Ideology, Language and the Politics of Time

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Abstract

This thesis examines the temporal dimension of political thought. From the standpoint of ideology studies, it incorporates methods and findings in conceptual history and in the work of Reinhart Koselleck, the primary theorist in the field, to the study of political thinking. Building on Koselleck's theorisation on the semantics of historical time, the thesis investigates the ways that political ideologies, which primarily influence political activity through the control of language, linguistically mediate historical time for political purposes.

There are three parts to the thesis. The first is an assessment of the existing scholarship on the study of political thinking and time in the field of ideology studies, followed by an analysis of Koselleck's hitherto unincorporated writings on historical time. The second offers an initial typology of three core 'modes' of the ideological politicking of time—on the politics of contingency, the politics of horizons and the politics of movement—each incorporating particular themes from Koselleck's writings. The third puts Koselleck in conversation with two British political thinkers with whom he did not engage—J. S. Mill and Michael Oakeshott—in an effort to unpack contestations of historical time in their respective works.

On both these levels—the typological and by way of conversation—the thesis endeavours to give a better understanding of the routine ways in which politics contests and shapes historicity. Yet doing so also concerns the influence of time on politics. It suggests that political practice is not simply an activity to study 'in time', but is also, on the level of experience, a contestation of time itself.

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Introduction
Ideology and the Politics of Time

> "We have some planes."
> – Mohammad Atta, 11 September 2001[1]

The temporal designation that is '9/11' is in fact a collection of different times. On the morning of September 11 2001 at 8:46:40 am Eastern Standard Time American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York. At 9:03:11 another plane, United Airlines Flight 175, crashed into the South Tower. Both towers would soon collapse: the South Tower at 9:58:59 and the North Tower at 10:28:25. Meanwhile, before the times of these collapses, American Airlines Flight 77 hit the Pentagon in Washington, DC at 9:37:46. Another plane, bound for the US Capitol, crashed in a field in Pennsylvania at 10:03:11. In total, 2,996 people died in a timespan of less than two hours that morning, including 19 terrorists.

We know these times with relative certainty because in November 2002 the US Congress and the president established the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, an independent and bipartisan panel tasked with, among other things, 'examining the facts and circumstances surrounding the September 11 attacks'. Published in 2004, few would disagree with the meticulous fact-finding portions of the report, including the times of impact noted here. [2]

Recording these precise times go some way to explaining what happened. But they offer only a limited account of the time(s) of the event. For we think of time in different, often unquantifiable, ways. The philosopher John McTaggart classified the above type of

[1] FAA Audio File, Boston Center, Position 46R 8:24:38, Peter Zalewski interview (September 23, 2003). Quoted in *The 9/11 Commission Report Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States: The Full Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York, W. & W. Norton and Co., 2004), 1.

[2] The others, as written on the back cover of the Report, were to 'identify lessons learned, and provide recommendations to safeguard against future acts of terrorism'.

time as ‘B-series’ time, a tenseless objective time where one can order a sequence of happenings according to their position before and after other events.[3] According to ‘B-series’ time, Flight 11 hit the North Tower before Flight 175 hit the South Tower. Or put in another way, these instances of impact occurred in sequence within the flow of what one may call ‘natural time’ or a Newtonian sense of ‘objective time’.[4] We normally divide this time by the clock and calendar, but we also note such time according to other markers – the rhythms of the beating heart, the returning seasons and the duration of time between birth and death. We cannot escape this spatial time, thought Kant, because time and space are transcendental conditions of our experience.[5] His view is that our experiences are already in time, as opposed to Plato’s dualism between a sensible world of phenomena and a separate intelligible world of *noumena*, the atemporal world containing the idea (ἡ ἰδέα) or the form (τὸ εἰδος) of what is merely visible by sensation.[6]

But this debate aside, in our everyday lives most have a sense that we experience things within the space of time. Our normal way for accounting for instances and durations is to measure them ‘in time’ – and such a time, as measure, is as Aristotle defined it, nothing but the measure of motion (κίνησις) – of motion in time.[7] And on September 11 2001 this time moved at a constant rate. There was measured time between the hijackings and the crashes and between individuals jumping out of the burning towers and hitting the ground. It took an amount of time for emergency personnel to enter the buildings and for the buildings to later collapse.

Brought together, all of these instances and measured durations became part of what we know colloquially as 9/11. And most would agree that that 9/11 still overshadows all the

[3] John M. E. McTaggart, ‘The Unreality of Time’, in *Mind 17* (1908), 457-473. ‘A-series’ time, by contrast, is a tensed time according to the positions determining past, present and future.
[4] Issac Newton, *The Principia*, A. Motte trans. (New York: Prometheus Books, 1995).
[5] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* , N. Kemp-Smith trans. (London: Macmillan, 1983).
[6] See, for instance, Plato, *Republic*, C. D. C Reeve trans. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1992), 507b – 510e.
[7] Aristotle, *Physics*. Translated by Robert Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

other 9/11s that came before and have since followed. But to say this is beyond time-as-measure. It is to make a temporal evaluation of durational time – to evaluate 9/11 historically and give it historical meaning.

Of course thinking of the past in terms of historical occurrences still relies on time as measure. This, historians refer to as chronological time or chronology, terms derived from the Greek word *Chronos* (χρόνος) denoting an infinitely divisible durational time that is quantified, linear, invariant and external to human perception.[8] Chronological time provides the basic materials for writing history and thinking historically. It is a temporal framework for ordering a series of events in different ways to demonstrate the processes and causalities that help make up history. It helps to answer important questions like *When? How fast? How often? How old?*[9]

Still, *Chronos* alone usually offers an insufficient historical explanation – certainly about what happened on 9/11. Well-equipped in philosophical language, the Greeks had their own separate word for subjectively ascribing wider historical meaning to events, what they called time as *Kairós* (καιρός), a word signifying 'the opening of a discontinuity in a continuum...a decisive moment that must be caught in passing'.[10] *Chronos* was a quantitative time of measure, whereas a qualitative *Kairós* had a double meaning: it designated a time of significance and also a time for action.[11] *Kairós* thus differentiated a chronological 'any time' from considerations about the 'right time' or 'good time' (*eu-Kairós*); and it included the possibility of the 'wrong time' (*Akairós*) or the 'wrong time to do something' (*Kakakairós*).[12]

[8] I take this list from Adam, *Time*, 139. Also see Nowotny (1994), 13-14.
[9] I've slightly altered a series of questions from John Smith, 'Time, Times and the Right Time', in *Monist* 53:1 (1969), 1.
[10] Francoise Balibar, Philippe Büttgen, Barbara Cassin, 'Moment, instant, occasion', in Barbara Cassin ed., *Vocabulaire européen des philosophies. Dictionnaire des intraduisibles* (Paris: Le Robert/Seuil, 2004), 815. Translated in Helge Jordheim, 'Conceptual History between *Chronos* and *Kairos*: The Case of "Empire", in *Redescriptions: Finnish Yearbook of Political Thought and Conceptual History* (2007), 127. Also see, James L. Kinneavy and Catherine R. Eskin, 'Kairos', in Gerd Ueding ed., *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik* vol. 4 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1998), 837.
[11] Jordheim makes a similar observation in 'Conceptual History between *Chronos* and *Kairos'*, 127.
[12] On this see S A Chamber, *Untimely Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 2003).

The concept of *Kairós* was used widely in the classical period, in theology and into the Renaissance.[13] It first appears in the *Iliad* with a spatial meaning, denoting a vital or lethal place on the body. But it was soon temporalised.[14] In the *Praecepta Republicae*, Plutarch employs *Kairós* to designate the opportune moment to speak frankly (*Parrhesia*) and in Isocrates' *Panegyricus* it is the prudent time to take action.[15] It is likely that the funerals for many of the 9/11 victims included this well-known passage from *Ecclesiastes* 3:1 –

> For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven:
> A time to [*o Kairós*] be born and a time to die;
> a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
> A time to kill and a time to heal;
> a time to break down and a time to build up
> …
> A time to love, and a time to hate;
> a time of war, and a time of peace.[16]

For historians, in explaining the past, *Chronos* and *Kairós* showcase the difference between a chronicle and what we can call 'history proper', the latter an enterprise endeavouring to offer meaning and significance, and perhaps lessons, from the past for the present.[17] The possibility for time as *Kairós* is a necessary condition for history, a meaningful history, while quantitative *Chronos* is a presupposition of *Kairós*.[18]

Making a distinction between 'right time' and 'wrong time' or a 'time of significance' and a 'time of insignificance' also requires assessing an event diachronically in relation to other events and temporal structures coming and extending before and after it. In other words, thinking historically in terms of *Kairós* means considering the different possibilities

[13] See Joanne Paul, 'The Use of Kairos in Renaissance Political Philosophy', in *Renaissance Quarterly* 67:1 (2014), 48-55.
[14] Philip Sipiora and James Baumlin eds., *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in history, theory and praxis* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 2002), 2.
[15] I take these examples from Paul, 'The Use of Kairos in Renaissance Political Philosophy', 48, 55.
[16] See John Smith, 'Time and Qualitative Time', *The Review of Metaphysics* 40:1 (1986), 4.
[17] See A. C. Danto, 'Chronicle and History Proper', in Journal of Philosophy 50:6 (March 1953), 173-182.
[18] Smith, 'Time, Times and the Right Time', 2.

for assigning meaning to a historical event in relation to the past and future. Historical events happen chronologically, but also have their own variable temporality.

In accounting for this, *Kairós* incorporates and moves beyond *Chronos* to concern the experiential dynamics at the intersection between history and time – that is, as an event considered in relation to historical time. In German historiographical circles, historical time (*Zeitgeschichte*) is simply the history of a present time. But to put it more fully, as a theorist like Reinhart Koselleck does, historical time refers to an understanding of a present (i.e. a historical present) that is something more than an instant located chronologically in time, in a time that precedes historical experience. It also has to do with the meaning of an instant as a *historical* present that is not simply chronological but a present that contains its own *times* found in the different historical structures and individual experiences located at that particular present. In taking these historical presents (past-presents) together, as Koselleck puts it, historical time allows for considering an event historically in terms of, 'progress, decline, acceleration or delay, the not-yet and the not-anymore, the before and the after, the too-early and the too-late, the situation and the duration – whatever differentiating conditions must enter so that concrete historical motion might be rendered visible'.[19]

The historian thus embraces the notion that there are in fact different times existing simultaneously, which we can primarily locate in the language employed to explain historical experience – or as Koselleck put it, between actors' 'space of experience' (*Erfahrungsraum)* and 'horizon of expectation' (*Erwartungshorizont*).[20] The social aspect of historical time is important because rather than an individualised sense of *Dasein*, Koselleck's theory of historical time, the basis from which this thesis advances, concerns the temporality and

[19] Koselleck, History, Histories and Formal Time Structures, in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought) Keith Tribe trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 95. For more on this, see Niklas Olsen, *History in the Plural: An Introduction to the World of Reinhart Koselleck* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014), 221.

[20] See Koselleck, '"Space of Experience" and "Horizon of Expectation": Two Historical Categories', in Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 255-275.

historicity 'bound up with social and political actions, with concretely acting and suffering human beings and their institutions and organisations'.[21]

Given the varied contexts and permutations, in taking all this together we see that there is thus not one historical time, but plural historical times, which Koselleck often illustrates by way of the geologic metaphor *Zeitschichten*, meaning the layering of time. He also frequently refers to this through the notion of the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous (*die Gleichzeitigkeit der Ungleichzeitigen*), a term we also find in the writings of Ernst Bloch and Karl Mannheim representing the possibility of different trajectories and meanings existing simultaneously but do not correspond.[22] Still, Koselleck is distinct from the other two because he locates layering through language. To apply this to the 9/11 example, then, this is to say that there are different possible historical times leading up to and following the event, and thus different possibilities for its historical *temporalisation* in semantic space – that is, in how political actors may situate 9/11 'kairologically' in relation to pasts and future – what Koselleck calls *Vergangene Zukunft*.

Capturing kairological time

Kairós is not a term that Koselleck used often, if much at all, but it is a fitting conceptualisation of his theorisation of the possibilities for the historical structuring of a historical present – and the possibilities for contesting its meaning.[23] Through the concept of *Kairós* we can make an important distinction between a historical 'event' and an event that we designate as a 'moment'. Rather than just an event, we can understand a moment as an event, like 9/11, that is given particular historical significance—as something

[21] Reinhart Koselleck, Vergangene Zukunft: *Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1979), 9.
[22] Also see Koselleck, 'Stetigkeit und Wandel aller Zeitgeschichten' in *Zeitschichten: Studien zur Historik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2000), 246-264.
[23] See Jordheim, 'Conceptual History between *Chronos* and *Kairos*', 115-145.

'kariological'—that not only happens in time, but also affects how actors understand the meaning of the present moment in relation to what follows and came before.

A useful theorisation of an event-as-moment is in the historian J. G. A. Pocock's seminal work, *The Machiavellian Moment*, where he thematises the idea of 'the moment' in the context of the rise of Florentine humanism in the 16th century. He suggests that we interpret this historical 'moment' in two ways, the first of which I discuss here (the latter further on). On one hand, he explains that 'the moment',

> is selectively and thematically defined. It is asserted that certain enduring patterns in the temporal consciousness of medieval and early modern Europeans led to the presentation of the republic, and the citizen's participation in it, as constituting a problem in historical self-understanding, with which Machiavelli and his contemporaries can be seen both explicitly and implicitly contending…Their struggle with this problem is presented as historically real, though as one selected aspect of the complex historical reality of their thought; and their "moment" is defined as that in which they confronted the problem grown crucial.[24]

By discussing 'temporal consciousness' and 'historical understanding', Pocock is referring here to the temporal position between the 'enduring patterns'—the routinised structures—of medieval and early modern time in contrast to a later vision of the enduring republic. The moment marks a cleaving or at least a reassessment of the understood present in relation to the past and future. A moment is thus chronological and also potentially kariological in both meanings of the term: as a moment of significance and a moment for action (the possibilities for such action signified in the Machiavellian concept of *virtù*).

As a historical and political moment September 11 gained kariological status almost immediately. At 9:30 that morning, President George W. Bush already referred to the series of occurrences as "an apparent terrorist attack on our country".[25] The impact of the second

[24] J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), vii-viii. This passage, and those that follow, are also analysed in a similar way, though with some differences, by Jordheim in 'Conceptual History between Chronos and Kairos', 116-118. Chronos and Kairós in relation to Pocock's work is also discussed in Kimberly Hutchings, Time in *World Politics: Thinking the Present* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), 3-9.
[25] Quoted in David Finke, 'Four Planes Go Up the Usual Way and Come Back in Sheer Terror', *Washington Post*, 12 September 2001. Also quoted in Tom Lundborg, *Politics of the Event: Time, Movement, Becoming* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge Press, 2013), 28.

plane erased any doubt that it was a deliberate political act. Others soon politicised it beyond issues of national security. Writing only hours after the collapse of the towers, Paul Berman, who would go on to write a book on terror and liberalism,[26] reported his encounters on the streets of his ethnically diverse Brooklyn neighbourhood. He recounts encountering a 'round-faced man' spouting, "Don't let any more of these foreign Arabs come into this country no more! They hate us!" Hearing this, a shopkeeper of Moroccan descent responded by praising a moderate form of Islam. It had been only hours and Berman wondered if multicultural New York, and indeed America, might ever be the same.[27]

Others had already made up their mind on this score. 'Nothing Will Ever Be the Same', read the September 11 special edition of the *Philadelphia City Paper*.[28] Printed two days later, *The Economist* claimed that 9/11 was, 'the day the world changed' and a 'declaration of war not just on America but all civilized people'.[29] In *The New Statesman* the philosopher John Gray considered it a 'genuine rejection of western modernity' and that 'the ideal of a universal civilization is a recipe for unending conflict, and it is time it was given up'.[30]

Such proclamations may look overheated in retrospect. But the alarmingly simplistic efforts of 19 hijackers to fly airplanes into structures symbolic of western economic and military power clearly had a marked effect on the historio-temporal assessments made during and near the time. Suddenly the future looked more dangerous and uncertain than it did the day before. And in response, for many Americans, the events of 9/11 were also a moment for action – time as *Kairós* – to retaliate and reassert American power, and for some, to fight for the liberal ideas newly put under attack. During a "day of national prayer and remembrance,"

[26] Paul Berman, *Terror and Liberalism* (New York, W. W. Norton & Co., 2003).
[27] Paul Berman, 'Under the Bridge: Brooklyn Dispatch', in *The New Republic* (24 September, 2001). Recalled at: https://newrepublic.com/article/82316/11-reaction-berman-arabs-xenophobia.
[28] Quoted in Mary L. Dudziak ed., *September 11 in History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 2.
[29] 'The day the world changed', *The Economist*. (13 September 2001). Recalled at: http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=E1_SRDPQT&source=login_payBarrier.
[30] John Gray, 'The era of globalization is over', *The New Statesman* (24 September 2001) Recalled at: http://i-p-o.org/globalization-gray.htm.

President Bush remarked that, "Just three days removed from these events, Americans do not yet have the distance of history. But our responsibility to history is already clear: to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil".[31]

Ten years removed from the attacks, political commentators were certainly more apt to question the event's kariological status. 'For all the upheaval [of the past ten years], it now turns out that the geopolitical forces shaping the present century will bear only slight connection to 9/11', wrote Phillip Stevens in the *Financial Times* in September 2011,[32] demonstrating that temporal evaluation is an on-going activity. Indeed, despite President Bush's proclamation, democracy still struggles to take hold in the Middle East, Afghanistan remains beset with tribal infighting and terrorism is still a threat. Meanwhile the events and processes resulting from mechanisation, migration and climate change now seem far more worthy of the designation of *Kairós*.

Contesting temporal meaning

The implication of this is that we should recognise that the temporal status of events is something essentially contested, to borrow W. B. Gallie's term,[33] and that the primary way in which actors comprehend, assign and contest the meaning of events like 9/11 is through language. That is, the temporal significance of an event is linguistically mediated and contested through the semantics of historical time. Koselleck wrote that 'all testimony [on the historical experience of time] answers to the problem of how, in a concrete situation,

[31] 'President George W Bush's Remarks at National Day of Prayer and Remembrance', (September 14 2001), recalled at https://www.911memorial.org/sites/default/files/Remarks%20by%20President%20Bush%20at%20National%20Day%20of%20Prayer.pdf.
[32] Phillip Stevens, 'No, 9/11 did not change the world', in the *Financial Times* (1 September 2011). Recalled at: https://www.ft.com/content/b6c10c8e-d332-11e0-9ba8-00144feab49a
[33] W. B. Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* New Series vol. 56 (1955-1956), 167-198.

experiences come to terms with the past; how expectations, hopes or prognosis projected into the future become articulated in language'.[34]

For instance, in regards to 9/11 we locate the temporal politics of *Kairós* in the use of words and phrases like 'crisis', 'emergency' and 'declaration of war'. And here we can now alight on Pocock's second thematisation of a 'moment'. For Pocock too, 'the moment' is not only a historical designation, as discussed above, but itself a linguistic mediation of past experience, and one worthy of historical study in its own right:

> "The Machiavellian moment" denotes the problem itself. It is a name for the moment in conceptualized time in which the republic was seen as confronting its own temporal finitude, as attempting to remain morally and politically stable in a stream of irrational events conceived as essentially destructive of all systems of secular stability. In the language that had been developed for the purpose, this was spoken of as the confrontation of "virtue" with "fortune" and "corruption"; and the study of Florentine thought is the study of how Machiavelli and his contemporaries pursued the intimations of these words, in the context of those ways of thinking about time.[35]

Indeed, this is a ubiquitous way of contesting temporal meaning. As Machiavelli and his peers mediated moments in words like 'virtue', 'fortune' and 'corruption', so too was 9/11 associated with temporal language open to different interpretations and contestations. To mine examples from just one place, in May 2002 a number of scholars from different disciplines gathered for a symposium at the University of Southern California around the topic of 'September 11 as a Transformative Moment'. Their remarks, some based on empirical observations, others more theoretical, all of which later appeared in book form, are littered with references to 'crisis', 'recovery', 'history', 'decline', 'memory', 'change', 'new', 'beginning' and 'end', to name but a few.[36] All are reflections on the historicity of 9/11 (the title of the symposium already carried two temporal concepts to begin with – 'transformative' and 'moment').

[34] Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft*, 11-12.
[35] Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, viii.
[36] Dudziak ed., *September 11 in History*, esp. 1-10, 55-69.

Used by professionals or in vernacular discourse, these everyday concepts transformed 9/11 from an 'event' to a salient historical 'moment'. The California symposium entertained discussions about 'globalisation', 'unilateralism' and 'imperialism'.[37] And these narrative terms were matched by words like 'continuity', 'citizenship', 'homeland' and 'tradition'.[38]

In addition, without a vocabulary readymade for a 21st century event like 9/11, scholars and pundits also reverted to anachronistic historical terms like 'Ground Zero' and a new 'Cold War', reminding that we designate historical phenomena through language, but at the same time historical events also alter our meaning and use of language. As Koselleck put it, 'language is historically conditioned and all history is linguistically conditioned'.[39] Indeed, 9/11 altered our references to and how we think about 'terrorism', and how many still react to the word 'Islam'. The phrase 'twin towers' will hardly remind people of the buildings in Kuala Lumpur, even though the Petronas Towers share the moniker. Ground Zero is now in New York, not Hiroshima or Nagasaki.

Theorising the politics of time

> There is no history without political theory, whether it refers in the Aristotelian tradition to constitutional structures or in a modern sense to the open field of political action and suffering, or to both at the same time…thus political theory becomes the presupposition for and the result of historical knowledge.
>
> – Reinhart Koselleck, *Eulogy for François Furet*[40]

Political theorists cannot ignore temporal language because these linguistic moves are part and parcel of politics – of the discursive politics of time. Was 9/11 a rejection of modernity?

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[37] See for instance, Andrew Bacevitch ed. *The Imperial Tense: Prospects and Problems of American Empire* (Chicago: Ivan R Dee), 2013.
[38] See, for instance, Amy Kaplan, 'Homeland Insecurities: Transformations of Language and Space', in Dudziak ed., September 11 in History, 55-69.
[39] Koselleck, 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', in *The Journal of Modern History* 6:4 (1986), 649.
[40] Reinhart Koselleck, 'Laudatio auf François Furet', in *Sinn und Form* 49 (1998), 298. Quoted and translated in Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, 'Koselleck, Arendt and the Anthropology of Historical Experience', Tom Lampert trans., in *History and Theory* 49 (May 2010), 234.

Should the United States avoid efforts to promote liberal democratic institutions in developing countries?

Designating historical meaning to 9/11 had a profound impact on the political response. The response came to be known as the 'Freedom Agenda', a muscular approach to nation building.[41] Accusations of 'empire', 'militant democracy' and 'Pax Americana' soon followed, each evoked as counter concepts to the temporal rhetoric of 'democratisation' and 'state-building'.[42] Indeed the linguistic battles around 9/11 and its aftermath should remind us that words are primary weapons of temporal combat – and that the mediation between *Kairós* and *Chronos* in dealing with the contingent event remains one of the core areas of temporal contestation.

In forming ways to theorise this, however, we must at the same time always recognise that the temporal language of politics—the 'politicking' of time—occurs in a social milieu of multiple temporalities. Like history and politics, almost everything in our lives is timed, and as the sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel points out, the times of our lives usually move according to rhythms routinised in social life.[43] Yet since the Enlightenment and especially the industrial revolution, as David Landes recounts, clocks and the time of the clock have come to dominate other times that move according to natural rhythms or eschatological prophecy. And the dominance of clock time has implications for our so-called public and private times. Stephen Kern argued that World Standard Time led to greater time uniformity of shared public time, and by consequence a plurality of private times in response.[44] But clock time can also constrain private time and our different senses of time. Following Marx, many argue that

[41] On this, see, Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).
[42] On these phrases, see Jügen Habermas' remarks in Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 40-41. Following the Iraq invasion, a popular book on the left was Emmanuel Todd, *American Empire: The Breakdown of the American Order*, John Delogu trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).
[43] Evitar Zerubavel, *Hidden Rhythms: Schedules and Calendars in Social Life* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981).
[44] Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918: With a New Preface* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2003).

in industrial society the clock increasingly became a tool for political domination—over people and against other times—driving out broader considerations of human temporality. On this H. W. Hohn reflected that,

> Work and time are "cleansed" of orientations and meanings which are antithetical to the capitalist work-discipline. In the process of industrialisation the cycles of work and relaxation, which formally accompanied the nature and task-bound rhythms, attain their own metric dynamic and gradually became indifferent towards traditional contexts of meaning and significance.[45]

All these times, among others, are potentially political – or at least can be politicised. But in response to Hohn's claim, equally, all human experiences—and the language used to describe them—always contain their own temporality.

Time and ideology

In light of this, to now set out my core argument, this thesis endeavours to unpack different ways in which political thinking contests historical time through the control of political language. More specifically, it is an investigation into the ways that political ideologies, as a particular mode of political thinking, influence political activity through the control of language.

The thesis concerns the semantics of ideologies because in their operation, ideologies are not simply ideas or systems of ideas. Rather what makes ideas ideological is that they are on the level of *praxis*, operating in the form of discursive representations and interpretations of the world that are referred to in the interest of influencing political activity. Not all political thinking is ideological; rather all political thinking has the potential to be so.

[45] H.-W. Hohn, *Die Zerstörung der Zeit. Wis aus einem göttlichen Gut eine Handelsware wurde.* (Frankfurt and Maim: Fischer Alternativ, 1984). Quoted and translated in Barbara Adam, *Time and Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 113.

In saying this it is fruitful to think of ideologies as contact lenses—liberal lenses, conservative lenses, socialist lenses etc.—through which we view the world politically.[46] The ideological lenses help us see things, like time, in a particular political way. The lenses bring certain things into focus, and others less so. Take for example an encounter with a homeless woman living on a busy street in Oxford, asking for money. On a moral level we may think it is unjust that someone must live this way; or that it is morally unacceptable for people to beg; or wrong to walk by without offering some assistance, monetary or otherwise. But these are not expressly political considerations. Rather, though often related to our moral beliefs, ideological lenses clarify this encounter *politically*. Depending on the lens, some may believe that the woman deserves welfare assistance from the state, including publicly provided housing; or that it is the responsibility of the community in the form of charities, not the state, to assist this woman; or that homelessness is symptomatic of the ills of capitalism.[47] Contrary to the Marxist view, these ideological lenses are not by nature distorting or blinding (or need not be), but allow one to make sense of the blurry social world around them, along with the possible political responses to the social problems that inevitably come with it.

In short, ideological lenses influence how one thinks politically, and are an accessory to the other basic features of political practice: asserting dominance, ranking priorities, forming alliances, setting out visions, employing emotive language, to state a few.[48] Whereas to study the micro-lenses that make up various macro-lenses (i.e. ideologies), or to compare one macro-lens to another, is to think *about* politics.[49] And in doing so we notice in the

[46] This metaphor is in many ways my own interpretation of the basic components of Michael Freeden's morphological theory of ideologies. See Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996). He also incorporates the metaphor of layers, one also prominent in conceptual history, in Freeden, *Liberalism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), esp. 37-50.
[47] See Lenard C. Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter: Homelessness, Democracy and Political Exclusion* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2006).
[48] On the features of the practice of political thinking, see Michael Freeden, *The Political Theory of Political Thinking: An Anatomy of Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
[49] I am interpreting two distinctions made by Michael Freeden, in 'Thinking Politically and Thinking About Politics: Language, Interpretation, and Ideology, in Marc Stears and David Leopold eds. *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 198-215.

practice of politics that these lenses are advertised in various ways and sold in different forms of packaging. Sometimes the branding includes an '–ism' displayed across the front and an explanation of the different micro-lenses written on the back. They are sold in different forms—in speeches, newspapers and cartoons.

However, this variation aside, thinking about different ideological lenses is always to study the *discursive* packaging used to sell them, which tends to employ a set of recognisable key concepts and words that refer to a particular vision. For instance political actors often articulate and promote macro-ideologies through the use of open-ended political concepts like 'freedom', 'justice', 'equality' and 'citizenship', which we can associate with particular micro-lenses. When layered together they help form a certain political vision of society.

In concentrating on this discursive element, many ideology theorists, and the morphological approach pioneered by Michael Freeden in particular, argue that the power of ideologies is not mainly in the lenses themselves—the political vision of the world—but in the discursive packaging.[50] This is to say that ideologies operate by controlling the meaning of the concepts that represent the macro- and micro-lenses.

But as Koselleck argues forcefully, I suggest we cannot separate the description from the vision. In other words, we cannot understand experience without the language used to describe it (and vice versa), even if, as Koselleck thought, language is always an imprecise and incomplete representation of experience (*pace* Gadamer).[51]

I discuss Koselleck's contribution to the study of ideology in greater detail in chapter one, but to explain his relevance a bit further, suffice to say here that from a historical perspective Koselleck offers an initial three theories relevant to ideology theorists: on what he called the 'democratisation', 'politicisation' and 'ideologisation', or more awkwardly

[50] See Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, chapter 2.
[51] See Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past*, 75-92; and Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Second and Revised Edition, Translation revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London and New York: Continuum, 2004).

'ideologisability' (*Ideologiesierbarkeit*) of historical concepts that he saw occurring simultaneously around the beginning of the 18th century in Germany. To summarise, what he calls 'democratisation' signifies the wider use, dissemination and engagement with the meaning of key concepts in the period. This is not a surprising finding given the growing political discourse taking place in the period—hence their 'politicisation'—which often saw concepts set in 'combat' (*Kanpfbegriff*) with each other. 'Aristocracy' vs. 'democracy' and 'revolutionary' vs. 'reactionary' are two examples. Meanwhile *Ideologiesierbarkeit* refers to the incorporation of certain concepts into the particular discourse of political ideologies – the new '–isms' that Koselleck saw emerging in the period.[52] These were political concepts taken out of their historical context and reconstituted into what he calls open-ended 'collective singulars' (*Kollektivsingulare*), whereby 'liberties' become 'Liberty' and 'history' becomes 'History' (*Historie* to *Geschichte*). The meaning of concepts therefore become contested in ideological discourse, or rather 'decontested' to use Michael Freeden's phrase – reduced in the semantics of politics from multiple possible meanings to a singular meaning.[53]

But to these three processes that Koselleck locates in this period he adds a fourth characteristic key to this investigation: what he calls the process of 'temporalisation' (*Verzeitlichung*), whereby the contested meanings of certain concepts were not simply definitional, but often denoted a process of historical *movement* that for historical actors replaced historical experience according to a static and predictable history with one of history moving towards an open-ended horizon of expectation.[54] As such, for Koselleck, the evidence bore out that concepts are both 'causal factors' and also 'indicators' of historical

[52] See Reinhart Koselleck, 'Introduction and Prefaces to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe'*, Michaela Richter trans., in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6:1 (2007), 1-37, and 'The Historical-Political Semantics of Asymmetric Counterconcepts', in *Futures Past*, 155-191.
[53] See Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, chapter two.
[54] For and explanation of this, see Koselleck, 'Introduction and Prefaces to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe'*, 1-19 and esp. 11-14. For a useful summary, see Willibald Steinmetz, 'Some Thoughts on a History of Twentieth-Century German Basic Concepts', in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 7:2 (2012), 87-100; and Steinnmetz, 'Multiple Transformations: Temporal Frameworks', in Willibald Steinmetz, Michael Freeden and Javier Fernández-Sebastián eds., *Conceptual History in the European Space* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Press, 2017), 63-95.

change.[55] To return to a theme discussed earlier, concepts were indicative of and contained different historical times. This pluralisation is to say that in their ambiguous meaning, key concepts like 'rule', 'nation' and 'democracy' contained within them diachronic structures extending 'Janus-Faced' backwards and forwards, containing past meanings, experiences and also future possibilities. As Koselleck put it, 'concepts do not only teach us the uniqueness of past meanings but also contain the structural possibilities, [and] treat the concatenations of difference, which are not detectable in the historical flow of events'.[56] In other words, when concepts are ascribed to or put in relation to a historical event, such as 'crisis' or 'war' or 'terror', these meanings and their temporal thrust shape how one views the event in terms of past and future. Calling something terrorism, for instance, associates an event with other terrorist events in the past, and also evokes a feeling that things will not be the same going forward.

The temporal turn

Of the four processes related to the study of ideologies and their semantic fields, Koselleck's theory of temporalisation is, I feel, his most innovative. It also happens to be the least utilised to date. In light of this, this thesis aims to push the linguistic approach in a new direction. As I outlined in the previous section, by building on Koselleck's theorising I propose that we should look beyond ideologies in terms of the contestation of the definitional meaning of concepts to identify other discursively mediated contestations going on – the experience of historical time being one such possibility.[57]

In chapter one, I open the discussion on ideology and time with an assessment of what I call the 'existing temporalities', or at least a selection of them, that are associated with the

[55] Koselleck, 'Introduction to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*', 8.
[56] Koselleck, Begriffsgeschichte and Social History, in *Futures Past*, 90.
[57] For a description of the linguistic turn in the study of ideologies, see Aletta J. Norval, 'The Things We Do with Words', *British Journal of Political Science*, 30(2) (2000); and Jonathan Leader Maynard, 'A map of the field of ideological analysis', in *Journal of Political Ideologies* 18(3) (2013), esp. pp. 299-327.

ideology concept. It begins with an assessment of three 'founding fathers' in the use of the concept, where I make the claim that these early considerations of ideology either consciously eschewed considerations of historical time or only focused on the ideas and structures of historical time without seriously engaging with the role of language. By comparison, I then look at select authors in the later 'linguistic turn' in the study of ideologies, including Pocock and Freeden, who are more sensitive to issues of language and time, but who for the most part focus on the study of ideological language 'in time' as opposed to theorising, to any great extent, the linguistic mediation 'of time'. To make this temporal turn the chapter finishes with an introduction to Koselleck's theorising on language and time, where I also highlight specific elements of his work particularly relevant to this project.

Chapter two discusses the first of these three modes of the politicking of time – what I call the politics of contingency. Over the past two decades or so there has been a fruitful collaboration between conceptual historians and theorists of political ideologies concerning ways of better understanding the contingency of conceptual meaning and the relationship between language and historical experience. While these approaches appreciate the contingency of politics, there is also room to look at this in terms of the politics of contingency. In doing so, I suggest that Koselleck alights on three issues of contingency relevant to political theory – on the contingency of politics, the politicking of the contingent event and the politics of the contingency of historicity.

Following this, chapter three focuses on another core element of Koselleck's thinking—on the semantics of temporal horizons—to categorise two different yet overlapping modes of 'horizonal politicking' that attempt to harness and control time for the legitimation of political activity. The first mode is the contestation of the spatial-temporal 'horizons of politics', referring to the scope and temporal reach of political thinking and

activity, and the second is the 'politics of horizons', denoting the contestation and politicization of different time horizons on an individual and social level.

Chapter four assesses another element of historical time – on the movement of history—to thematise what I call the temporal 'politics of movement'. In looking at Koselleck's discussion of the movement of time, in relation to language and the structure of events, the chapter argues that politics contests a dynamic 'movement landscape' consisting of movements from the perspective of an ideological vision or in relation to the ideologisation of movements external to a political vision, at least in their origination. I argue that political thinking contests movement in three particular ways – in the structure of movement, its pace and its mechanisms of propulsion.

Chapters five and six move from a typological analysis of the politicking of time to relate elements of Koselleck's thinking to two British thinkers about whom Koselleck either wrote little about, the empiricist J. S. Mill, or whose work he was likely unfamiliar with, even unaware of – Michael Oakeshott. Chapter five, on Mill, alights on two components of Koselleck's thinking: first, on the layers of temporality contained with the concepts of progress and development (often used interchangeably); and second, in the separation between the space of experience and horizon of expectation. Chapter six, on Oakeshott, takes a different tack, by comparing Koselleck's and Oakeshott's respective approaches to the historical discipline—one as a historian and the other a British Idealist—to analyse how these approaches to history in fact relate to a similar theory of politics.

A number of these chapters relate to material and themes that I have published in academic journals – namely the *History of European Ideas* (on Oakeshott), *The Journal of Political Ideologies* (on the *topoi* of the ideological politicking of time) and *Contributions to the History of Concepts* (on the politics of horizons). By way of conclusion, I end the thesis discussing how this typological and empirical exercise, though one that is by no means

comprehensive, endeavours to give a better understanding of the routine ways in which politics contests and shapes our understanding of time. Yet doing so also concerns the influence of time on politics. It suggests that political practice is not simply an activity to study 'in time', but is also, on the level of experience, a response to the contingency of the human temporal experience – a human condition that events like 9/11 reaffirm.

Chapter One
Ideologies in Time and the Ideological Politicking of Time

> Ah, time is a riddling thing, and hard it is to expound its essence.
> – Thomas Mann, *Magic Mountain*[1]

> Time is to politics what space is to geometry.
> – Régis Debray, *Prison Writings*[2]

Applying conceptual history to the ideological 'politicking of time'—the contestation of the time and temporality for political purposes—can move along two main methodological pathways. One pathway is a synchronic and diachronic survey of the different meanings and understandings of the concept of 'time'—thought of ontologically or epistemologically, logically or empirically—and their respective politicisation.[3] Or along this same path one can narrow the focus to a single conception of time, such as historical time, on which one might study its politicisation in the use of specific historical-temporal concepts – such as 'modernity' or 'postmodernity', 'progress' or 'decline'.[4]

By contrast, taking the second pathway is to reverse the order: it is to study the temporality or temporalisation of either a set of key political concepts (e.g. liberty, justice, equality) or familiar concepts describing the activity of politics and different ways of thinking politically. The latter includes the concept of 'politics' itself (e.g. its historicity, horizons, and temporal constraints), along with adjacent concepts denoting modes of political activity and

[1] Thomas Mann, *Der Zauberberg* [The Magic Mountain] (1924), H. T. Lowe-Porter trans. (New York: Knopf, 1953).
[2] Régis Debray, *Prison Writings,* R. Sheed trans. (London: Allen Lane, 1973), 90.
[3] For conceptual historians, unfortunately, though perhaps understandably, the historical and socio-political use of the concept of time (*Zeit*) does not have its own entry in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. The closest Koselleck comes to this is in his essay 'Time and History', briefly covering the differences between natural, chronological and historical time, translated in Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002), 100-115. While not strictly a work of conceptual history, a useful survey of the concept of time—and its place in anthropology, natural science and philosophy—is in Stephen Toulmin and June Goodfield, *The Discovery of Time* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965).
[4] On modernity see, for instance, Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and the Avant-Garde* (London: Verso, 1995); and on questions of modernity and progress see Hans Blumenberg, *The legitimacy of the Modern Age* (Boston: MIT Press, 1985).

thinking, including that of 'ideology'.[5] It is the latter pathway, in reference to ideology and the possible conceptions of historical time wrapped within it, that I pursue in what follows.

However, I do this with an initial disclaimer that this chapter does not undertake, by any means, a comprehensive history of the meaning and employment of the concept of ideology, nor its myriad confluences with issues of time. Rather, the task is to first look at a select set of authors whose use of the ideology concept relates to different interactions with time and its possible historisation for the purpose of understanding the social world and the role of politics in shaping it. In doing so I suggest that they speak to a set of reoccurring 'temporal themes' in relation to ideology and time that are threaded through each section of this chapter.

Let me list these themes at the outset, which I present as a set of conceptual pairings, some opposing and others mutually supporting. The first theme concerns the relationship between ideology and history. It concerns whether ideologies are thought of as ahistorical ideational and discursive constructions that transcend or 'disarticulate' from history; or otherwise may be thought of as discursive systems in 'articulation' with particular situations.[6] In other words, writers may treat ideology as something ahistorical and therefore non-contingent (static worldviews irrespective of time and space); or by contrast as historical and contingent (more sensitive and responsive to time and space). Some interpretations of ideology, as we will see, take the middle ground.

Meanwhile, a second pairing concerns the difference between considering and studying ideologies as a particular type of political thinking 'in time'—that is, something we contextualise and consider contingent, thus sensitive to historical context—versus studying the ideological politicking *of* historical time. The 'of time' refers to how ideologies may

[5] Kari Palonen, *The Struggle with Time* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2014).
[6] I take this idea of articulation and disarticulation from Robert Wuthnow, *Communities of Discourse*: *Ideology and Social Structure in the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and European Socialism* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1993).

influence and shape how societies come to understand their place 'in time'. Thus, the 'in time' pertains to studying ideologies in and across time and the 'of time' to the *ideologisation* of time itself.

The third pairing is between diachrony and synchrony,[7] two concepts theorised by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure.[8] Synchrony denotes studying the stable meaning and structure of language in a particular situation or over a period of time. Thus there is a component to synchronic study that looks at meaning over time, as long as the meaning is stable.[9] Diachrony, by contrast, concerns documenting and explaining how meaning remains stable and also *changes* over time, the task Koselleck and his collaborators undertook in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, in looking at changes over a longer period of time than usually undertaken by other approaches.[10] Diachrony by default always includes synchronic analysis.

The fourth, and final pairing relevant to synchronic and diachronic time is between the 'singularisation' and 'pluralisation' of historical time – that is, whether actors think of history as one universal—a unifying philosophy of history or Lovejoy's idea of the history of events as a 'great chain of being',[11] both related to what Koselleck calls a 'collective singular' (*Kollektivsingulare*)—[12] or the possibility for the simultaneity or different levels of historical time, referred to in Koselleck's use of the concept *Zeitschichten*, or layers of time.[13]

To explore these themes the chapter is split into three parts. As mentioned already, the

[7] See Anna Giacalone Ramat, Caterina Mauri and Piera Molinelli eds., *Synchrony and Diachrony: A dynamic interface* (Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2013).
[8] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, eds., Roy Harris trans. (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Press, 1983).
[9] Willibald Steinmetz calls this 'micro-diachrony', in 'Vierzig Jahre Begriffsgeschichte: The State of the Art', in Sprache–Kognition–Kultur, Heidrun Kämper and Ludwig M. Eichinger, eds. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 187. Discussed in Jan Iverson, 'About Key Concepts and How to Study Them', in *Contributions to the History of* Concepts 6:1 (2011), 82.
[10] Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck, eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* [Basic Concepts in History: A Dictionary on Historical Principles of Political and Social Language in Germany], Vols. 1-8 (Stuttgart, 1972–90).
[11] Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933).
[12] On his idea of a Kollektivsingulare, see Reinhart Koselleck, 'Historia Magistra Vitae', in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought). Keith Tribe trans. (New York, Columbia University Press, 2004), 33-36.
[13] Reinhart Koselleck, *Zeitschichten: Studien Zur Historik* (MIT Einem Beitrag Von Hans-Georg Gadamer Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2000).

first sets out three foundational uses of ideology that either historicise or dehistoricise the concept – in the works of Destutt de Tracy, Karl Marx and Karl Mannheim. Each author relates to some of the pairings more than others, the main issues being: ideology as related to naturalised and thus dehistoricised human characteristics (de Tracy); ideology related to a singularised conception of history (Marx); or ideology as a purveyor of plural and interacting conceptions of historical time (Mannheim). What they all have in common, however, is that the primary concern for each author is the concept of ideology and its relation (or not) to the *structuralisation* of history. Whereas, by contrast, a primary aim of the conceptual historian, following in the path set by Reinhart Koselleck, is to focus on the relationship between historical events and structures and their representation in historical and political language.[14]

Conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*), and the work of Koselleck in particular, thus makes an important step away from the three 'foundational' authors I discuss in Part I, encouraging us to explore the important intersection between language, structure and time in order to flesh out how ideologies go about contesting time discursively. The remainder of the chapter is dedicated to this 'linguistic turn'. First, in Part II, I build on the emergent linguistic focus in the study of ideologies, which I contend concentrates primarily on ideology and language 'in time', an effort that already utilises some of the theory and practices in *Begriffsgeschichte*, followed by a reappraisal of Koselleck's work, comprising Part III, that shifts the focus to the linguistically mediated politicking 'of time'.

In discussing these three parts my overall aim is to move away from strictly considering the use and relevance of the synchronic-diachronic study of political concepts to ideology studies, to look more broadly at Reinhart Koselleck's wider *oeuvre*, especially in relation to the theories on time found in his writings on developing a *Historik*, his theory of possible histories (*die Theoriebedürftigkeit der Geschichtswissenschaft*). By surveying his

[14] For one example of this, see Koselleck, 'Language, Change and the History of Events', in *The Journal of Modern History* 61(4) (1986), 649-666.

wider writings, my contention is that his concern is not only the temporal components of concepts, but rather the relationship between concepts, structure and historical consciousness. Indeed, it is the contestability and malleability of historical consciousness, through language, that affects the social senses of historicity, which makes its politicisation and ideologisation so powerful. In arguing this, I suggest Koselleck offers us both a useful typology of different modes of politicking historical time, along with ways of going about studying its linguistic mediation. In doing so this chapter serves as an introduction to Koselleck's work and methods, particular aspects of which I will elaborate on in the chapters that follow.

Part I: Three considerations on time in the early use of the ideology concept

Destutt de Tracy

But first we must start at the beginning. Almost every book on ideology mentions Destutt de Tracy, the 18th century French aristocrat and philosopher who minted the word 'ideology', and who had a very different and entirely anachronistic understanding of its referential meaning from one we would recognise today.[15] For de Tracy, ideology did not refer to systems of ideas or the semantic dissemination of a particular *Weltanschauung*, as many think of it today; but rather, for him, it referred to a scientific *study* of ideas and their discursive propagation. As its Greek roots reveal (idea from ἰδέα and -logy, or explanation from -λογία), 'ideology' was literally a new 'science of ideas'. Indeed, the suffix '-logy' gives its original intentions away: the invention of the concept was part of the desire to transform the study of human thinking—through what de Tracy called the 'natural history of ideas'—for the purpose of understanding, and not (at least not explicitly) to propagate particular ideas for political purposes. This enterprise should not be an entirely foreign one to ideology scholars today. In many ways de Tracy's three volume *Élémens d'Idéologie* built on

[15] For more on de Tracy's work, see Emmet Kennedy, *A 'Philosophe' in the Age of Revolution: Destutt de Tracy and the Origins of 'Ideology* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1978); and François Picavet, *Les ideologues. Essais sur l'historie des idées et des theories scientifique, philosophiques, religieuses, etc. en France depuis 1789* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1891).

the empiricism of John Locke and especially the sensationalism of Étienne Bonnot de Condillac[16] in an attempt to do what many 'neutral' theorists of ideology continue to do today: to examine and identify patterns in the ways in which humans think and behave socio-politically.[17] But in his analysis of human thinking, where he investigated ideas as sensations or impressions in the mind of the individual, like many in his *milieu*, de Tracey was especially interested in theorising the foundational elements of political man. For him the 'science of ideas' was part of zoology. Rather than a historical exercise, then, it was an undertaking to understand man's *natural* (and hence atemporal) faculties. As de Tracy put it in *Élémens d'Idéologie*, the study of the human mind was essential because, 'our understanding of an animal is incomplete if we do not know its intellectual faculties'.[18] The investigation of ideas and sensations, he thought, preceded all subsequent epistemological endeavours. As Emmet Kennedy described it, for de Tracy, 'the science of ideas was genealogically the first science; all of the others would spring from "ideology" in the fashion of biological encasement (*emboîtement*) or preformation'.[19]

[16] See Destutt de Tracy, Antoine Louis Claude, comte, *Élémens d'Idéologie* 4 vols. (Paris: Courcier, 1804-1815). One aspect worth pointing out is that his discussion of the ambiguity of conceptual meaning is underappreciated among ideology scholars. In relation to an underappreciated connection to the linguistic turn, see Volume II, which discusses the semantic representation and dissemination of ideas. Also, and related to this focus, for an initial foray into the relevance of Condillac's sensationalism to the semantics of political thinking, see Hans Aarsleff, *From Locke to Saussure: Essays on the Study of Language and Intellectual History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1982).

[17] On the origination of ideology, one prominent example is Teun A van Dijk's discussion of the formation of 'group ideologies' in his, *Ideology: a multidisciplinary approach* (London: Sage Publications, 1998), esp. parts I & II.

[18] Quoted in John Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in and Era of Mass Communication* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 30. For original, see *Destutt de Tracy*, Élémens d'Idéologie, vol. 1 (Paris: Courcier, 1803); repr. Librairie Philosophique J. Wrin, 1970), xiii.

[19] Emmet Kennedy, '"Ideology" from Destutt de Tracy to Marx', in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 40:3 (1979), 355. Kennedy remarks on a correspondence between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, where Adams wrote: '"3 vols. of Ideology" Pray explain to me this Neological title! What does it mean? When Bonaparte used it, I was delighted with it, upon the Common Principle of delight in every thing we cannot understand. Does it mean Idiotism? The science of Non compos Menticism? The Science of Lunacy? The theory of Delirium? Or does it mean the Science of Love? Of Amour propre? Or the Elements of Vanity?' [Adams to Jefferson, Dec. 16, 1816 in Lester J. Cappon ed., *The Adams- Jefferson Letters*, 2 vols. (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1959), II, 500-01.] Jefferson responded: 'Tracy comprehends, under the word "Ideology" all the subjects which the French term *Morale* as the correlative to *Physique*. His work on Logic, government, political economy, morality, he considers as making up the circle of ideological subjects.' [Cappon, 'Jefferson to Adams', Jan. 11, 1817]. Quoted in Kennedy, '"Ideology" from Destutt De Tracy to Marx"', 361-362.

Still, its intellectual merits notwithstanding, de Tracy undoubtedly undertook this enquiry with normative purpose. A better understanding of man's needs and desires was something essential, he thought, for devising an appropriate form of political order, even if he himself did not outline this order in great detail. Nonetheless, as an intellectual pursuit this was for him a matter of utmost urgency. Reeling from the mayhem of the Terror, during which he was imprisoned, de Tracy operated among a group of French intellectuals tasked in 1795 with running the new *Institut de France* (he joined in 1796), with the aim, if at times unspoken, to preserve the Enlightenment study of ideas in an age of upheaval. In the spirit of the age, de Tracy's initiative was in many ways at the vanguard of the rise of positivism in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, even if the likes of Auguste de Comte were often critical of him.[20]

These were ideas, sentiments and a project that soon led de Tracy into trouble, along with many of his colleagues.[21] Unnerved by the preference for republicanism among the *savants* at the *Institut*,[22] Napoléon, after initially relishing his association with and the initial support he received from its intellectual denizens, soon came to deride ideology and its practitioners, whom he labelled as 'idéologues', as too detached from day-to-day politics, and more significantly, as a source of ideas potentially destabilising to his power.[23] 'Cannons killed feudalism. Ink will kill modern society', he once remarked.[24] Upon returning to Paris following the disastrous 1812 invasion of Russia, amid the fallout of the second Malet

[20] For instance, Auguste Comte thought that the development of the human mind depended on certain natural laws—an argument that would also influence J. S. Mill, as discussed later in this work. See, Harriet Martineau ed. and trans., *The positive philosophy of Auguste Comte* (New York: AMS Press, 1974). Comte also criticized de Tracy, rather unfairly, for not going beyond 'metaphysical aberration'. [Auguste Comte, *Cours de philosophic positive* 6 vols. (Paris, 1830-42), III (1838), 776-778.] Quoted in Kennedy, '"Ideology" from Destutt De Tracy to Marx', 365.

[21] De Tracy was implicated with the first Malet conspiracy in 1808, though the '*idéologues*' had nothing to do with the second attempt. See Kennedy, '"Ideology" from Destutt De Tracy to Marx"', 359-360.

[22] Emmet Kennedy lists the most important politically: 'Members of the Class of Moral and Political Sciences included the abbe Gregoire, Talleyrand, the Director La Revelliere-Lepeaux, the regicide Daunou, Cambaceres, Merlin de Douai, Dupont de Nemours, Sieyes, and Roederer', in Kennedy, '"Ideology" from Destutt De Tracy to Marx"', 354, ft. 9.

[23] George Lichtheim, *The Concept of Ideology and Other Essays* (New York: Random House, 1967), 5.

[24] Napoléon, *Pensées* (Paris, 1913), 43. Quoted in George Lichtheim, 'The Concept of Ideology', in *History and Theory* 4:2 (1965), 165, ft. 4.

conspiracy, he gave a speech placing blame for France's plight squarely at the feet of the so-called idéologues:

> We must lay the blame for the ills that our fair France has suffered on ideology, that shadowy metaphysics which subtly searches for first causes on which to base the legislation of peoples, rather than making use of laws known to the human heart and of the lessons of history. These errors must inevitably and did in fact lead to the rule of bloodthirsty men…When someone is summoned to revitalize a state, he must follow exactly the opposite principles.[25]

From this point onwards the concept of ideology became something pejorative, and also explicitly political. Or in other words, it was politicised – set firmly, if not somewhat unfairly, in opposition to material and practical considerations. The early conceptual history of ideology is thus an ironic one: a term designating a new science of the human nature soon came to represent a set of metaphysical and idealist considerations detached from reality. With its reputation tarnished, de Tracy's broad scientific project, at least as something associated with the concept 'ideology', fell by the wayside, his work destined for obscurity among ideology scholars had it not been for the term he coined. Students of ideology still feel compelled to mention de Tracy for this very reason. Most quickly move on.[26] But simply ticking this etymological box fails to sufficiently appreciate the connection between de Tracey's work and the study of political thinking – and its relation to ever-relevant issues like emotion, judgement, memory, among many others.

Despite its richness I will only pick up on one temporal element of his ambitious and underappreciated endeavour. This has to do with appraising the 'zoological' concern of the *Élémens d'Idéologie* and its effort to identify natural—and therefore *consistent*—elements of human behaviour. If we look at this aspect in isolation we see that one of ideology's first entrances into considerations of temporality was to claim that many features of political man

[25] Napoléon 1st, 'Réponse à l'addresse du Conseil d'État', quoted in Emmet Kennedy, *A Philosophe in the Age of Revolution: Destutt de Tracy and the origins of ideology* (Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia for promoting useful knowledge) (American Philosophical Society, 1980), 81; and quoted in Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture*, 31.

[26] For instance, *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies* only mentions his name four times, and each only in the context of the word's germination. See Michael Freeden, Lyman Tower Sargent and Marc Stears eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

remained constant and ahistorical, even if the resultant ideas did not. Put more fully, de Tracy's practice of ideology rested on a belief that the possibility for harmonious co-existence depended on first coming to understand, in a systematic way, the predictable and ahistorical characteristics of humanity.

As such, his legacy is still with us. While de Tracy's scientific project is long gone, naturalist and behaviouralist undertakings, if not strictly sensationalist in their approach, continue to rely on discovering human fundamentals in their respective efforts to explain or even solve the persistent problems that inhabit the complexities and contingency of geopolitics.[27] A look through the syllabi of any university politics department will show that quasi-scientific approaches continue to offer a steady conveyor belt of normative prescriptions, many of them basing their theories on underlying claims and assumptions – e.g. we are biologically wired to form social groups, ostracise others, etc.[28] And from these understandings of human behaviour they advance their solutions built around theories of self-preservation, utility maximisation, resisting or embracing one's wills to power or innate desire for the good life, to name only a few of the most popular.

Without wishing to violently break with chronological integrity it is worth pointing out a few recent examples of this that will be more familiar to contemporary political theorists. For instance, under the influence of logical positivism's arrival on their shores, post-war American social science divisions soon founded well-financed studies of the 'science of behaviouralism' that aimed to develop a 'science of politics modelled after the methodological assumptions of the natural sciences', as David Easton, one of the main cheerleaders of the field put it.[29] In this they continued the aim of de Tracy's ideology

[27] The most popular is perhaps Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs and Steel: A short history of everybody for the last 13,00 years* (London: Vintage, 1998).
[28] See for instance, Michele Gelfand, Garriy Shteynberg, Tiane Lee, et al. 'The cultural contagion of Conflict', in *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 367:1589 (2012).
[29] David Easton, 'Introduction: The current meaning of "behavioralism" in political science' in *The Limits of Behavioralism in Political Science*, J.C. Charlesworth ed. (Philadelphia: The American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1962), 17.

project, though eschewed naming their field as such. There are also connections here with elements of the 'end of ideology' movement that emerged in the 1950s,[30] which pushed for a de-theorised and anti-historical approach to politics, endorsing the rising popularity of what Mostafa Rejai descried as the aim for 'scientific thought and professionalism' in politics.[31] In the wake of the Second World War and in response to Fascism and Communism, these theorists—and inhabitants of the left and right—eschewed 'total ideology' or any theoretical call for revolution or radical social chance, preferring pragmatic and incremental reforms instead – ideas similar in many respects to Karl Popper's notion of 'piecemeal social engineering'.[32] But like de Tracy, the latest turn to science also had normative purpose. Even with Bolshevism on the wane and liberal democracy ascendant, they thought science and pragmatic politics must not only constantly hold back against 'ideological' impulses but also engage in political debate. 'The democratic class struggle will continue', wrote Seymour Lipset in *Political Man*, a popular end of ideology text, 'but it will be a fight without ideologies, without red flags, without May Day parades'.[33] A mid-century 'age of analysis' could now occur after the 'exhaustion of political ideas', as Robert Lane wrote, given that the 'transformation of broadly conceived political ideas into social action is no longer the centre of an existing struggle'.[34]

The rise of scientific behaviouralism is often seen to be at the expense of political theory. This led to an almost immediate professional pushback, sparked by theorists like Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin and Sheldon Wolin, even given their own anti-idealist sentiments.[35] But in and around the same time, elements of political theory were taking on a quasi-

[30] See Chaim I. Waxman ed., *The End of Ideology Debate* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968).
[31] Mostafa Rejai, *Decline of Ideology?* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1971), 19.
[32] See Karl Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957).
[33] Seymour M Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Anchor Books, 1963), 408.
[34] Robert Lane, *Political Man* (New York: Free Press, 1972), 15. And for another example of his behaviouralist approach, see Robert Lane, 'Patterns of Political Belief', in Jeanne Knutson ed., *The Handbook of Political Psychology* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974).
[35] For a useful survey on behaviouralism in political science, see John Gunnell, *Imagining the American Polity: Political Science and the Discourse of Political Science* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004).

behaviouralist turn. Strands of contemporary political philosophy became replete with uses of abstract general models to arrive at transcendent, often neo-Kantian, ethical formulations readymade for real-world application, irrespective of context and contingency, even though these theories often rested on underlying intuitions and assumptions about human basic interests and desires.[36] There are elements of de Tracy here too. While Weber's ideal type of instrumental rationality is a more temporally sensitive attempt to help understand the choice complexity faced by political agents in time and space,[37] the temptation among many contemporary political philosophers was to place one's faith in the motivational homogeneity underlying their use of rational choice theory in particular,[38] while more or less ignoring the wider rational choice field's growing sensitivity to issues of context, sequence and path dependency.[39] Indeed, this atemporal use of rational choice is still common practice among theorists nowadays, especially in analytic political philosophy circles, proving useful it seems for ignoring or providing resiliency against the stubborn uncertainties and contingencies posed by politics.[40] Rawls and his followers' continued reference to situations behind a 'veil of ignorance' is the most famous, and enduring;[41] though again, it too ultimately rests on

[36] For an extreme example of this detemporalisation, see Daniel McDermott, 'Analytic Political Theory', in David Leopold and Marc Sears eds., *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 11-28.

[37] See Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, Hans Gerth and C- Wright Mills eds. and trans. (Berkley: University of California Press, 1968).

[38] On criticisms that rational choice does not satisfactorily take into account the contingencies and complexities of politics, see Kristen Renwick Monroe ed., *The Economic Approach to Politics: A Re-examination of the Theory of Rational Action* (New York: Scott-Foresman/Harper and Row-Collins, 1991); Jane J. Mansbridge ed., *Beyond Self-Interest* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); and Karen Schweers Cook and Margaret Levi, eds., *The Limits of Rationality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

[39] Indeed this is not to suggest that all of rational choice theory ignores the importance of events, temporality and structure. For instance, on possible combinations of rational choice theory and the use of narrative, see Edgar Kiser, 'The Revival of Narrative in Historical Sociology: What Rational Choice Theory can Contribute', in *Politics and Society* 24:3 (1996), 249-271.

[40] See Philip Pettit, 'Resilience as the Explanandum of Social Theory', in Ian Shapiro and Sonu Bedi eds., *Political Contingency: Studying the Unexpected, the Accidental, and the Unforeseen* (New York: NYU Press, 2007), 84.

[41] In *Theory of Justice*, Rawls write that, 'if a knowledge of particulars is allowed, then the outcome is biased by arbitrary contingencies …If the original position is to yield agreements that are just, the parties must be fairly situated and treated equally as moral persons. The arbitrariness of the world must be corrected for by adjusting the circumstances of the initial contract situation'. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 141.

arguments, this time intuitional not empirical, about a human's basic needs and desires.[42]

We notice that all of these theories and formulations are, I suggest, continuations in a tradition that places normative purpose in scientific and quasi-scientific predictive enterprises, which are considered as *alternatives* to ideology. When did this opposition start? For political purposes it was Napoléon who initiated the practice of ridiculing ideology, but it was not until decades later, specifically in the writings of Marx and Engels, that a pejorative use of the concept was incorporated into a theoretical framework and political agenda. In their use of the concept, Marx and Engels still maintained its negative connotation – though this time infused with temporal and historical meaning.

From de Tracy to Marx

Following that path of Auguste de Comte and Ludwig Feuerbach, Marx's political project continued to characterise the science of ideology as a purely metaphysical enterprise, placing it in the same category as the Hegelian philosophy to which he was primarily responding. In *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels wrote that,

> No specific difference distinguishes German idealism from the ideology of all other peoples. The latter ideology also considers the world as governed by ideas, that ideas and concepts are determining principles, that certain ideas constitute the mystery of the world accessible to philosophers.[43]

Marx, of course, had little time for this, having already written in his doctoral dissertation that, 'it is not ideology or vaingloriousness which we need for our life, but to live without confusion'.[44] Spurning the complex metaphysics of idealism, Marx and Engels embarked on developing an alternative form of 'science' to offer the truth, this time a science of *history*, by replacing the likes of idealism, rationalist or essentialist arguments with a theory of historical

[42] See M. B. E. Smith, 'Rawls and Intuitionism', in *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Supplementary Volume III (1977), 163-178.
[43] Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, The German Ideology, quoted in Kennedy, '"Ideology" from Destutt De Tracy to Marx"', 366. Original quote from Marx and Engels, Werke vol. 3 (Berlin, 41 vols., 1960-1968), 14. It is worth noting that this was a passage later crossed out by Marx and Engels, but it is widely cited as an expression of Marx's view. See John Torrance, Karl Marx's *Theory of Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 207.
[44] Maximilien Rubel, *Marx, Life and Works* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1980), 4.

materialism—and its reading of historical time as a process—in order to arrive at a sociology of ideas that reversed the relationship between consciousness and material conditions.[45] 'We know only a single science, the science of history,' they wrote in an early draft of *The German Ideology*.[46] What differentiated their 'science' from 'ideology' was the evidence, not ideological obfuscation, of man's ever-changing materialist conditions. But rather than banishing Hegel entirely, their science of history was an attempt to incorporate elements of his idealism into an alternative image of the historical world, one structured around a materialist dialectic in order to square a sense of determinism on one hand with a claim over the potential for the human liberation on the other.[47] Describing his 'bottom up' approach,[48] Marx wrote in *A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy* that, 'the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness'.[49]

Still, despite his materialist bent, Marx's move away from de Tracy's 'zoological' approach is more complicated than often portrayed by ideology theorists, especially in

[45] One issue, though is that the outline of a specific 'materialist conception of history', a phrase they never use, is not fully explained in *The German Ideology*. On this see Massimiliano Tomba, *Marx's Temporalities*, Peter D. Thomas and Sara R. Farris, trans. (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2013), vii. It is important to note that I am of course aware of, though don't feel the need to engage in, the decades old discussions over questions about the consistency of Marx's thinking—especially in the relation between his early and later works—and debates as to whether we should ever really consider Marx's approach to be a scientific system of analysis. My aim here is far narrower: to simply make the point that Marx and Engels *thought* of their work as a science, in response to earlier endeavours, and to pick up on select temporal themes in his somewhat inconsistent and disjointed 'theory' of ideology. For a fuller account, see Michael Rosen, *On Voluntary Servitude: False Consciousness and the Theory if Ideology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996); and J. Larrain, *Marxism and Ideology* (London: 1983). For a shorter summation, see Jan Rehmann, 'Ideology Theory', in *Historical Materialism* 15, 2007), esp. 212-214; and David Leopold, 'Marxism and Ideology: From Marx to Althusser', in Michael Freeden et al. eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, 20-26.

[46] On the different versions of this section, see Terrell Carver and Daniel Blank, *Marx and Engels's "German ideology" manuscripts: presentation and analysis of the "Feuerbach chapter"* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[47] On Marx's approach to history as process, see for instance, Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 285-287.

[48] See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology,* C. J. Arthur ed. (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1970), 39-52.

[49] Marx, 'Preface' of *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* in David McLellan, *Karl Marx: Selected Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 76.

relation to his quasi-behaviouralist understanding of man's 'species-being' (*Gattungswesen*), where he identified the centrality of labour and production to man's 'active species-life'.[50] Marx wrote little about de Tracy,[51] but despite their differences on the nature and role of ideas, both aimed to overthrow metaphysics with the use scientific principles that they thought could subsequently explain human activity in all its diversity. In other words, they both employed atemporal nomothetic propositions to explain the complexity of man as a social being.[52]

But from there they diverge. The difference between the two was in the position of mind in relation to activity and in Marx's prioritisation of explaining the essence of man in relation to history. In the *Manuscripts* Marx wrote that man, 'produces himself not only intellectually, as in consciousness but also actively in a real sense and sees himself in a world he made'.[53] For Marx it was labour, not thought, that is the essence (*Wesen*) of man (*contra* Hegel, Feuerbach, Steiner et al.). Yet he did so with an accompanying theory of an almost quasi-Aristotelian conception of the good, placing great importance in the possibility for man to realise his full potential through *praxis*.[54] As Marx wrote in the *Manuscripts*,

> For labour, *life activity*, and *productive life* appear to man at first only as a *means* to satisfy a need, the need to maintain physical existence. Productive life, however, is species-life. It is life begetting life. In the mode of life activity lies the entire character of a species, its species-character; and free conscious activity is the species-character of man. Life itself appears only as a *means of life*.[55]

In light of this, to paraphrase Thomas Wartenberg's commentary, for Marx, it is within the realm of labour, as 'free, conscious activity', that human beings realise the conditions of their

[50] On the connection between Marx's 'science' and his theory of 'species-being', see Thomas E. Wartenburg, '"Species-Being" and "Human Nature" in Marx', *Human Studies* 5:2 (1982), 77-95.
[51] Marx's only reference is De Tracy's essay, *Traité d'économie politique*. In *Das Kapital* (Book II, Sec. III, Chp. 20) Marx called him 'to a certain point a light among the vulgar economists'. Quoted in Kennedy, '"Ideology" from Destutt De Tracy to Marx"', 367.
[52] For a discussion of Marx's search for general scientific principles, see Raymond Firth, 'The Social Anthropologist? Social Anthropology and Marxist Views on Society', in Maurice Bloch, *Marxist Analysis and Social Anthropology* (London and New York: Tavistock Publications, 1984), 29-61, esp. 29-31.
[53] Marx, 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts (1844), in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, Lawrence H. Simon ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company Inc., 1994), 64.
[54] On this see Agamben's short essay, 'Time and History', in Giorgio Agamben, *Infancy and History: The Determination of Experience*, Liz Heron trans. (London: Verso, 1993), esp. 99-100.
[55]Marx, 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts', 63.

physical existence (i.e. their species-being).[56] There is thus a temporal dimension on the level of society and also on that of the individual.

If we consider this in terms of ideology and time in the context of articulation and disarticulation from history, Marx's project differentiates him from, though in other ways links him with elements of de Tracy's sensationalist and ahistorical understandings of the human species.[57] However, in moving from reading the *Manuscripts* to the *German Ideology* there emerges a question as to what degree, if at all, Marx wanted to subscribe to any sort of atemporal sense of human nature or essence. Is one's species-being an atemporal characteristic? Or is 'free, conscious activity' something wholly dependent on socio-historical circumstances? The dominant sociological bent of Marx strongly points to the latter.[58] But more than this, rather than being dependent on circumstances, for Marx, man's species-being speaks to his capacity to *shape* history, a capacity to which most remain alienated, though only temporarily.[59] The realisation of 'free, conscious activity' marks the turning point. As Étienne Balibar explains, in Marx, 'there is never any effective freedom which is not also a material transformation, which is not registered historically in *exteriority*. But nor is there any work which is not a transformation of self, as though human beings could change their conditions of existence whilst maintaining an invariant "essence"' [His emphasis].[60]

As for ideas, meanwhile—and by extension, ideas as ideology—they are, again, a reflection of man's historical existence. Hence Marx and Engels' choice to label the left-

[56] Wartenberg, 'Species Being and Human nature in Marx', 84.
[57] See Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, George Eliot trans., (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), 3. I take much of this discussion of labour, freedom and materialism from Wartenberg, 'Species Being in Marx', 83-87.
[58] In his *Theses on Feuerbach* he makes a clean break with Feuerbach's essentialism. 'Feuerbach resolves the religions essence into the human essence. But the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations. Feuerbach, who does not enter upon a criticism of this real essence…does not see that the "religious sentiment" is itself a social product, and that the abstract individual whom he analyses belongs to a particular form of society'. Quoted in Torrance, *Karl Marx's Theory of Ideas*, 37.
[59] See Agamben, 'Time and History', 99.
[60] Étienne Balibar, *The Philosophy of Marx*, Chris Turner trans. (London and New York: Verso, 1995), 40.

Hegelian's enterprise as a 'German ideology', arguing that their philosophy was not a first-mover, but a reflection on the impoverished conditions in Germany at the time. This is the main thrust of the famous metaphor of the *camera obscura*.[61] Ideas do not make history; history makes ideas, and by extension 'their expression in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc.'.[62] As they say only a few lines further on in *The German Ideology*, 'we set out from real, *active* men [my emphasis], and on the basis of their real life process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process'.[63]

But it is important to stress that this does not mean that all ideas are ideological. In Marx's use of the concept, ideology constitutes a special *category* of ideas, even if all ideas—including scientific facts—can be ideologised by the bourgeoisie. What are the hallmarks of the Marxian ideology concept? If we survey his various references to and uses of the concept we can piece together some core attributes, though whether certain features are ineliminable (or at all convincing) is a matter for another essay. Still, we can quickly run through some key attributes useful for our purposes. First, as Jorge Larrain among many others argues, if not all casual readers: in Marx's thinking ideology is always a *distortion* of thought that originates from, and obscures, social contradictions.[64] Why this must always be the case, and why ideological distortions are always in the interest of the dominating class, a second feature, is something Marx never satisfactorily explains, in my opinion.[65] Nevertheless in *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels are explicit about this. 'The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas', they wrote in regard to the second feature; 'i.e. the class which

[61] 'Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process. If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura*, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects the retina does from their physical life-process'. Marx and Engels, *German Ideology*, 47.
[62] Ibid., 47.
[63] Ibid.
[64] See Larrain, *Marxism and Ideology*, Chapter 1.
[65] Jon Elster makes a similar point. See John Elster, *Making Sense of Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 473. The same reference is used in Leopold, 'Marxism and Ideology', 26.

is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time the ruling *intellectual force*'.[66] Meanwhile, third, ideology is for them always presented as a prescriptive theory. To borrow John Torrance's words, for Marx, ideology's, 'prescriptions result from illusions engendered by social barriers to knowledge…[they are] socially generated illusions about the nature of human reality'.[67] Importantly, we must remember that this means it is possible to have a prescriptive theory that is not ideological (Marx's own 'scientific' theory being one of them), and it is also possible to propose a theory—scientific, metaphysical or otherwise—that is not prescriptive. But to disagree with Torrance slightly here, it is important to note that prescription is not necessarily about '*What is to be done?*'. Indeed, in Marx, ideology is most often presented as a mechanism for explaining or justifying a situation, not necessarily prescribing something to do about it. Either way, fourth and last, ideology in this reading is always on the level of theory, and in all instances (not just in idealist philosophy), an appeal to a 'heaven of ideas', as Torrance described it – the eternal or Divine, social myths, scientific laws and so forth.[68]

This is by no means an authoritative list of core attributes. The main issue here, for my purposes, is that by taking these fuzzy characteristics together, problems notwithstanding, we see that in terms of history Marxian ideology is understood as something historically *derived*; yet at the same time it is *not* history forming – more 'in time' than 'of time', to use our categories. This is significant. For it means that ideologies as such are not drawn-up by the dominant class out of thin air, but are discursive derivations of existing material relations about which ideologies attempt to explain, justify or paper over. As such, history produces ideology; but in turn, ideologies are an attempt to disguise history and its capacity for change. As Claude Lefort later described it, for Marx, 'the historical is effaced in the atemporality of

[66] Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 64.
[67] Torrance, *Marx's Theory of Ideas*, 190-191. My emphasis.
[68] Ibid., 209-213.

essence'.[69] In summarising his thinking here, Aletta Norval writes that 'Lefort argues that the organization of ideology is such that it suppresses any sign which could destroy the sense of certainty concerning the nature of the social… [the dominating class] attain their certainty through attempting to cover over any sign of historical creativity'.[70] The eventual problem for ideologists, however, according to Marx and Engel's account, is that the era of bourgeois capitalism exposes a new fragility to this de-historicising effort. It is an epoch beset by volatility and change. In a famous passage, Marx and Engels wrote in *The Communist Manifesto*:

> Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind.[71]

The culmination of the destabilising process is, of course, the emergence of the proletariat as the dominant class, precipitating a final phase where both class and history supposedly come to an end. The erosion of ideology also marks the moment when the proletariat comes to understand its own historicality, to use Heidegger's term.[72] This is not to say that, along Hegelian lines, it is purely historical consciousness that sets the proletariat free; but rather, it is his realisation of his exploitation and newfound ability to control his own destiny, to shape the present and future through his own actions.[73] For Marx, then, to return to our above discussion of freedom, man is free when he consciously determines his own life,

[69] Claude Lefort, *The Political Forms of Modern Society: Bureaucracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism* John B. Thompson ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1986), 190-191. For a fuller look at his views on ideology, see his 'Outline of the Genesis of Ideologies in Modern Societies' in the same work.
[70]Norval, Aletta J. 'The Things We Do with Words', in *British Journal of Political Science*, 30:2 (2000), 326.
[71] Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, in Simon, *Selected Writings*, 161-162.
[72] On the very complicated theoretical issue of historicity, historicality and conceptions historical time in Marx in relation to Heidegger, see George Tomlinson, *Marx and the Concept of Historical Time* (ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 2015). As Tomlinson argues, 'there is no readily identifiable concept of historical time in [the writing of] Marx', requiring scholars to reconstruct Marx's materialist conception of history into an identifiable theory of historical time. One can infer from Marx's historical materialism, Tomlinson argues, an underlying theory of temporality; or put differently, a theorisation of the historical experience of historicity.
[73] See J. J. Clarke, '"The End of History": A Reappraisal of Marx's Views of Alienation and Human Emancipation', in *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 4:3 (1971), 367-380.

when ‘he is his own master’ and ‘owes his existence to himself’, as he put it in the *Manuscripts*.[74] The absence of ideology is central to this. It is not, therefore, solely a matter of economic alienation.[75] Rather there is in the sense of historical awareness, an existential realisation brought about by the eventual emergence from the fog of ideology. The lifting of ideology marked the historical point from which the proletariat comes to understand history as one that ‘consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms at different epochs’, as Marx and Engels argued in the *Manifesto*.

But does this really mean the end of history in the Hegelian sense? One could interpret Marx another way to say that from here on he simply thinks that it is different. History does not disappear, as is often claimed by scholars when reading him.[76] Rather I suggest we see Marx as referring to an end of *determinist* history, and consequently a chance for society and the people that comprise it to thereafter make their own. To take one cautious step further: history and time is no longer in terms of the development of society, which is resolved, but a shifting understanding of time centred on the capacity for human flourishing. The *Manifesto* reads, ‘in place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and classes antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all’.[77]

At this point let me summarise Marx’s temporalisation of the ideology concept as presented so far. While his sociology still concerns elements of man’s traits as a species, in eschewing de Tracy’s science of ideology as ‘idealist’, Marx historicises the concept of ideology as a product of material conditions, whilst at the same time describing the function of ideology as an artifice for obscuring history. In other words, the concept of ideology is temporalised, but in practice it acts as a ‘detemporalising’ force.

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[74] Quoted in Clark, ‘A Reappraisal of Marx’, 375.
[75] See, for instance, Robert Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge, 1964).
[76] See, for instance, Howard Williams, ‘The End of History in Hegel and Marx’, in *The European Legacy* 2:3 (1997), 562.
[77] Marx and Engels, ‘Communist Manifesto’, in Simon, *Selected Writings,* 176.

To this we must add one exception, however. In Marx's writings there is what John Thompson calls a 'latent conception' of ideology, most prominent in his historical writings, especially the *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. For Thompson this conception of ideology in Marx is 'latent' because Marx does not use the concept of ideology in this context – speaking instead of 'illusions', 'fixed ideas', or 'spirits' and 'ghosts' that influence people's conduct. Nevertheless, contrary to the simpler formalisation of history according to class structure seen above, in this instance at least, Marx offers an account of how historical actors must grapple with the complexity of their present *vis-à-vis* the past and future. All of a sudden the lower classes are aware of the contestability of the meaning of the present, especially in its relation to the past.[78] In the *Brumaire*, Marx wrote that,

> Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please in circumstances that they choose for themselves; rather they make it in present circumstances, given and inherited. Tradition from all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they appear to be revolutionising themselves and their circumstances, in creating something unprecedented, in just such epochs of revolutionary crisis, that is when they nervously summon up the spirits of the past, borrowing from their names, marching orders, uniforms, in order to enact new scenes in world history.[79]

Close readers will point out that the histories here are in fact different. Marx's is scientific, whereas, in this case, history consists of a past laden with tradition and myth that holds sway over the present. But nonetheless, it still adds a new dynamic to the relationship between ideology and history in Marx's thinking. Not only is a class all of a sudden aware of history and its complexity, but their historical consciousness proves to be as debilitating here as it is liberating in the narrative above. It speaks of the limitations put upon a present time by the past.[80] Marx's description here of the 'weight of the past' is not far off from notions of 'path

[78] Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture*, 40-44.
[79] Marx, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', in *Later Political Writings*, 32.
[80] Michael Freeden also offers a brief analysis of this theme in Marx. See Freeden, *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 74-75.

dependency' familiar to political scientists interested in issues of time.[81] Only in this case it is ideas, not structures or institutions, where the past holds sway over the present.

Given the significance of this exception, regardless of whether making history has to be debilitating (it certainly need not), ideology theorists should not be hesitant about ascribing the ideology label here, especially since the contestability of multiple possible times is emblematic of later Marx-influenced discussions of 'historical imaginaries', or what Cornelius Castoriadis would call, more broadly, the 'social imaginary' (*l'imaginaire social*). In socialisation there are, Castoriadis wrote, 'different modes of the actual institution of social-historical time by different societies…different modalities according to which different societies represent and make their incessant self-alteration – even if, in the extreme case, they deny it or, rather, attempt to deny it'.[82] Man is historical, but he also can make his own history, and in Marx's wake later authors would not only question the historicity of ideology itself, but struggle to harmonise determinism on one hand and the revolutionary activity of consciously breaking with a sense of determinative time on the other. For instance, Antonio Gramsci distinguished between historically organic time-bound ideologies that as a 'historic bloc' link structure and superstructure for the purposes of organising human masses—'create[ing] the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc.'—and what he calls 'arbitrary, or rationalistic, or "willed"' ideologies that while conceived in historical time are trying to rupture it.[83] Or, combining aspects of Gramsci's discussion of a plurality of superstructures and Lacanian psychoanalysis, for Louis Althusser, ideology is not derived from history, but is non-historical or *omni-historical*, 'immutable in

[81] On this see, Paul Pierson, *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), 17-53.
[82] Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, Kathleen Blamey trans. (Polity Press: Cambridge, 1987), 185. On the contribution of Castoriadis and Lefort to the study of ideologies, see John Thompson, 'Ideology and the Social Imaginary', in his *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984), 16-42.
[83] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Prison Notebooks* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), 704.

form throughout the extent of history'.[84] Unlike Marx, he thought ideology was part of the human condition, not a historical derivation. Individual ideologies, however, *are* bound in historical time, found within institutional material structures, what he calls 'Ideological State Apparatuses', that articulate what he explains as the imaginary relationships that men represent to themselves as 'subjects'. The temporality of ideologies is in this sense a consciousness of self-deception, reimagining present-past narratives of how a society arrives to exist as it does – a myth or devised collective memory for imagined communities, to borrow Benedict Anderson's phrase.[85]

But to sum up with Marx before moving on, in all these cases, the on-going Marxian influence, I want to suggest, is that in placing political thinking (ideological or otherwise) in relation to history, it allows for the possibility of political constructions of history and therefore a sense of historical time. But still, we see that the 'latent conception'—the *of* time—is the exception in Marx. In the main, ideology is a feature of underlying economic relations, and formulated by and in the interest of the dominant class.[86] I want to linger a bit longer on this economic dimension because while I cannot devote sufficient space to discussing it, it is important to point out that the relation between ideology and history forms the basis for a second type of 'time politics' in Marx – that of the capitalist commodification of time, a core feature to his labour theory of value which he discusses in the first volume of *Capital* and in the *Grundrisse*.[87] Put succinctly, in the thinking of the worker at least, capitalist society replaces historical time with commoditised time. In the *Poverty of Philosophy* he wrote that,

> Through the subordination of humanity to the machine the situation arises in which men [and women] are effaced by their labour; in which the pendulum of the clock has

[84] Louis Althusser, 'Ideological State Apparatuses', in Slavoj Žižek ed. *Mapping Ideology* (London: Verso, 2012), 120-132.
[85] See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Revised edition. (London: Verso, 2006).
[86] See Norman Geras, *Literature of Revolution: Essays on Marxism* (London: Verso Books, 1996), 63-84.
[87] See Peter Osborne, 'Marx and the philosophy of time', in *Radical Philosophy* 147 (January/February 2008), 15-22.

> become as accurate a measure of the relative activity of two workers as it is of the speed of two locomotives. Therefore, we should not say that one man's hour is worth another man's hour, but rather that one man during one hour is worth as much as another man during an hour. Time is everything, man is nothing; he is at the most the incarnation of time. Quality no longer matters. Quantity alone decides everything: hour for hour, day for day.[88]

This would have a profound influence on later writers on the politics of 'clock time' or what is otherwise known in social theory as 'industrial time'.[89] The transition from work in relation to natural time (the seasons etc.) to the time regimes of industrial capitalism is a rich and complicated one.[90] Governments can impose restrictions on the number of working hours employers can demand, and set minimum or living wages, but they can do little to push back against the pressure to squeeze more out of each hour.[91] Time is money, as Benjamin Franklin famously said, an attitude Weber would later transform into his own social theory.[92] This adds the element of speed to the politics of time, something I pick up on in chapter four. From the workplace to political activity, time is often of the essence.[93] In this Marx is prescient, but whether quantitative understandings of time are ultimately linked to his theory of historical time remains debatable.

Mannheim's pluralist turn

What is less debatable is the influence of Marx on subsequent engagement with the ideology concept. Indeed, to varying degrees, almost all uses and considerations on the meaning of ideology post-Marx are influenced by or are a direct or indirect response to his use of the concept. I suggest we can arrange these respondents into four main groups, each containing

[88] Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Volume 6, 1845–1848 (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1976), 127.
[89] For a summary, See Barbara Adam, *Time and Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 104-126; Anthony Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism: Power, Property and the State* (London: Macmillan, 1981), 118-135; David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 99-124; and Tim Ingold, 'Work, Time and Industry', in *Time and Society* 4:1 (1995), 5-28.
[90] One of the best accounts of this is E. P. Thompson's, 'Work, Discipline and Industrial Capitalism', in *Past and Present* 38 (1967), 56-97.
[91] See Barbara Adam, *Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).
[92] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Talcott Parsons trans. (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).
[93] See Kari Palonen, *The Politics of Limited Times: The Rhetoric of Temporal Judgment in Parliamentary Democracies* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2008).

within them varying levels of engagement with Marx's work. First, there is a 'post-Marxist' tradition found inside and outside the academy that continues to carry on, refine and amend Marx's concept of ideology in the interest of social critique – from Lenin and Lukács to Gramsci and Althusser. Second, there is a 'neutral' interpretation that considers ideology to be a ubiquitous type of political thought, thereby attempting to move away from Marx's characterisation. This is then accompanied by two groups who set themselves in opposition to a Marxian conception of ideology: one being 'end of ideology' sociologists and political scientists who prefer a 'practical' form of politics and the scientific or behavioural study of socio-political man, and the other a group of intellectual antagonists who want to rescue the use of ideas from the clutches of '-isms' (Michael Oakeshott and Hannah Arendt are two examples).

Valuable contributions to a discussion on ideology and time can be found in each of these four groups. But here I want to focus on only one author, the Hungarian sociologist Karl Mannheim, because he engages with previous understandings of ideology to put forth a very different take: suggesting that at any one moment there are multiple ideologies that interact and compete with each other, each with a rival, and in some instances aligning,sense of historical time.

This said, I want to start from the basis that Mannheim had an approach to ideology that in many ways aligned with the positivist efforts of de Tracy and Marx. Like them, Mannheim proposed a scientific attempt for understanding the ideas and passions of individuals, along with exploring the possibility for scientific guidance to political life.[94] Though, like Marx, he diverged away from de Tracy by focusing primarily on the underlying historical and social influences on ideas.[95] Mannheim's project, what he called a 'sociology

[94] Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*: *An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co, 1954), 4.
[95] 'Sociology of Knowledge', in Karl Mannheim, *Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology*, P. Kecskemeti ed. and trans. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953), 182.

of knowledge', was thus a different pursuit from a purely naturalist investigation of human desires and inclinations. By contrast, he felt that human experience, and by extension the scientific attempt to interpret it, always occurs within what he called the 'historical stream', something always moving and changing in unpredictable ways.[96]

In this there are elements of agreement and also stark differences with Marx. Whilst more-or-less overlooking de Tracy's earlier project, both Marx and Mannheim's projects stemmed from a rejection of idealist philosophy, and what Mannheim called the supra-temporality of Enlightenment reason, though in this respect Mannheim's main target was not Hegel, but Kantian epistemology on which he wrote his dissertation from a pluralist, ontological standpoint.[97] Both also thought of ideology as a construct employed to disguise social reality. However Mannheim changed this significantly. He thought, like Marx, that ideologies were images and ideas employed by groups to maintain a present social order, but added to that a category of future oriented 'utopias' (what we would now consider a component of many progressive ideologies, including Marxism), which constituted ideas held by oppressed groups in the hope of changing the existing order. In the tradition of a Marxian reading of ideology, he thought both were unrealities, but utopias at least had the chance of becoming a reality at some point.[98] Furthermore, and again unlike Marx, Mannheim also suggested that there were two distinct conceptions of ideology. A 'particular conception' followed Marx's portrayal of ideology as obscuring and deceptive ideas, though he places their employment, on the level of the individual. To this he added a second, 'total conception' of ideology, which concerned a more comprehensive understanding of a social group's *Weltanschauung* within a particular historical epoch.[99]

[96] Mannheim, 'Historicism', in Ibid., 119.
[97] See Mannheim, 'Structural Analysis of Epistemology', in Ibid., 15-73. Discussed in David Kettler and Colin Loader, 'Temporizing with Time Wars: Karl Mannheim and Problems of Historical Time', in *Time and Society* 13:2/3 (2004), 155-172.
[98] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 115.
[99] Ibid., 49-50.

It is the appreciation of this 'total view' that leads to the possibility of a more dynamic 'sociology of knowledge', and in a sharp turn away from Marx, whereby one comes to see the thought of all historical parties as varied and potentially ideological.[100] Thus, while Mannheim never entirely abandons the Marxist roots to his theory of ideology, he in fact had not only Enlightenment reason in his sights, which he thought improperly eschewed contingency and the complex psychological, emotional and vital impulses that he thought influenced conduct,[101] but also unifying philosophies of history, like Marx's, that he felt ignored the varied cultural and historical influences on intellectual and cognitive standpoints at any given time. As a 'dynamic sociology', the sociology of knowledge attempted to plough a third way for understanding human conduct: to systemise the different meanings social actors assigned to experience in relation to a host of factors—cultural, historical and psychological—that might influence their doing so.

In this, then, I suggest there are not one but two significant points of departure from Marx—the first primarily spatial and the second primarily temporal—relevant to our discussion of Koselleck later in this chapter. The first, spatial departure, has to do with Mannheim's claim that man's intellectual relationship with the world is far more dynamic than Marx's economic focused portrayal, not only in the distinctions between various epochs, but also in the variations within an epoch. The recognition of plurality thus adds a vertical dimension in contrast to Marx's singularised reading of the relation between thought and historical time: when the researcher abandons his narrow critical standpoint, Mannheim argued that sociology in fact reveals that there are layers of simultaneous knowledge systems for explaining the world at any given time. In doing so, Mannheim admonishes Hegelian and Marxian historicism for treating events and the different lives and cultures of historical subjects that might influence a diversity of views as nothing more than 'motifs' of various

[100] *Ibid*., 69. And see Freeden, *Ideology: a Very Short Introduction*, 14.
[101] Ibid., 2.

spheres of life and culture that they thought were organically bound together. Such 'motifs' were treated by them as only 'components and functions of an ultimate basic process which is the real "subject" undergoing the change', Mannheim writes in *Historicism*. In these readings, 'the stream of ideas does not, then, flow and swell in separate channels'.[102] By contrast, Mannheim's dynamic sociology aimed to account for a diversity of worldviews that reflected local culture and institutions, going well beyond the Marxian thesis on the formulistic relationship between material interest, class divisions and intellectual phenomena.[103] Marx and Engels' work therefore exemplified what he called a limited sociology, motivated by their political project to 'unmask' bourgeoisie ideology, which Mannheim thought ignored the greater diversity of commitments formed in the intersection between standpoints or 'styles of thought' and socio-historical conditions. Economic power did not entirely dictate human thinking.[104] Rather, he writes in *Ideology and Utopia* that, 'acting men have, for better or for worse, proceeded to develop a variety of methods for the experiential and intellectual penetration of the world in which they live, which have never been analysed with the same precision as the so-called exact modes of knowing'.[105]

It is in the context of this pluralist argument that we should situate what came to be known as 'Mannheim's Paradox',[106] a term coined much later by Clifford Geertz, and which now represents Mannheim's most familiar contribution to ideology studies.[107] The paradox centred on the often-quoted claim, in response to Marx, that 'the analysis of thought and ideas in terms of ideologies is much too wide in its application and too broad a weapon to become the permanent monopoly of any one party'. As Mannheim rightly said, 'nothing is to prevent the opponents of Marxism availing themselves of the weapon of applying it to

[102] Mannheim, 'Historicism', in *Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology*, 86-87.
[103] Mannheim, 'Sociology of Knowledge', in *Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology*, 183; and *Ideology and Utopia*, 138-139.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid., 1.
[106] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 194.
[107] See, Peter Breiner, 'Karl Mannheim and Political Ideology', in Freeden et al, Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies, 38-55.

Marxism itself'.[108] Contemporary ideology scholars accurately read this as an indictment of any attempt to think of ideas as ideological without conceding that an analyst's own viewpoint also comes from an unavoidable ideological standpoint, something Mannheim thought we must at least try to mitigate. His sociology of knowledge and the 'science of politics' that derived from it were an attempt to do so.

The methodological problem for sociology was that in moving away from seeking any epistemological validation from philosophy, embracing a purely 'open system' as a response to Marx had to then contend with the conundrum that it promoted a relativist view that all thought is simply bound up in 'the concrete position in life of the thinker (*Standortsgebundenheit des Denkers*)'.[109] In other words, the problem was that such a theory endorsed a view of total subjectivity, ignoring what he called the 'relational dimension' between thought and different types of social experience.[110] To amend this, his 'science of politics' was an attempt to theorise not only the influence of diverse experience on ideas and political ideologies, but also to look at the *interaction* and *contestation* going on among different ideological standpoints for the sociological purpose of gaining a better understanding of the present situation as a whole. In *Ideology and Utopia* he writes that,

> It seems inherent in the historical process itself that the narrowness and the limitations which restrict one point of view tend to be corrected by clashing with the opposite points of view. The task of a study of ideology which tries to be free from value-judgments, is to understand the narrowness of each individual point of view and the interplay between these distinctive attitudes in the total social process.[111]

While this attempt at dynamic sociology still clung to a search for totality, it still functions as an important recognition of coexisting and interacting ideology-influenced reactions to happenings in a given historical period. Whether 'true' or not, is not our concern.

This spatial accommodation for diverse worldviews at a particular moment provides

[108] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 67.
[109] Ibid., 70.
[110] Freeden, *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction*, 12-19.
[111] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 72.

for what I suggest is Mannheim's second major departure from Marx, and other predecessors for that matter, in affirming the possibility for the ideological contestation of the meaning and makeup of historical time. At any moment in time society comprised of multiple interacting and competing perspectives that situate the present into a configuration of events that may offer varying emphasis on the past, present and future in relation to political conduct. In *Ideology and Utopia* he writes that the 'reference to history and the study of history or of society are valuable because orientation to them can and must become a determining factor in conduct and in political activity'.[112] In studying this sociologically there emerges no 'true' formulation of the direction of history (you need sociology for that), but instead there are recognisable ideological formulations of historical time that are always changing and reacting to each other, along with the formation of visions of ahistorical utopias and mythological pasts. A distinguishing factor is in how each temporalises the present. In regards to the ideologies of liberalism, socialism and conservatism he writes that,

> Different as these points of view were in method and content, they all understood political activity as proceeding on an historical background, and they all agreed that in our own epoch, it becomes necessary to orient oneself to the total situation in which one happens to be placed, if political aims are to be realised.[113]

To offer just one distinction, he notes that a key difference between conservatism and progressives (liberals and socialists) was the contrast in their respective experience of time. In his essay 'Conservatism', Mannheim writes, albeit rather too sweepingly, that 'the progressive always experiences the present as the beginning of the future, while the conservative regards it simply as the latest stage reached by the past'. The conservative 'picture of historical time takes on something of the quality of an imaginary space', an 'inclination...toward...a resolution of every temporal succession in to a spatial contiguity or

[112]Ibid., 121.
[113] Ibid.

inclosure'.[114] The proletariat on the other hand looked at things in a very different way – focusing on the present in relation to the future, not the past:

> In short, while conservative thought is oriented towards the past surviving in the present, and bourgeois thought, because it the carrier of the present, nourishes itself on new developments, as they transpire from moment to moment, proletarian thought attempts to consider and to further the future within the present, by putting into the foreground those present factors which herald the future structural forms of life.[115]

This said, for him, the historisation and temporalisation of the present was not a part of every ideology. Fascism, in particular, provided the contrast to such temporalising or historicising the present. 'This idea of history as an intelligible scheme disappears in the face of the irrationality of the fascist apotheosis of the deed', he thought. It 'regards every interpretation of history as mere fictive construction destined to disappear before the deed of the moment as it breaks through the temporal pattern of history'.[116] Rather than situating politics in historical time, he thought Fascism simply based its ideology on a myth of national superiority. As Mussolini put it, 'this myth [of the Italian nation] is a faith, a noble enthusiasm. It does not have to be a reality, it is an impulse and a hope, belief, and courage. Our myth is the nation, the great nation which we wish to make into a concrete reality'.[117]

In response to this sentiment, the normative bent of Mannheim's project was to reassert the importance of history on one hand, but rescue it from singularisation on the other. As fascism was an attempt to eradicate diversity and change—historical-temporal and otherwise—Mannheim's relationalism was a dialectical attempt to integrate the plurality of socio-historical views. The science of politics aimed at maintaining a 'dynamic synthesis' between disparate temporalisations of historical time within his conception of the total process of history. He writes in *Ideology and Utopia* that, 'instead of a fictional unity of a

[114] Mannheim, 'Conservatism', in *Conservatism: A Contribution to the Sociology of Knowledge*, D. Kettler, V. Meja and N. Stehr eds. and trans. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), 97. Quoted in Kettler and Loader, 'Temporalizing with Time Wars', 11.
[115] Ibid., 99. Quoted in Kettler and Loader, 'Temporalizing with Time Wars', 12.
[116] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 121.
[117] Quoted in Carl Schmitt, *Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus*, and in Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 123, ft. 3.

timeless unchanging "consciousness as such" (which was never actually demonstrable) we get a conception [of ideology] which varies in accordance with historical periods, nations and social classes…we continue to cling to the unity of consciousness, but this unity is now dynamic and in a constant *process of becoming*'.[118] Thus, his point is that the study of ideological views, including those on time, is itself done within time – a time he characterised as a time of becoming. To consider it otherwise would invalidate his entire sociological enterprise, where historical time is neither fixed, nor entirely relative. To quote Mannheim at more length:

> Politics as a science in the form of a political sociology is never a closed and finished realm of knowledge which can be separated from the continuous process out of which it developed. It is always in the process of becoming and is always nevertheless bound to the stream from which it derives. It arises in the dynamic unfolding of conflicting forces. Consequently it may be built either upon quite one-sided perspectives reflecting the interrelations of events as a given political party see them, or it may appear in its most advanced form – as a constantly renewed attempt at synthesis of all the existent perspectives aiming at a dynamic reconciliation.[119]

The dynamism of history and its meaning is one we must take with us. But to this he also introduces us to an issue that leads directly to Koselleck – in the importance of language as a reflection of historical change and in its representation of a worldview. Nowhere in the realm of social life', he wrote, 'do we encounter such a clearly traceable interdependence and sensitivity to change and varying emphasis as in the meaning of words'.[120] In this short comment buried in *Ideology and Utopia*, Mannheim foreshadowed a radical shift in the study of ideologies, a linguistic turn, moving away from metaphysical questions, that suggested we should start to recognise ideologies as discursive not just ideational entities. That is, they do not ultimately influence politics with ideas or a vision, but do so through the contestation of the meaning of key political concepts. It is the relation of this focus on language to issues of time that I turn to next.

[118] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 61.
[119]Ibid., 152.
[120] Ibid.

Part II: Theorising ideological discourse in time

Following the influence of the 'linguistic turn' in the social sciences and post-war historiography,[121] contemporary work in the study of ideologies has encouraged scholars to think of ideologies as a particular form of political discourse that engages in assigning competing meanings to key political concepts.[122] But in generally diverging away from Marxian or Mannheimian concerns over truth or totality, this turn has promoted a renewed study of the contextual usage and intent behind political language, drawing methodological similarities with the study of contextual language in the history of political thought, promoted by Quentin Skinner and J. G. A. Pocock, both heavily influenced by the work of J. L. Austin, R. G. Collingwood and Ludwig Wittgenstein.[123] While the linguistic approach to the study of ideologies has taken different forms, each is concerned in some way with studying the relationship between language and the political influences on social and individual understandings of the world.[124] In doing so, unlike elements of political philosophy, it recognises the importance of studying political thought as it is practised in the political,[125] often in the vernacular, by unpacking political language as it is used within socio-historical

[121] See Richard Rorty ed., *The Linguistic Turn: Recent Essays in the Philosophical Method* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).
[122] See Norval, 'The Things We Do with Words', 313-346 and D. Howarth, A. Norval & Y. Stavrakakis eds., *Discourse theory and political analysis: Identities, hegemonies and social change* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).
[123] See Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Regarding Method Vol. 1.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); John G. A. Pocock, *Politics, Language, and Time* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* 2nd edn, G. E. M Anscombe trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958); J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words*, J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisà eds. 2nd edition with corrections (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946).
[124] For other approaches see Ernesto Laclau, 'The Death and Resurrection of the Theory of Ideology', *Journal of Political Ideologies,* 1 (1996), 201-220; Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on Revolution of Our Time* (London: Verso, 1990); Ernesto Laclau and Chantel Mouffe, *Hegemony and Social Strategy* (London: Verso, 1985); Rosen, *On Voluntary Servitude*; Žižek, Slavoj, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989); Slavoj Žižek, ed. *Mapping Ideology* (London: Verso, 1994).
[125] There are efforts in political philosophy to rectify this. See, for instance, Raymond Guess, *Philosophy and Real Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

contexts—looking at how it is disseminated and received—in order to recognise its implications and form answers to broader questions in political theory.[126]

Following in the footsteps of Hobbes, analysts of political discourse must start by recognising that language is not only an indicator of a historical situation, a mirror of the world,[127] but is a constitutive element that shapes one's viewpoint.[128] As Austin said, 'language embodies all the distinctions that men have found worth drawing, and connections they have found worth making, in the lifetimes of many generations'.[129] But from the other direction, experience is also conditioned by the structures of language and meanings used to describe it. There is therefore an on-going back-and-forth, which Koselleck also picks up on: actors assign linguistic meaning to experience, whist at the same time the routinised meaning of language also functions to shape how we articulate and understand experience.[130]

As such, and as we will see in the following section, Koselleck is engaging in an on-going theoretical debate over which is the first-mover (or if there is one), and more broadly on issues of language and subjectivity familiar to many poststructuralists. Koselleck does so firmly from the position of a historian, while others are more conversant in ontological and epistemological debates of which Koselleck was aware but did not engage with in depth. Still, both built off theories of language, Saussure's in particular. One example of the poststructural perspective is in the work of Foucault, where in his lectures he described science and knowledge as nothing but 'discursive formulations' resting, he thought, on either

[126] See Michael Freeden, 'Language, interpretation and ideology' in David Leopold and Marc Stears, *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 196-215.
[127] On Hobbes and language, see Terrence Ball, 'Hobbes' Linguistic Turn', in *Polity* 17 (1985). Also see Fred Dallmayr, *Language and Politics* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).
[128] See Kay Junge, 'Self-concepts, counter-concepts, asymmetrical counter-concepts: Some aspects of a multifaceted agenda', in Kay Junge and Kirill Postoutenko eds., *Asymmetrical Concepts after Reinhart Koselleck: Historical Semantics and Beyond* (Bielefeld: Transcript Publishing, 2011), 12-13.
[129] J. L. Austin, 'A Plea for Excuses', in *Philosophical Papers*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 182. Quoted in Junge, 'Self-concepts', 16.
[130] See Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past*, 75-92.

ideology, a concept he later abandons,[131] or on his more prominent Nietzsche-influenced reading of a 'will to knowledge'. Like neutral theories in the linguistic turn, of which his certainly was not, in saying this Foucault is building on Saussure, whose revolution in structural linguistics was to argue that we cannot separate thoughts from the signs used to describe them. By introducing the dichotomy between *langue* and *parole* and between synchrony and diachrony, Saussure wanted to develop a science of language, looking at its rules and mechanisms, that accounted for the connections between meaning and form – between words and concepts, their grammatical form and especially in the relation between words. The meaning of words, for Saussure, depended on its relation with other words, what he referred to as a word's 'combinatory possibilities'.[132] When outside a system of words a single word loses its meaning. In all this, Saussure was far more interested in the structure of *langue*, though he could not escape the fact that we can only study the synchronic structure of language through the language used by individuals (*parole*), which is susceptible to historical change over time and the issues of temporality that come with it. Still, Saussure never engaged with this in any detail. The focus of his structural linguistics, and the structural tradition that would follow it—from Levi-Strauss, Jacques Derrida and Foucault's archaeology—was on the underlying influences to the synchronic meaning of words. To follow the analysis of Helge Jordheim here, Foucault's archaeology and its interest in 'discourse' was to take Saussure's abstract work and apply it to real world situations.[133] As Jordheim points out, in his earlier work on language Foucault treats history as something that does not unfold diachronically across time, but spatially, 'in time', in terms of various arguments, structures and theories. Even in *Les mots et les choses*, translated as *The Order of Things*, Foucault's periodisation of history into different *epistemes*—Renaissance, Classicism

[131] See Michel Foucault, 'Truth and Power', in Paul Rainbow ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 60.
[132] On this see Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 49-51.
[133] See Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, A. M. Sheridan Smith trans. (London: Routledge, 2002).

and Modernity—still does not account for the changes that led from one episteme to the other. As Foucault writes in *The Archaeology*, without the need for historical description, discourse is, 'snatched from the law of development and established in a discontinuous atemporality'. It is 'immobilized in fragments'. In light of this, he argues that it is possible to ignore temporal relations in discursive formations because archaeology 'explores the general rules which are always valid, in the same way, at all points in time…by imposing on a maybe slow and imperceptible development the restrictive figure of a synchronic system (*la figure contraignante d'une synchronie*)'. [134] One could argue that Jordheim underplays the significance of the temporalities explored in Foucault's subsequent genealogical project and its focus on the developmental influences on language and thought. But compared to his *Archaeology*, the genealogical take is more methodologically ambiguous. And furthermore, in relation to genealogy, we can read Foucault's concern here with contingency and the discontinuity of history as mainly a consideration focusing on the temporal ontology of the present in relation to its inheritance of past foundations and structures, something of a materialist bent (though non-Marxian) rather than primarily linguistic, as was his *Archaeology*. I suggest we see his interest in language in relation to genealogy as having more to do with the relationship between structures of power underlying discursive formations than focusing on the composition of linguistic systems themselves.[135] In his later phase he argued that, 'one's point of reference should not be to the great model of language (*langue*) and signs, but to that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power, not relations of meaning'.[136]

[134] Foucault, L'archéologie du savoir, 216-217, quoted in Helge Jordheim, 'Thinking in Convergences: Koselleck on History, Language and Time', in *Ideas in History* 2:3 (2007), 67.
[135] See H. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow eds., *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 104.
[136] Michael Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, Colin Gordon ed. (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Publishing, 1980), 114.

Still, Foucault's decision to abandon his archaeology limits his contribution to ideology studies. A primary interest in language and ideology is left to others, one of the most prominent found in the study of the history of political thought among scholars in what is colloquially known as the Cambridge School.[137] I turn to the work of two of its denizens next.

Space and synchronicity in the work of Quentin Skinner

Foucault's primary interest in the synchronic, especially in his earlier work, aligns him with efforts in political theory to situate political thought 'in time', though this time from a historical rather than philosophical perspective. The most familiar example of this is the Cambridge School—Quentin Skinner, J.G.A Pocock, John Dunn, James Tully, et al.—and their focus on contextual analysis. It is very important to point out that Skinner focuses on 'authorial intentionalism' whilst Foucault and other poststructuralists focus on the 'interpretation' and 'appropriation of a text', denying that the meaning of a text can be set by its author. For them it is the reader.[138] Still, both hermeneutical endeavours, either in reference to the production or reception of language, concern themselves with texts and contingency 'in time' as opposed to tracing language 'over time'. As such, the emphasis is on context and space rather than structure and time.

To first focus on Quentin Skinner's contribution to this synchronic study of language, his work can be seen to only coincide with, not match or corroborate, the changes-over-time focus of conceptual history.[139] Still, in eschewing the neo-Kantian enterprise to define key moral terms, both recognise the contextual nature of political concepts for explaining and shaping the world. 'The shifting conceptualisations to which this process gives rise', writes

[137] Skinner discusses the connection between his work and Foucault's. See Quentin Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[138] See Michael Foucault, 'What is an author?', in Paul Rabinow ed., *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), 101–120. Tony Burns argues that these two approaches are not incompatible. See Tony Burns, 'Interpreting and appropriating texts in the history of political thought: Quentin Skinner and poststructuralism', in *Contemporary Political Thought* 10:3 (2011), 313-331.
[139] Collections of Skinner's work on method can be found in *Visions of Politics,* vol. 1, and also in James Tully ed., *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 29-119.

Skinner, 'constitute the very stuff of ideological debate'.[140] For him, conceptual change is analysed in terms of the 'linguistic actions' taken by individual thinkers, who he at times calls 'ideologists', though without elaborating on exactly what he means in using the term.[141] While Skinner claims to appreciate the work of *Begriffsgeschichte*, he is clearly more interested in human agency and the changing use of rhetoric than conceptual historians, who, as we will see, also focus on structures and processes.[142] In doing so, unlike conceptual historians, he does not focus on changes in concepts as much as he does the changes in application.[143] In his *Reply*, Skinner writes that 'I remain unrepentant in my belief that there can be no histories of concepts as such; there can only be histories of their uses in argument'.[144] In this, Skinner believes that to understand a text we need to appreciate its argumentative power 'in time'. In contrast with Paul Riceour's phenomenological approach,[145] he rejects the possibility of a 'surplus of meaning' in authors' intentions: rather, we uncover textual 'meaning' by trying to find out what the author meant in writing it.[146]

How others receive this meaning is not of great concern to Skinner, contrary to poststructuralists, along with many scholars of ideology.[147] To unpack meaning in writing, Skinner proposes that we think of a text as an individual's contribution to a wider contextual discursive *space,* encouraging us as interpreters to unpack the author's 'intentions' expressed

[140] Skinner, *Visions of Politics, vol. 1*, 176-177.
[141] This is discussed in Kari Palonen, 'Rhetorical and Temporal Perspectives on Conceptual Change', in Kari Palonen ed., *Political Conceptual Histories: Rhetorical and Temporal Perspectives* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2016), 46.
[142] See Bo Stråth, 'Ideology and History', in *Journal of Political Ideologies* 11:1 (2006), 35-36; and Jacques Guilhaumou, 'De l'histoire des concepts à l'histoire linguistique des usages conceptuels', in *Genèses* 38 (2000), 105-118. For the emphasis on rhetoric in Skinner's work, see Kari Palonen, *Quentin Skinner: History, Politics, Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003).
[143] Skinner, *Visions of Politics, vol. 1*, 179.
[144] Skinner in Tully, *Meaning in Context,* 283, and quoted in Palonen, 'Rhetorical and Temporal Perspectives on Conceptual Change', 46.
[145] Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976).
[146] Skinner, *Visions of Politics, vol. 1*, 91-92 and 113.
[147] He is criticized for this in Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 100-111.

in the text.[148] To do so we must also come to understand the discursive and ideational milieu in which the author is engaged.[149] We can find these intentions by recognising the relationship between the author and the text, whereby in writing something the author is engaging in an action or 'speech-act',[150] a theory borrowed from Austin's work on language and intention, which focuses on the 'illocutionary force' behind words.[151] Thus, considered this way, an author should be thought of as *doing something* by writing something. We should not only ask what words mean, but what the author is 'doing in' using them.[152]

It is important to note that determining authorial intentions is different from trying to understand the *motives* behind writing a text. Finding motives, by contrast, is a temporal activity, looking at the reasons antecedent to writing—reasons 'for writing'—while intentions are the plan or design – the intentions 'in writing'.[153] 'To know about motives', writes Skinner, 'is to know what promoted those political speech acts, quite apart from their character and truth-status as utterances'.[154] Unlike motives, Skinner thinks intentions must be legible in the text itself.[155] To go about finding them, Skinner builds on Collingwood's logical setup of question and answer to view texts as arguments in response to other assumptions and points of view in a particular discursive space.[156] Historians must try and find out the nature of this discursive intervention because 'any act of communication will always constitute the taking up of some determinate position in relation to some pre-existing convention or argument'.[157] Skinner writes further that 'the appropriate context for

[148] The best description of Skinner's approach to uncovering intentions is in Chapter Five of *Visions of Politics vol.1* , 'Motives, intentions and interpretations', 90-102.
[149] Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, *vol. 1*, 118-120.
[150] Ibid., 105.
[151] See Ibid., 98-108.
[152] Skinner in Tully, *Meaning in Context*, 260.
[153] Skinner, *Visions of Politics, vol. 1*, 98.
[154] Ibid., 96.
[155] Ibid., 120.
[156] Collingwood, R. G. (1939). *An Autobiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 30-39.
[157] Skinner, *Visions of Politics, vol. 1*, 115. For more in intentions see Skinner, in Tully, *Meaning in Context*, 83-88.

understanding the point of such writers' utterances will always be whatever context enables us to appreciate the nature of the intervention constituted by their utterances'.[158]

To take one example to highlight his predominantly spatial focus, in one work Skinner accounts for the combination of religion and capitalism in Weber as a 20th century extension of the common use of religious terms like 'providence' and 'religion' in 17th century tracts, which acted to defend capitalist enterprise against what was at the time a disapproving church. Skinner suggests we see how other contemporaries including 'minor thinkers' in little known 17th century tracts employ similar terms and tactics.[159] 'The primary task is therefore that of trying to recover a particular context of presuppositions and other beliefs', he writes, 'a context that serves to exhibit the utterance in which we are interested as one that was rational for that particular agent, in those particular circumstances to have held to be true'.[160] As the Weber example shows, Skinner is not primarily interested in the extended history of concepts, but rather the changes in meaning, application, or the 'rhetorical redescription' of concepts for varying applications.[161] For Skinner, concepts should be thought of as 'instruments for political action',[162] with little focus on structures. Skinner's interest is only in a form of conceptual change that 'occurs when the capacity of a normative vocabulary to perform and encourage particular acts of appraisal alters in direction or intensity'.[163] This is unfortunate because, as Kari Palonen has also argued, there is ample space for engagement with Koselleck's temporal-focused study of conceptual change.[164] But Palonen's search for connectivity should look elsewhere. For a more amenable approach within the Cambridge School, I suggest we instead turn to Pocock's more readily apparent thoughts on language and time.

[158] Skinner, *Visions of Politics, vol. 1*, 116.
[159] See Skinner, 'Moral principles and social change', in *Visions of Politics vol. 1*, 145-157.
[160] Skinner in Tully, *Meaning in Context*, 247.
[161] This is discussed in detail in Kari Palonen, 'Quentin Skinner's Rhetoric of Conceptual Change', in *History of the Human Sciences* 10 (1997), 61-80. Also see Stråth, 'Ideology and History', 35-36.
[162] Palonen, 'Rhetorical and Temporal Perspectives on Conceptual Change', 47.
[163] Skinner, *Visions of Politics, vol. 1*, 180.
[164] Palonen, 'Rhetorical and Temporal Perspectives on Conceptual Change', 54-56.

Diachronic possibilities in Pocock's linguistic paradigms

Like Quentin Skinner, J. G. A. Pocock approaches political thought through the synchronic study of language.[165] In his methodological work he separates the role of the historian, interested in contextual discourse, from the philosopher, who is charged with assessing the coherence of philosophical systems,[166] writing that, 'what seemed to many, about 1956, the subversion of political philosophy by linguistic analysis helped to liberate the history of political thought by converting it from a history of systematization ('philosophy' in an old sense) into one of linguistic use and sophistication ('philosophy' in a new sense).[167] Grouped together in the same school as Skinner, Pocock also endorses the notion of 'speech acts';[168] though, unlike Skinner, Pocock minimises the extent of individual agency in preference for placing authorial intention within influential language systems, a more 'complete' language context than only individual authors.[169] What he also calls 'discourses', 'language systems', 'traditions' or 'paradigms', these languages, as particular vocabularies and meanings,[170] frame how thinkers understand and write about political events and ideas.[171] As he put it more elaborately, a language system 'is a complex structure comprising a vocabulary; a grammar; a rhetoric; and a set of usages, assumptions, and implications existing together in time and employable by a semi-specific community of language-users for purposes political, interested in and extending sometimes as far as the articulation of a worldview or ideology'.[172] Indeed, it is important to separate this from Skinner's authorial intent approach;

[165] Pocock, *Politics Language and Time*, 15.
[166] Ibid., 11.
[167] Ibid., 12.
[168] J. G. A. Pocock, 'The Reconstruction of Discourse: Towards the Historiography of Political Thought', *MNL* 96:5 (1981), 974.
[169] This is discussed in Rudolf Valkhoff, 'Some similarities between *Begriffgeschichte* and the history of discourse', in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 2:1 (2006), 85.
[170] Melvin Richter, *The History of Social and Political Concepts*: A Critical Introduction (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 127.
[171] On the importance of political agency, see Julie E. Cooper, 'Book in Review: *Political Thought and History Essays on Theory and Method, by J. G. A. Pocock*, in *Political Theory* 38 (2010), 444. Also see Pocock, J. G. A. *Political Thought and History: Essay's on Theory and Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2009), 90.
[172] Pocock, 'The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts', in Melvin Richter and Hartmut Lehmann eds., *Occasional Paper* 15 (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 1996), 48.

but in his own method, Pocock still shares with him a primary interest in language 'in time' and in exploring discourse in order to understand better the influences and motives of historical actors.

To determine and delineate systems, Pocock borrows from Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* to look at the 'paradigmatic qualities' of language in socio-political discourse, supplanting a linguistic approach in place of Kuhn's discussion of scientific theories.[173] In this way, the history of political thought, a phrase Pocock later eschews, is in actuality a history of political discourse and rhetoric, where paradigms[174] are thought of as, 'highly authoritative linguistic formulations',[175] that function as linguistic reference points 'within the structure of consciousness, stable and durable enough to be used at more than one moment'.[176] Thus, authors operate within and employ, consciously and subconsciously, one or usually more language systems at the same time. During the early modern period, for example, he sees numerous political languages (paradigms) at play—those stemming from common law, eschatology or civic humanism—that a student of political language must first 'learn to speak' before trying to understand, through the text, how an historical actor thought and to whom he spoke. 'A single author' writes Pocock, 'may respond to a number of simultaneously active paradigms, overlapping and interacting, consonant and dissonant, requiring the actor to choose, but permitting him to combine, compare and criticise'.[177] With an understanding of contextual politics, its conceptualization, and the institutions and practices it legitimates, in their various and often interlocking forms,

[173] Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time*, 35-36.
[174] I will from now on prefer this term to languages or discourses. Iain Hampsher-Monk argues that Pocock's interest in paradigms is only a 'fashionable flirtation' with Kuhn. He equates the term with the more preferable options of 'languages' and 'modes of discourse'. But I think 'paradigm' makes an important point that the other terms do not: for Pocock it suggests that historical actors are influenced by particular understandings and uses of concepts that 'screen out' other interpretations. See Iain Hampsher-Monk, 'Review Article: The Work of J. G. A. Pocock' in *British Journal if Political Science* 14:1 (1984), 105. And see Pocock, 'The Reconstruction of Discourse', 965.
[175] Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time*, 18.
[176] Ibid., 280.
[177] Pocock, 'The Reconstruction of Discourse', 972.

comprehending these language systems goes a long way to helping the historian locate an author's intent.[178]

How does one go about identifying a paradigm? Pocock says they can be found in various forms and contexts, and performing a range of different tasks. They are neither rigid nor wholly determinative. Pocock often describes paradigms as authority-structures; but he also implies that there is some degree of paradigmical malleability for authors to work with, along with the ability to speak multiple languages at once. Studying the time-bound paradigm is to look at the 'political utterance[s] that can be made' writes Pocock, 'and the ways in which these utterances may transform one another as they interact under the stress of political conversation and dialectic'.[179] Most importantly for historians, a paradigm shift—in terms of changing conceptual meaning or altered application—can mark a significant historical event, what Pocock calls a 'paradigmatic revolution', that points to important historical moments for investigation. [180] But contrary to Koselleck's synchronic-diachronic approach, these linguistically revolutionary moments are where Pocock thinks a synchronic-focused analysis should focus. The 'Anglophone tradition' is, he believes, 'better at establishing the character of innovations in the synchronic than at tracing the more long-term pattern of changes in the diachronic...long-term patterns of change in language use are difficult to reduce to the performances of identifiable authors'.[181]

But Pocock's downplaying of diachronic analysis should not prevent us from drawing connections with Koselleck's synchronically-diachronically revealed ideas of historical time. First of all, as Rudolf Valkhoff argues, through their study of language both methodological approaches incorporate an awareness of historical change set in contrast with periods of

[178] Richter, *The History of Social and Political Concepts*, 127.
[179] Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time*, 19.
[180] Ibid., 276. For further analysis on this point seeValkhoff, 'Similarities between *Begriffgeschichte* and the history of discourse', 85.
[181] Pocock in Lehmann and Richter, 'The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts', 49.

'historical sedimentation'.[182] Pocock's paradigm approach is in fact based on the formal categories of sedimentation and transformation, where within the paradigms of a traditional society, for example, the present dispositions are based on past experiences. He writes that 'an action…is performed on the assumption that it has been performed before; its performance is authorized…by the knowledge, or the assumption, of previous performance'.[183] But in the Early Modern period, Pocock argues these traditional paradigms start to break down, seen as 'other', and there occur 'transformations' or 'conceptual revolutions' where old paradigms are not so much replaced as altered to support new political identities.[184] The political application of this revolutionary linguistic action is attributed at least in part to the rise of ideology politics, where new paradigms aim to give a population a new identity outside tradition, 'to clarify the distinctions between the different types of statements being confusedly intimated'.[185]

For Pocock, then, the new reordering of paradigms is not only to reinterpret language, but also the temporal qualities of language paradigms. In traditional paradigms, Pocock believes time is institutionalised, 'an awareness of the conventions and devices erected in society to maintain continuity and control contingency', which is 'rendered vivid and intense by an added awareness of what has in fact been happening to these institutions in time'.[186] During the transformation of traditional paradigms in the early modern period these notions of time are newly contested by the temporal understandings of new or reformulated competing paradigms. 'Any such body of thought, and every paradigmatic language', writes Pocock, 'contains a structure of implications concerning time, which can further be shown to

[182] See Valkhoff, 'Similarities between *Begriffgeschichte* and the history of discourse', 83-92.
[183] Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time*, 237. Also quoted in Valkhoff, 'Similarities between *Begriffgeschichte* and the history of discourse', 88.
[184] Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time,* 278.
[185] Ibid., 275.
[186] Ibid., 274.

embody a mode or modes of conceptualizing political society itself existing in time'.[187] In already containing a structure 'of time' and existing 'in time' we should see Pocock's paradigms related to time in two further ways: the first is the existence of various paradigmatic institutions that anchor their legitimacy in their establishment over time (seen in the concept of 'tradition' or 'eschatological time'); while the second is the use of language to conceptualise and react to contingent events that happen in history – what happens in what Pocock calls the 'extra-political continuum of time'.[188]

To further our investigation of the latter two temporalities we can look more closely at Pocock's essay 'Time, Institutions and Action', where he explores conceptualisations of time as different awarenesses and connections to the past,[189] where social structures and political actions are taken as continuations or differentiations of what came before. To expose this, Pocock looks at conceptualisations of 'tradition' as 'formed ways of living' and 'formed ways of acting' which function as linkages between past and present.[190] Found in different language paradigms, traditions, and how we become conscious of them, vary widely. But in its variation Pocock is arguing that each particular tradition undergoes, to some degree, time-bound (contextual) alteration, re-interpretation and contestation. What changes 'is its [a tradition's] mode of being and becoming conscious of itself and its existence in time'.[191] Over time, he argues, traditions and the notions of time that come with them tend to move away from tradition in the purist form of the word (the accumulation of experience or practice) to become something formed by 'intellectual operations' where the past is subject to political and ideological uses. In this he refers to what Michael Oakeshott calls the

[187] Ibid., 39.
[188] Ibid., 40.
[189] Ibid., 236.
[190] Ibid., 234.
[191] Ibid., 239.

'abridgement' of tradition into ideology.[192] Compared to Oakeshott, though, Pocock does well to avoid this overly simplistic view of the dichotomy between tradition and rationalism. He believes there is a permeable divide between the two camps: in reality, the majority of traditions 'contain some image of charismatic or other action [where tradition is 'created' or 'founded'],[193] which the radical may employ to construct his strategy of return and develop into the foundations of his ideology'.[194] In doing this, Pocock provides a rather convincing portrayal of a conceptual landscape of multifarious understandings and constructions of the past that compete with one another, and which in various ways are then used in politics to influence present choice-making. On this it is worth quoting Pocock at length:

> Alternative versions of the past and their relation to the present is what we mean by historiography…[and] the beginnings of historiography are to be found when, in a literate tradition, an attempt is made to alter not so much the received facts of the past as the kind of authority which they exercise over the present; for this will bring about the discussion of alternative versions of societies' continuity as a means of transmitting authority. The concepts employed in constructing and discussing these versions of society's continuity as a means of transmitting authority…Depending upon what modes of authority are supposed to be inherent in the tradition under discussion, there will be timeless concepts of sacred or rational authority; there will be concepts of action and transmission peculiar to the tradition's institutional character, and taken for granted without critical investigation; there will even be uncritical or anti-critical employments of the concept of tradition.[195]

In this he is suggesting that historiography engenders ideological competition over the past and also over the concepts and paradigms that represent it. The struggle over what tradition means and its significance to present choices is in large part based on its understanding of time between the past and the present, whether it is one of continuity or transition, and how the importance of this view should affect behaviour extending into the future. In tradition, then, we can see the fight over different temporal visions. Time can be accumulation or continuity, the time-bound extension of habit or an open space for new visions. Whether we

[192] See Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in politics and other essays*, Timothy Fuller ed. (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1991), 5-42.
[193] See Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time*, 243.
[194] Ibid., 253.
[195] Ibid., 256.

want to classify these as 'moments', 'transitions' or 'paradigmatic revolutions' the focus on language and historical change relates to historical contingency and the possibility for linguistic change. It is this issue of contingency and its synchronicity that I focus on next, in the context of two linguistic approaches to ideology in political theory – that of Michael Freeden and in the subsequent subsection, the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe.

Freeden's theory of conceptual morphology

Freeden's work is related to (though different from) the greater hermeneutical focus in the history of political thought that encourages theorists to better 'focus on constructed and invented realities as necessary forms of both reproducing knowledge and understanding', in which he thinks ideology, contrary to the Marxist view, provides a vital and ubiquitous role.[196] To understand the operation and significance of ideologies to political thinking, Freeden follows Mannheim's neutral approach, rejecting claims that ideology refers only to illusionary ideas or class domination,[197] and arguing that we should study ideologies from a semantic rather than epistemological or strictly linguistic perspective. His approach does not argue that all political thinking or theorising is ideological, but that it always has the potential to be so. He says that, 'what makes political thinking ideological relates to the linguistic need and interpretative imperative to choose among contested meanings of concepts, in order to attain the control over language that effects political action'.[198] For Freeden, concepts refer to the regularly used terms in political discourse – either long-lasting concepts (e.g. liberty,

[196] Michael Freeden, 'Political ideologies in substance and method: appraising a transformation', in Michael Freeden ed., *Reassessing Political Ideologies: The Durability of Dissent*, (London: Routledge, 2001), 5. Also discussed and quoted in Matthew Humphrey, '(De)contesting Ideology: The struggle over meaning of the Struggle over meaning', in *Critical Review of International and Social Policy* 8:2 (2006), 225-246.

[197] See John B Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture*. For a useful critique of Thompson, see J. M. Balkin, *Cultural Software: a Theory of Ideology* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998). On ideology as falsehood, see Tommie Shelby, 'Ideology, racism, and critical social theory' in *The Philosophical Forum*, 34:2 (2003), 153–188. On domination also see Zeus Leonardo, 'Discourse and critique: outlines of a post-structural theory of ideology', in *Journal of Education Policy*, 18: 2 (2003), 203–214. On the Lacanian tradition and ideology as falsehood, see Jason Glynos, 'The grip of ideology: a Lacanian approach to the theory of ideology', in *Journal of Political Ideologies* 6:2 (2001), 191–214.

[198] For a succinct explanation see Michael Freeden, 'Editorial: What is special about ideologies?' in *Journal of Political Ideologies* 6:1 (2001), 5.

democracy, power etc.) or those that are newer to the block (neo-liberalism, radicalism or feminism), even if he still tends to stick to major concepts in political thought – and the major ideologies. Like conceptual historians, in his theory concepts are not merely words. Rather, 'words are the outside forms of concepts'; they signify concepts, which in comparison to words have a much greater complexity of meaning. Concepts contain within them theories and 'complex ideas that inject order and meaning into observed or anticipated sets of political phenomena and hold together an assortment of related notions'.[199] Concepts and their meaning are, to a degree, contingent in the real world. That is, unlike Saussure, for Freeden the meaning and content of a concept is not only determined by its relation to other words, but also to the socio-historical situation from which the concept originates and is employed to influence. In this, studying ideologies not only differs from structural linguistics, but from efforts in political philosophy in its focus on patterns of actual political thinking among a variety of actors in time and space. His method is better attuned to the impulses, behaviours and cultural contexts that affect thinking politically, as opposed to searching for any kind of logical agreement over the meaning of concepts or aims of politics.

To do so, Freeden starts from the observation that concepts have indeterminate, not essential, meanings. Rather, it is their contextual usage that determines the meaning of a concept.[200] Nor is meaning only in terms of the internal components of an ideology (the core and peripheral elements that make up conceptual meaning), but also in terms of a concept's external associations with other words and concepts. 'An ideology is itself a concept with a recognizable form, [and also signifies] a particular way of organising clusters of other political concepts'.[201] In this he draws on two influences (though his theory by no means matches them): one is W. B. Gallie's notion of 'essential contestability'; the other is Ricoeur's theory of the 'surplus of meaning', arguing that a concept always holds within it

[199] Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 54.
[200] Here I am paraphrasing Norval, 'Things we do with words', 323.
[201] Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 48.

unknown meanings.[202] To understand meaning Freeden's conceptual method must study difference synchronically and diachronically, whilst also remaining sensitive to the diachronicity (i.e. the influence of past uses, culture, tradition) contained within a concept at a particular moment in time.[203] This is similar to Koselleck, as we will see, and in a similar fashion to *Begriffsgeschichte* the synchronic-diachronic study of the morphology of a concept looks for recognisable patterns, continuities and discontinuities over time.[204] As Freeden writes,

> To concentrate on synchronic meaning, which cannot alone account for the burden that political concepts bear, is a weakness not only of semiology but of much analytical philosophy. Conversely, historians tend to look at contingent and unique occurrences and are suspicious of recurrent patterns. The emphasis on morphology counterbalances that by drawing attention to the general patterns that the history of political ideas—rooted as it is both in language and political concepts—must display.[205]

To this, though, Freeden not only looks at meanings in different contexts in and over time, but also at the particular *way* in which ideologies assign meaning in time and space. In some ways similar to Koselleck's notion of 'singularisation', but far more elaborated on, Freeden claims that the main exercise of political power of ideologies lies in semantic combat and their effort to 'decontest' the meaning of a concept into a single dominant meaning against rival meanings. Decontesation may also be read to pertain to how ideologies articulate the relationships between concepts in an ideological cluster, often in contrast to how other ideologies or members of the same ideological family may organise and prioritise them. He writes that, 'ideologies serve as the bridging mechanism between contestability and determinacy, converting the inevitable variety of options into the monolithic certainty which is the unavoidable feature of a political *decision*, and which is the basis of the forging of a

[202] Ibid., 55-60 (Gallie), and 74 (Ricoeur).
[203] Ibid., 52.
[204] Ibid., 54. And discussed in Norval, 'The things we do with words', 323.
[205] Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 91.

political identity'.[206] Ideologies are thus a cluster of decontested concepts of varying complexity. Clusters are always shifting, internally and in relation to other ideologies. One dominant ideology may hold sway over a particular understanding for a time, but decontestation and the search for finality is an on-going activity in changing circumstances and against emerging rivals.

At the same time Freeden's synchronic-diachronic theorisation wants to escape from the relativist position that ideologies are infinitely malleable, and that all ideologies are as malleable as others. An ideology is never an unlimited variety of combinations. In response, Freeden is able to formalise two key morphological features that open up yet constrain the possibility for ideological 'creativity'.[207] In other words, diachronic analysis must pay attention to certain synchronic aspects that limit the contingency of conceptual arrangements. One is that some semantic components to an ideology remain ineliminable; and two, others are what he calls 'quasi-contingent'.[208] Ineliminable concepts are intrinsic to an ideology. Their reoccurring use gives them irremovable status – they are a constant and stable feature.[209] Without them an ideology loses its intelligibility and communicability. We can break this down further in that 'ineliminability' pertains to aspects internal to a concept (e.g. liberty as non-restraint) and associative concepts within an ideological cluster (e.g. the liberty concept's association with progress in liberalism), what Freeden refers to as 'logical and cultural adjacency'.[210] Meanwhile, a concept also contains 'quasi-contingent' features, which are individually dispensable but their categories not so. To use Freeden's example of a table: a table must have a colour, but the colour of the table may vary. Put in another way, the colour is essentially contestable whilst the fact that a table has a colour is not. Or to put in in the context of politics, Freeden argues, for instance, that every ideology has a conception of

[206] Ibid., 77.
[207] On creativity as a key feature of ideologies, see Freeden, 'What is special about ideologies', 7.
[208] Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 61-62.
[209] Ibid., 61-62.
[210] Ibid., 69-74.

human nature, a view of social structure, of moral ends, etc. – but the contents of those conceptions differ dramatically.[211]

The upshot of this is that Freeden's synchronic and diachronic evaluation reveals a key vertical dynamism to conceptual contestation in the relation between core, adjacent and peripheral concepts. While on a temporal level, this method primarily concentrates on both the 'in time', like contextual historians in the Cambridge School, along with picking up on the 'over time' feature advocated by conceptual history. However, this approach contains *less* of an interest, at least to date, in the relationship between concepts, language and the ideological contestation 'of time'. This is the case despite a number of references to the potential contribution of conceptual history's temporal discussions to ideology analysis.[212] Kari Palonen has written that there is now 'a changed reality reference of politics towards a situation in which the whole relation to time, space and language have become the subject matter of political action'.[213]

It is up to students of political ideologies in the linguistic tradition to spend more time studying these features.

The poststructuralist use of the ideology concept

One prominent exception, however, lies in the work of a group of post-structuralists who take an interest in certain aspects of temporality and the ideological temporalisation (or in fact de-temporalisation) of history and historical events. Before moving to this, it is worth noting that, as Aletta Norval has already pointed out, despite their different intentions, there are some striking similarities between Freeden's morphological approach and the post-structural or post-Marxist interpretation of ideology by this group – namely in the likes of Mouffe,

[211] Ibid., 66-67.
[212] See Michael Freeden, 'Ideologies and Conceptual History', in *Journal of Political Ideologies* (1997), 3-11; and Bo Sträth, 'Ideology and Conceptual History', in *Handbook of Political Ideologies*, Freeden et al. eds, 6-17.
[213] K. Palonen, 'Conceptual history as a perspective to political thought', in I. K. Lakaniemi, A. Rotkirch and H. Stenius eds, *'Liberalism'—Seminars on Historical and Political Keywords in Northern Europe* (Helsinki: The Renvall Institute, University of Helsinki, 1995), 27. Quoted in Freeden, 'Ideologies and Conceptual History', 6.

Lefort and Laclau.[214] All locate ideology in the control of language and consider ideology a ubiquitous presence in society. The difference between these two camps is that the latter hold on to a Gramscian and Foucaudian understanding of ideology as domination, especially in terms of 'identity', carried out through linguistic and other discursive forms (via social symbols, institutions, etc.); whereas Freeden, at least in terms of morphology, is primarily interested in conceptual issues. But more importantly for our purposes, contrary to Freeden, the specific concern of these post-structuralists is not over the decontestation of concepts, at least not primarily, but the ideological-linguistic decontestation of the meaning of 'dislocating' historical events or phenomena. In doing so they are pushing back against the structural rigidity of Marxian determinism to explore more directly how ideologies help explain contingencies, and also any pre-social understanding of human identity – thus *contra* Marx's idea of 'species-being' and the centrality of class, and also any scientific theory of innate human behaviour. Instead, identity emerges during foundation-shaking moments of dislocation, where ideology, according to this view, acts to maintain order by 'suturing' the break in structure.[215] Put in another way, it attempts to settle the ontological position of being between beings: papering over cracks or inventing a new normal. Akin to Schmitt's concept of emergency,[216] the political—and indeed the ideological—occurs in this moment of the in-between – in the moment of dislocation between past and future.[217] But by contrast, for them, ideology is to deny the political, at least in understanding it in terms of contingency,

[214] For an overview of these theories, see Ernesto Laclau, 'The Death and Resurrection of the Theory of Ideology', 201-220; and secondary commentary by Norval, 'The things we do with words', 326-334; Fred R. Dallmayr, 'Hegemony and Democracy: On Laclau and Mouffe', in *Strategies*, 1 (1988), 29-49; and David Howarth, 'Discourse Theory and Political Analysis', in E. Scarborough and E. Tannenbaum eds., *Research Strategies in the Social Sciences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 268-93.

[215] On Laclau and Mouffe's Lacanian-influenced use of 'suture' and its broader use in post-structuralism, see Slavoj Žižek, 'Ideology, Politics, Hegemony', in Žižek ed. *Mapping Ideology*, 248-249. For contextualizing this in the broader post-structuralist argument, see Micèle Barret, *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991).

[216] See Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology*, George Schwab ed. and trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

[217] On the influence of Schmitt for poststructuralism, see, for instance, the critical take by Chantal Mouffe, *The Return of the Political* (London: Verso, 1993).

historicity, contestation and unpredictability.[218] There are thus two things going on in relation to 'dislocation' that seem at least partially related: first, contingent events are given meaning in an effort to fold them into existing 'sedimented' narratives or a re-established order in what Laclau calls a 'space of representation';[219] and second, in this moment of the breakdown of the existing order, social identity is re-contested and in this process subsequently decontested to cement a new order of things.[220]

This naturalising or reordering is not simply due to a reordering of history and its meaning, certainly not in the Marxian sense. Rather, meaning is especially related to the concepts of 'myth' and the 'imagery', an understanding related to Slavoj Žižek's writing on the psychoanalytic conception of fantasy in political thought.[221] All of the authors in this group discuss ideology as structures of power that attempt to ameliorate class struggle and moments of historical 'dislocation', where the existing structure 'fails to bring closure'.[222] In these dislocating situations 'in time', this post-structuralist take sees ideological discourse as a means to 're-explaining the order of things' by explaining away dislocation, making it look natural in order to form new or reinforce existing identities.[223] It is worth mentioning that some of their recent writing moves from myth and imagery to explain linguistic contestation in a similar way to Freeden's work. Laclau especially thinks this 'naturalisation' and 'reinvention' at moments of dislocation can also occur through the decontestation of what he calls 'empty signifiers', which offer a plurality of meanings because they are inherently meaningless, or 'floating signifiers' that have too many contested meanings for one to ever

[218] A similar observation is made by Marchart in Oliver Marchart, *Post-Foundational Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 161.
[219] Ernest Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time,* 61. For a further discussion of this, see Aletta Norval, 'Poststructuralist conceptions of ideology', in Freeden et al., *Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, 157.
[220] See Ernesto Laclau, 'Deconstruction, pragmatism, hegemony', in *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, (London: Routledge, 1996), 47–68.
[221] Slavoj Žižek, 'Fantasy as Political Category: A Lacanian Approach' in *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society*, 1 (1996), 77-85.
[222] See Aletta J. Norvel, 'The Things We Do with Words', 328-329.
[223] On preserving existing orders, see Lefort, *Political Forms of Modern Society*, 201.

arrive at a settled definition.[224] Meaning remains stubbornly contingent and therefore *un-decontestable*.[225] Put in our terms, signifiers are either too subjective, in too much articulation with contingencies to find a common meaning (floating), or are too disarticulated (empty) to have any specific relevance. The implication of this is that society cannot escape ideological contestation, something Freeden would agree with.

This said, Laclau never leaves his post-structuralist position, a viewpoint that proliferates widely. To touch on a few, in following a path already well trodden by Nietzsche, Hayden White's *Metahistory* dismisses the possibility of a 'science of history' suggesting that the structuralization of historical time is merely a derivative of poetic tropes employed by authors to narrate histories of various plots and ideological dispositions. Historical time flows not from languages or structure but from rhetorical organisation, where the historian orders the world of past, present and future in order to 'clothe the chaos of the phenomenal world in stable images'.[226] 'There can be no such thing as a nonrelativistic representation of historical reality', White elaborates further, 'insomuch as every account of the past is mediated by the language mode in which the historian casts his original description of the historical field prior to any analysis, explanation, or interpretation he may offer of it'.[227] This not only relates to the disposition of the historian, but to any socialised understanding of historical time. One instance of this is in expressions of myth and the practical use of constructed imagery, connected to post-structuralists, whereas Lévi-Strauss explains that mythical narratives give order and meaning to the universe. Or for Pierre Bourdieu, myth is routinized into social practice along with the spatial: 'the organization of time and the group in accordance with mythical structures leads collective practice to appear as "realized

[224] See Ernest Laclau, 'Death and Resurrection of the Theory of Ideology', 297-321; Ernesto Laclau, 'Why do Empty Signifiers Matter to Politics?', in Ernesto Laclau, *Emancipation(s)* (London: Verso, 1996), 36-46; and discussed in Norval, 'Things we do with words', 330-332.
[225] For a similar analysis, see Norval, 'Things we do with words', 332.
[226] Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse*: *Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 48.
[227] Ibid., 117.

myth"'.[228] The ordering of historical time is in this sense the coherency of myth, where society tries to explain or naturalise events. Bourdieu describes this act as 'naturalizing arbitrariness', similar to Castoriadis' notion of the use of the imaginary in the development of social-historical being. At the core of social historical life is, according to Castoriadis, 'an identitiary or ensemblist logic that rules sovereignly and ineluctably over the two institutions of *legin*, the component of language as representation, and *teukhein*, the ineffaceable component of social doing'. [229] Time becomes a dimension of linguistically represented radical imaginary, a component of the socio-historical *eide* employed to explain historicity. For the sake of doing, language transports society into being as temporality. 'There must be a social institution of a common or collective marking of time'.[230] As a last point, there is a key difference between the social-historical being and the use of myth. In Lévi-Strauss' description, myth is a form of time transcendence, or what Pocock calls a charismatic view of the past. That is, it is something that can be repeated *ad infinitum* irrespective of the movement of time. Castoriadis' social-historical, by contrast, presents determinacy to neutralise the potentiality of historical change, closer to what Lefort describes as a form of ideological occultation that 'folds over social discourse' to supress any notion of historical creativity.[231]

Given their intellectual roots, it is no surprise that these critiques of science or determinism and revised theories of ideology offer propitious ground for an elaboration on the politics 'of time'. Their use of identity, utopia, myth and fantasy—all analytic concepts that allow space for temporal contestation—rely on a narrative of continuity and change, historical determinism or dislocation. Yet unpacking how ideologies make these temporal moves requires the student of ideology to develop a way of not only assessing ideology

[228] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, 1997), 163.
[229] Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 175.
[230] Ibid., 204.
[231] Lefort, *The Political Forms of Modern Society*, 202-203.

contingently, but to explore the relationship between political language and contestations of contingent or non-contingent time, which is often done for the very opposite purpose of concealment or naturalisation. Hence one criticism of post-structuralism is that in their focus on domination and efforts to decontest or singularise the meaning of dislocating moments, they neglect the much wider possibilities for contesting the meaning of contingent time itself. In addition, to suggest that ideologies want to 'suture' dislocation ignores the myriad examples where ideologies may embrace or ignore it. The notion of a dislocation is itself contestable. A major rift for one group of political actors may seem small beer to another.

But all this said, the biggest shortfall is that contingency should not be treated as the only element of the linguistically mediated contestation of time. As I suggested in the introduction to this thesis, it is only one *mode* of politicking historical time and the dimensions of present, past and future. There is thus a gap in the political theorising in this area, and one that I think the methods and thinking of Koselleck can help us fill.

Part III: Koselleck and the linguistically mediated politics of historical time

> Concepts are like joints linking language and the extralinguistic world.
> – Reinhart Koselleck, German Historical Institute

> Political and social concepts become instruments for the direction of historical movement.
> – Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past*

As mentioned above, the linguistic approach to the study of political ideologies has already begun to utilise and benefit from methods and findings in conceptual history, the study of the history of basic concepts (*Grundbegriffe*), where its German variant,[232] *Begriffsgeschichte*, showcases an established practice for tracing conceptual meaning in time and space both synchronically and diachronically.[233] This makes it an immediate methodological ally of

[232] This is to say that there are other examples of the study of key concepts outside the tradition of *Begriffsgeschichte*. For one example, see Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).
[233] On the benefits of this for political theorists, see Richter, *The History of Social and Political Concepts*, 45.

Freeden's work on conceptual morphology.[234] 'In actual language use or action there is no way that the diachronic and the synchronic can be kept apart empirically', writes Koselleck, undoubtedly the most accomplished theorist of *Begriffsgeschichte*,[235] and one of three editors (along with Otto Brunner and Werner Conze) of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, the eight-volume lexicon of the history of basic concepts.[236] As Koselleck put it more succinctly, 'synchrony is *eo ipso* at the same time diachronic'.[237]

But apart from a few unelaborated remarks,[238] political theorists have yet to move beyond the basic empirical work of *Begriffsgeschichte* to embark on a substantial attempt to incorporate Koselleck's broader interest in the elements and semantics of time that accompany and help explain his dual focus on the synchronic and diachronic. To be more precise, we should understand his empirical work in *Begriffsgeschichte* in light of his interest in the relation and difference between language and history[239] and between language and historical consciousness,[240] —what he calls past futures (*Vergangene Zukunft*)[241]— an issue elaborated on more fully in Koselleck's effort to develop a *Historik* on theorising the

[234] See Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory,* 117-123. There are key differences, however. For instance, Koselleck's theory on the historical contestation of concepts does not subscribe to Gallie's abstract notion of 'essential contestability'. See, W. B. Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* New Series vol. 56 (1955-1956), 167-198.

[235] His clearest remarks on the theory of conceptual history is in '*Begriffsgeschichte* and Social History', in *Futures Past*, 75-92; and Reinhart Koselleck, 'Introduction and Prefaces to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe'*, Michaela Richter trans., in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6:1 (2007), 1-37.

[236] Brunner, Conze Koselleck, eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*), vols. 1-8 (1972–90). Aside from editing, Koselleck contributed twelve entries to the *GG*: on *Bund, Demokratie, Emanzipation, Fortschritt, Geschichte, Herrschaft, Interesse, Krise, Revolution, Staat und Souveränität, Verwaltung and Volk*.

[237] This is discussed in Helge Jordheim, 'Does Conceptual History Really Need a Theory of Historical Times?' in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6:2 (Winter 2011), 33.

[238] See Michael Freeden, *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction,* 74-75; Michael Freeden, 'Ideologies and Conceptual History', 5-6; Bo Stråth, 'Ideology and Conceptual History', in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, Freeden et al.,15-17; Bo Stråth, 'Ideology and History', 36-38; and Bo Stråth, 'Review of *Futures Past*, by Reinhart Koselleck', in *European Journal of Social Theory* 8:4 (2005), 527-532.

[239] This is admittedly rather under-theorised by Koselleck as well. For the most comprehensive account, see Jan Iverson, 'Begrebshistorien efter Reinhart Koselleck', in *Slagmark* 48 (2007), 81-103; and Jan Iverson, 'About Key Concepts and How to Study Them', 67-73.

[240] Someone who downplays the connection between *Historik* and *Begriffsgeschichte* is John Zammito in his review essay, 'Koselleck's philosophy of historical time(s) and the practice of history', in *History and Theory* 43 (February 2004), 124-135.

[241] A selection of his writings is published under this title: Reinhart Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1988).

conditions of possible histories, something he thought was imperative in light of the ideological uses and abuses of history that blighted politics (and the historical discipline) at his time of writing.[242] In this, we must always remember that Koselleck approaches and theorises the study of language as a historian, not a linguist – and it is his interest in language in relation to historical experience and structure (*Strukturgeschichte*) that draws him to the historiographical study of key historical and political concepts.[243] As Gabriel Motzkin remarked at a conference on *Begriffsgeschichte* at the German Historical Institute in Washington (where Koselleck was present), when taken as a whole, Koselleck's work, 'seeks to bring the sense of time back into the sense of history *through* the medium of the analysis of language' [my emphasis].[244]

While he also urges scholars when writing history to pay attention to elements beyond language—for instance, what he calls the 'pre-linguistic' and 'extra-linguistic' conditions of history (climatic, geologic, institutional, etc.)—[245] historians, and especially conceptual historians, must of course work primarily with the words. But this is not to say that every word is a concept. By comparison, as Koselleck reads them, concepts must have a greater degree of generalisation and always hold claim to multiple meanings, unlike words. A concept is a 'concentrate of several substantial meanings'.[246] For instance, he uses the

[242] Helge Jordheim makes a similar claim in 'Does Conceptual History Really Need a Theory of Historical Times?', in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6(2) (2011), 21-41. Also see Jan Werner-Müller, 'On conceptual history', in *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, Darian Mcmahon and Samuel Moyn eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), esp. 74-76. On Koselleck's worry about ideology and history, see Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1988).

[243] Thus separating him from much of structural linguistics. This said, Koselleck was more positive about the work of the German linguist Jost Trier and the Romanian linguist Eugenio Coseriu, the former working on the difference between words and concepts, and the latter who most explicitly challenged Saussure's separation between *langue* and *parole*. See Koselleck, 'Sozialgeschichte und Begriffsgeschichte', in *Sozialgeschichte in Deutschland*, W. Schieder and V. Sellin eds. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), vol. 1, 91, 109. For a detailed analysis of these connections, see Iverson, 'About Key Concepts and How to Study Them', 67-73. Furthermore, on Trier and Koselleck, see Melvin Richter, *The History of Political and Social Concepts*, 48–49; and on Koselleck and Coseriu see Jordheim, 'Thinking in Convergences', 74-75.

[244] See Gabriel Motzkin, 'On Koselleck's Intuition of Time in History', *The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts: New Studies on Begriffsgeschichte*, Melvin Richter and Hartmut Lehmann eds., Occasional Paper 15 (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 1996), 45.

[245] See Koselleck, 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', 650-653.

[246] Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichte and Social History*, in *Futures Past*, 85.

example of the word 'we', which is only intelligible as a political concept when associated with a range of possible signifying and referential terms like 'nation', 'class', 'church', and so forth. 'We' on its own is nothing but a conceptual shell; but it is one which can 'contain', multiple referential words. To further this point he also uses the example of the concept of 'state' or 'the state' (*der Staat*), which includes word-objects like 'territory', 'domain', 'administration', 'army', etc.[247] Both of these examples showcase the spatial arrangement between a word and concept: words constitute what Koselleck refers to as a 'semantic field', borrowing elements from the linguist theory of Jost Trier,[248] that helps the historian to locate a concept. Words can become concepts, and of course concepts are themselves words; but at the same time, a concept is always more than a word.[249] While the meaning of a word can also be contested, a concept always contains within it various contestations of meaning at any one time. As Koselleck put it, 'a word presents potentialities for meaning; a concept unites within itself a plenitude of meaning'.[250]

Apart from the spatial division, another significant distinction is that the meaning of a concept is always wrapped up in socio-historical experience – in space *and* historical time. In a passage well known to conceptual historians, Koselleck claims that,

> The concept is bound to a word, but is at the same time more than a word: a word becomes a concept when the plenitude of politicosocial context of meaning and experience in and for which a word is used can be condensed into one word.[251]

Beyond generalisation, then, what is key here is that in being 'more than a word', for Koselleck, a concept always carries with it socio-historical 'baggage' in the form of the

[247] Ibid.
[248] He used the term 'conceptual field', developing what is known as 'field theory'. See Jost Trier, *Der deutsche Wortschatz im Sinnbezirk des Verstandes* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1931).
[249] For criticisms of Koselleck's theory on the relation between concept and language, see Clemens Knobloch, 'Überlegungen zur Theorie der Begriffsgeschichte aus sprach und kommunikationswissenschaftlicher Sicht', in *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 35 (1992), 7–24; Dietrich Busse, Historische Semantik: Analyse eines Programms (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1987); Heiner Schultz, 'Begriffsgeschichte und Argumentationsgeschichte', in *Historische Semantik und Begriffsgeschichte*, Reinhart Koselleck ed. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1978), 43–74. I take this list from Iverson, 'About Key Concepts and How to Study Them', 73.
[250] Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past*, 85.
[251] Ibid., 88.

experiences bound up in its space of meaning. It contains within it socially conditioned meanings, elements of past social organisation and also intentions with respect of the future – each, when assessed together, indicating the presence of what he calls the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous (*die Gleichzeitigkeit der Ungleichzeitigen*) layered within a concept.[252] Concepts therefore always refers to a world beyond a text – including the 'pre-linguistic' and 'extra-linguistic' anthropological conditions that have their own structures of repetition and dislocation.[253] Thus, as Elìas Palti explains, the concept is a construction that is both linguistic and extra-linguistic. It is a 'concentration of experiences and expectations, opinions and patterns of explaining historical reality'.[254] Or as Koselleck put it, 'a word becomes a concept when the full richness of a social and political context of meaning, in which and for which the word is used, is taken up in the word…[a concept] assembles the plurality of historical experiences as well as a series of theoretical issues in one single whole, which is only given in a concept and which only can be experienced there'.[255]

A concept's linguistic and extra-linguistic qualities provide both opportunities and barriers to gaining insights about historical reality.[256] For Koselleck, concepts serve as 'indicators of structural change' whilst we must also recognise a concept's capacity to 'affect political and social change', as Melvin Richter summarises it.[257] Koselleck writes that,

> On the one hand, they [concepts] point to something external to them, to the context in which they are used. On the other hand, this reality is perceived in terms of categories provided by language. Therefore, concepts are both indicators of and factors in political and social life.[258]

[252] Ibid., 79. This term is often translated differently – as the 'simultaneity of the nonsimultaneous' or the 'contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous'. The word *Ungleichzeitigkeit* best translates as 'non-sametimeliness'. On the initial use of this phrase, see Ernst Bloch, *Heritage of Our Times* [1935], Neville and Stephen Plaice trans. (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1990).
[253] A similar summarisation is made in Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, 'Koselleck, Arendt, and the Anthropology of Historical Experience', Tom Lampert trans., in *History and Theory* 49:2 (2010), 212-213.
[254] Elías José Palti, From Ideas to Concepts to Metaphors', in Sebastián ed., *Political Concepts and Time,* 53.
[255] Koselleck, 'Introduction and Prefaces to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*', 20.
[256] Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past*, 86.
[257] Richter, *The History of Social and Political Concepts*, 42.
[258] Koselleck, 'Response', in Lehmann and Richter, *The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts*, 61.

Or, as he put it elsewhere, a concept is 'indicative of the relations which it covers; [and] it is also a factor within them. Each concept establishes a particular horizon for potential experience and conceivable theory, and in this way sets a limit'.[259] This is to say that, history finds expression in concepts, though we can only understand events when conceptualised through language.[260] In the convergence of concept and history, language may be seen to reflect and also to affect historical change, even though, as he stresses, language cannot totally capture the whole of experience.[261] Nor does linguistic change and historical change occur simultaneously (for instance, he suggests that semantics change at a slower rate than historical events).[262] There is always a tension between the changes in the meaning of a word (*Wortbedeutungswandel*) or a thing (*Sachwandel*) and the capacity of each to reflect and respond to it. The language assigned to give an event meaning—by actors or historians later on—is never a full representation of what occurred. Therefore he argues that we cannot corroborate historical facts only from linguistic sources; rather *Begriffsgeschichte* is interested in the linguistic representation of occurrences in relation to other structural realities.[263]

It is this interest in the connectivity and (*contra* Heidegger and Gadamer) also the disjunction between language, structure and experience where Koselleck makes his most lasting empirical and theoretical contributions,[264] and which, as I mentioned above, relates his work in conceptual history to his writings on *Historik* and the transcendental theory of

[259] Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past*, 86.
[260] Koselleck, 'Introduction and Prefaces to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe'*, 20-21.
[261] Koselleck writes that, 'our concepts are founded in politicosocial systems that are far more complex than would be indicated by treating them simply as linguistics'. Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past*, 76.
[262] On this complication, between words as 'factors' and 'indicators' in historical change, see Koselleck, 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', 649-666.
[263] Koselleck, 'Introduction and Prefaces to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe'*, 21.
[264] On his critique of Heidegger and Gadamer's 'radical hermeneutics', see Reinhart Koselleck and Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Hermeneutik und Historik* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 1987).

possible histories.[265] Over the course of thirty years or so, he considered experience from these two vantage points: concerning structures in historical representation on one hand and their relationship to the situational experience on the other – revealing what he calls an 'anthropological given arc linking and relating historical experience with the knowledge of such experience'.[266]

To look at his theorising of historical time more closely, in surveying his disparate writings on the topic, the philosopher John Zammito calls Koselleck a 'veritable literary "hedgehog"' who 'worries his big idea over and over again'.[267] But one way to approach his 'big idea' is to consider it on these representational and experiential levels, one *in actu* and the other *ex post*, both of which explore the relationship 'between language and history in the process of events taking place' (*im Vollzug der Ereignisstiftung*).[268] On a representational level, historical time concerns the different ways in which historians structure past experience from the present—using conceptual history, but also those which are event-based or concern the *Longue Durée*—emphasising the plurality of possible historical times in representations of the past. Discussed in numerous places, he often represents these coexisting possible structuralisations of historical time with the geologic metaphor *Zeitschichten*, the layering of time, along with his oft-applied idea of the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous to explain the synchronic coexistence of different time structures that do not necessarily correspond.[269] *Zeitschichten* 'gestures, like its geological model, towards several levels of time (*Zeitebenen*)

[265] See, Reinhart Koselleck, 'One the need for Theory in the Discipline of History', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 1-19. On p. 4 the translator uses the phrase 'theory of periodization', when, in fact, a more accurate representation of Koselleck's theorisation would be a 'theory of historical time' or 'possible historical times'. On this, see Helge Jordheim, 'Against Periodization: Koselleck's Theory of Multiple Temporalities', in *History and Theory* 51 (2012), 152.
[266] Koselleck, 'History, Histories, and Formal Time Structures', in *Futures Past*, 93; and see Koselleck, 'Some Reflections on the Temporal Structure of Conceptual Change', in *Main Trends in Cultural History: Ten Essays,* Willem Melching and Wyger Velema eds. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), 15. On his linking between experience and representation, see Luca Scuccimarra, 'Semantics of Time and Historical Experience: Remarks on Koselleck's *Historik*', in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 4 (2008), 160-168.
[267] Zammito, Koselleck's Philosophy of Historical Time(s) and the Practice of History', 126.
[268] Reinhart Koselleck, 'Sprachwandel und Ereignisgeschichte', in *Begriffsgeschichten: Studien zur Semantik und Pragmatik der politichen und sozialen Sprache* (Frankfurt and Main: Suhrkamp, 2006), 32f.
[269] Reinhart Koselleck, *Zeitschichten: Studien Zur Historik* (MIT Einem Beitrag Von Hans-Georg Gadamer Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2000), p. 9.

of differing duration and differentiable origin, which are nonetheless present and effectual at the same time'.[270] He claims that *Zeitschichten*, 'allows us to make analytical distinctions between different temporal levels, where people are living, events are taking place, or their more long-lasting preconditions are to be found'.[271]

Meanwhile, at the other end of the 'anthropological arc', he considers how language relates to his quasi-Heideggerian interest in the experience of historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*)—'the relation of the acting and suffering people to historical time'[272]—and more specifically, to the contingent historicity of human societies (in contrast to Heidegger's individualised *Dasein*).[273] As is already well known to casual readers of Koselleck,[274] in the scope of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, *Begriffsgeschichte's* recording of the semantic change of key concepts documented not only shifts in definitional meaning, but for Koselleck indicated a new experience of 'temporalisation' (*Verzeitlichung*) taking place in categories of meaning that when assessed together suggested a qualitative 'transformation in temporal experience'[275] taking place in modernity. Looking synchronically and diachronically he saw this occurring during what he called a 'saddle period' (*Sattelzeit*) between the mid- eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[276] Punctuated by the French and Industrial Revolutions, it was, at least according to his periodisation, an era where the temporalisation of language suggested the arrival of a modern consciousness of time, a *Neuzeit*,[277] where descriptive (and spatial) concepts like 'democracy', 'republic' and 'revolution' gained new temporal meaning – denoting that a historical process was taking

[270] Ibid., translation from J. Zammito, 'Review: Koselleck's Philosophy of Historical Time(s)', 124-135.
[271] Koselleck, *Zeitschichten*, 19.
[272] Reinhart Koselleck, 'The Temporalization of Concepts', Klaus Sondermann trans., in *Redescriptions: Finnish Yearbook of Political Thought* 1 (1997), 16.
[273] This is discussed by Alexandre Escudier in 'Temporalization and Political Modernity', in *Political Concepts and Time*, 146.
[274] For instance see Jonathan Maynard, 'A map of the field of ideological analysis', in *Journal of Political Ideologies* 18:3 (2011), 303.
[275] Koselleck, *Zeitschichten*, 324.
[276] On the idea of a *Sattelzeit*, see Koselleck, 'Need for Theory in History', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 5-6.
[277] Koselleck, 'Modern Concepts of Movement', in *Futures Past*, 231-266.

place. Along with the incorporation of a host of neologisms, including many '-isms' familiar to students of ideology, he charts how neologisms and previously spatial terms become what he calls 'concepts of movement' (*Bewegungsbegriffe*) that in modernity related less to static experience and instead operated as transitional concepts oriented and designating a movement towards the future.[278]

For Koselleck what makes time distinctly modern, as a *Neuzeit*, is that it becomes newly historicised. In the introduction to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* he wrote that, 'the entire [social and political] vocabulary was reoriented in terms of baselines set within a philosophy of history', something he was highly critical of in his own age.[279] In his assessment, Kari Palonen wrote that in the end, for Koselleck, 'the temporalization of concepts is a special case of the temporalization of history'.[280] In other words, as something temporalised, history became something no longer thought to occur 'in time' but came to constitute time. Thus, overlaid on top (and often replacing) structures of rhythmic natural time (*Denaturalisierung*), chronological time (*Abfolge der Ereignisse*) or eschatological prophecy (*Säkularisierung*), the temporalised language of the *Neuzeit* reveals a dominant sense of historical time, and one which opened up the possibilities for different narratives co-existing and competing at any one time. Better put, then, Koselleck conceptually derived historical thesis contends that a fundamental component of modernity was the existence of historical time *in the plural* – each of different makeup and set moving at various velocities.[281] Koselleck writes that in modernity, 'time is no longer simply the medium in which all histories take place; it gains a historical quality. Consequently, history no longer

[278] Koselleck, 'Introduction to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*', 2-4.
[279] Ibid., 12.
[280] Ibid., p. 49.
[281] Koselleck discusses the pluralisation of historical time in reference to Herder's *Metakritik* of Kant's transcendental ascetics. Herder writes that, 'In reality, every mutable thing has within itself the measure of its time; this persists even in the absence of any other; no two worldly things have the same measure of time. . . . There are therefore (to be precise and audacious) at any one time in the Universe infinitely many times'. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Metakritik zur Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1799) (Berlin 1955), 68. Quoted in Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 2.

occurs in, but through, time. Time becomes a dynamic and historical force in its own right'.[282] Unlike earlier histories (as *Historie*), historical time (as *Geschichte*) allows one, as Koselleck put it, to 'deduce conceptually progress, decadence, acceleration, or delay, the "not yet" and the "no longer", the "earlier" or "later than", the "too early" and the "too late", situation and duration—whatever differentiating conditions must enter so that concrete historical motion might be rendered visible'.[283]

Moreover, for Koselleck, the emergence of a more subjective historical time showcased two further meta-historical developments that are both useful for further research in political theory. On a meta-historical level he refers to, 'first, the expected otherness of the future; and, second, connected with it, the experience, at once disturbing and widely gaining acceptance, of acceleration (*Beschleunigung*) by means of which one's own time is distinguished from the preceding time'.[284] To take these in turn, first, by the 'otherness of the future' he is referring to what he sees as a widening break between the experience of the past and future opening up during the *Sattelzeit* – or as he put it in Gadamerian terms, between the categories of a past-present 'space of experience' (*Erfahrungsraum*) and present-future 'horizon of expectation' (*Erwartungshorizont*).[285] This is to say that instead of a static time of reoccurring experiences, the contingent subjectivity of historical time(s) emphasised a future of plural possibilities, a 'heterogeneity of ends' (*Heterogonie der Zwecke*) that no longer resemble the past.[286] As a consequence, it is the future, not the present or past, that becomes the dominant tense in what Françios Hartog would later characterise as a modern regime of historicity (*Régime d'Historicité*).[287] Koselleck documented how this categorical shift is first

[282] Koselleck, 'Modern Concepts of Movement', 236.
[283] Koselleck, History, Histories, and Formal Time Structures, in *Futures Past*, 95. For more on this see Helge Jordhiem, 'Thinking in Convergences', 81-82.
[284] Koselleck, 'The Eighteenth Century as the Beginning of Modernity', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 168.
[285] See Koselleck, '"Space of Experience" and "Horizon of Expectation": Two Historical Categories', in Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 255-275.
[286] Koselleck, 'History, Histories, and Formal Time Structures, in *Futures Past*, 102.
[287] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and the Experiences of Time,* Saskia Brown trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

evident in historical writing of the period, which no longer considers the past as a purveyor of lessons rooted in experience, recalling Cicero's maxim *Historia Magistra Vitae*, but instead tends to mould history into a 'collective singular' (*Kollektivsingular*) that is seen as forward moving.[288]

On acceleration, meanwhile, Koselleck's thinking is split between two claims showcasing the interaction between language and historical forces: on one hand concepts are reactive to the fact that aspects of life are accelerating in parts of Europe from the late 18th century onward, according to various metrics (transport, production, etc.); and on the other hand, partially as a result, actors start to represent history as *needing* to move faster. Either way, each utilises and refers to various structures and structuralisations of speed (*Geschwindigkeit*). [289] To this, there is a second dimension concerning the type of acceleration, marked by concepts reflecting the intensity of change. Some changes occur (or according to actors must occur) over a short period of time, what he calls a 'rush of events'—seen in concepts like 'revolution', 'political revolution' or 'crisis'—whereas other changes may occur more slowly over a longer period of time – seen in the concepts of 'progress', 'industrialisation' or 'democratisation'.[290] I say *may* because many of these concepts can be utilised either in arguments for intense change or measured change.[291]

Moving on, and significantly for our purposes, he then discusses how concepts expressing the temporalisation of history soon proliferate, or 'democratise' (*Demokratisierung*) to use Koselleck's preferred term, within a wider discursive field, including into political discourse (*Politisierung*) as 'combative concepts' (*Kampfbegriffe*), as he calls them. In using this term, his argument about the antagonism inherent in political

[288] Koselleck shows how the collective singular 'Geschichte' replaces the plural 'Geschichten'. See Koslleck, 'Geschichte', in Reinhart Koselleck et. al. eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* Vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1975), 593-717.
[289] See Koselleck, 'Is there and Acceleration of History?', in *High-Speed Society: Social Acceleration, Power and Modernity* Hartmut Rosa and William E. Schulmann (eds) (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), pp. 113-134.
[290] Koselleck, 'Is there an Acceleration of History?', in Rosa and Schulmann, *High-Speed Society*, 127.
[291] On intensity, see Motzkin, 'Koselleck's Intuition of Time in History', in Lehmann and Richter, 43.

language is reminiscent of Carl Schmitt's sociology of concepts (*Begriffssoziologie*) and his discussion of 'conceptual oppositions', on which Koselleck also wrote an essay.[292] 'Concepts', Schmitt wrote, are constituted in 'concrete oppositions'; all 'political concepts' go on to acquire their 'intellectual force and historical significance' in its opposition to an 'enemy', a 'concrete antithesis' or 'counter concept'.[293] Similarly, in his own words, Koselleck tweaked this in writing that, 'the linguistic usage of politics, like that of everyday life, is permanently based on this fundamental figure of *asymmetric* opposition'.[294] But by linking the politicisation of concepts with a theory of temporalisation, which Schmitt did less explicitly,[295] Koselleck wrote that in the *Neuzeit*,

> There has hardly been a central concept of political theory or social programs which does not contain a coefficient of temporal change, in the absence of which nothing can be recognized, nothing thought or argued, without the loss of conceptual force. *Time itself becomes a title of legitimation open to occupation from all sides* [my emphasis]. Specific legitimizing concepts would no longer be possible without temporal perspective.[296]

Of particular interest here are certain abstracted forward-looking concepts he charts as being incorporated into a number of newly emergent political ideologies aimed at mass appeal.[297] In modern time, he says, there emerges a fresh set of practical socio-political concepts, either brand-new or reformulations of older forms, which in their orientation pointed forwards in the direction of political change and improvement.[298] They are what he

[292] Koselleck, 'The Historical-Political Semantics of Asymmetric Counterconcepts', in *Futures Past*, 155-191.
[293] Carl Schmitt, *Hugo Preuss: Sein Staatsbegriff und seine Stellung in der Deutschen Rechtslehre* (Tübingen, 1930), 5. Quoted in Olsen, *History in the Plural*, 188.
[294] Koselleck, 'The Historical-Political Semantics of Asymmetric Counterconcepts', in *Futures Past*, 156. They are 'asymmetric' according to Koselleck because the exact relationship between conceptual pairings is not always universally recognised.
[295] On the influence of Schmitt on Koselleck, see Niklas Olsen, 'Carl Schmitt, Reinhart Koselleck and the foundations of history and politics', in *History of European Ideas* 37:2 (2011), 197-208.
[296] Koselleck, 'Concepts of Movement', in *Futures Past*, 248.
[297] Koselleck, 'Introduction to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*', 13.
[298] Ibid., 13-14. Elsewhere he says that 'many basic concepts, above all those designating movements – isms – concur in the demand that future history should differ fundamentally from the past. Among such concepts is "progress," "development," "emancipation," "liberalism," "democratization," "socialism," "communism"'. Koselleck, 'Response', in Lehmann and Richter, 'The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts, 61.

calls ‘conducting concepts’ that oriented social and political activity.[299] Temporal orientation is a major feature of this. ‘Political and social concepts become the navigational instruments of the changing movement of history’, he writes. ‘They do not only indicate or record given facts. They themselves become factors in the formation of consciousness and the control of behaviour’.[300]

To discuss his use of the ideology concept more precisely, in his specific use of the concept, he argued that, starting in the *Sattelzeit*, temporal concepts became ‘ideologisable’ (*Ideologiesierbarkeit*); that is, generalised enough to be incorporated into semantic constructions that disarticulate from a particular meaning. Indeed, their controlling function stems from their amorphous character; or more precisely, in their ability to disarticulate from context on account of their ambiguity, but also in the possibility of narrowing their meaning depending on the immediate situation. Summarising this, Koselleck writes that, ‘the experiential substance of many [ideological] concepts was thus reduced, while their claim to realisation increased in proportion’;[301] and elsewhere that ‘such terms…have the advantage of being general and ambiguous. These qualities facilitate open-ended, unspecified expressions that can be understood in different, contradictory senses depending on the class or interest of the person using them’.[302]

To elaborate on one example, he discusses how the Aristotelian concepts of ‘republic’ and ‘democracy’, both previously referential to specific instances, became, when ideologised, more ambiguous and inherited a coefficient of future change. Republic became republicanism and democracy diminishes as a historical reference to become a term fused with hope and action. In this, Koselleck mentions the concept of democratism (*Demokratismus*), though

[299] Koselleck, The ‘Temporalisation of Concepts’, 23.
[300] Koselleck, ‘Perspective and Temporality’, in *Futures Past*, 129.
[301] Koselleck, ‘Begriffsgeschichte and Social History’, in *Futures Past*, 80.
[302] Koselleck, ‘Introduction to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*’, 13.

today we often talk of this in terms of democratisation.[303] Following on from these examples, to try and couch this rather awkward phrase into something more familiar to ideology theorists, in employing the term *Ideologiesierbarkeit* Koselleck is pointing to their potential 'decontestability', a process which he characterises in terms of the formation of a collective singular (*Kollecktivsingular*). An example of this is where stories or histories (*Geschichten*) become 'history as such' (*Geschichte an sich*), *revolution* becomes 'The Revolution', possible freedoms become Freedom, and where numerous experiences are wrapped up in the collective singular of Progress (*Fortschritt*) – such as 'development' (*Entwicklung*) or 'emancipation' (*Emanzipation*), and so forth.[304] When we consider this in light of his broader work, we see that the contestation seen in ideologisation and singularisation is in many ways a response to the contingent possibility of different historical times found in modernity, even if, contrary to Koselleck's belief, some ideologies, like forms of liberalism, in fact embrace the possibility for a plurality of times. Given these inconsistencies, how we might sift through Koselleck's work in the interest of future research requires further elaboration.

Koselleck's Empirical and theoretical contributions

Despite Koselleck's narrow reading of how ideologies come about and behave semantically, the core argument in this thesis, to reiterate it, is that ideology analysis has much to gain from both his empirical findings and methodological guidelines, especially in order to help establish the linguistically mediated contestation of historical time and temporality—the contextual politicking *of* time—as a core feature of political thinking. On an empirical level one can rightly quibble with his *Sattelzeit* as crude periodisation,[305] and question his insistence on the extent to which there is a divergence between future expectation and past

[303] Ibid., 11-12. On 'democratism', see Koselleck, 'The Temporalization of Concepts', 21.
[304] See Koselleck, 'Historia Magistra Vitae', in *Futures Past*, 35. And on progress as a collective singular and oppositional concept, see Koselleck, '"Progress" and "Decline"', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 218-235.
[305] See Lynn Hunt, *Measuring Time, Making History* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008), 75-76; and Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and Avant-Garde* (London: Verso, 1995), 13-14.

experience (or for that matter, that all temporal concepts must be future-oriented). Of course, many ideologies continue to promote the need for threads of connectivity, of varying strength, between the present and future and the memories, myths and traditions of the past. Still, we can nonetheless appreciate that around the end of the eighteenth century, if not sooner, the erosion of dominant experiential and eschatological temporal frameworks marked at least the increasing prominence of socio-political responses to the contingency and malleability of historicised time from which ideologies gained traction and had a significant impact.

It is important to remember, though, that we need not rely on his empirical findings and temporalisation thesis in order to benefit from many aspects of his anthropologically arched theory of historical time. Rather, from his work, we can begin to assemble different tools and locate reoccurring areas of temporal contestation in order to help reveal different forms of temporal politicking going on, each indicative of four themes: ideology/history, in time/of time, synchrony/diachrony and singularisation/pluralisation. Here I present two of them, which are not mutually exclusive, that I will employ in the chapters that follow – one adhering closer to *Begriffsgeschichte* and the temporality of language and the other identifying certain 'modes' of temporal politicking in light of Koselleck's theorisation of conceptual history and his *Historik*.

I start by saying that the idea of synchronicity and the nonsynchronous in particular provides one of his richest theoretical contributions to this effort. It does so in at least four ways. The first concerns his instance on the simultaneity of the dimensions of past and future extending 'Janus-faced' from a concept in a particular point in time (*Zustand*).[306] That is, we must always consider the temporalisations extending outwards from concepts, those explicitly temporal and those not. All 'concepts contain past experience, present reality, and expectations for the future', writes Koselleck, even if some dimensions are more dominant

[306] Koselleck, 'Introduction to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*', 9.

than others.[307] Second, and related to this, Koselleck also claims that all concepts have an internalised temporal structure (*Temporale Binnenstruktur*) that contain meanings gained across different points in diachronic time, and which, given their degree of sedimentation, have varying degrees of permanence.[308] Put in another way, the internal components of a concept change at varying rates. Take the concept of liberalism, for instance, which contains different internal meanings and emphasis—such as notions of non-interference and emancipation—that entered the concept at different points in its evolution and which have varying degrees of importance and permanence.[309] To this we can add that many concepts also *gain* temporalisation through their associations with other temporal concepts, something I elaborate on below. The third influence is in relation to the ideologisation of historical events, where a moment that is chronologically static—a war, election or market turmoil—may be placed (or 'structured') in different places in a historical narrative. Depending on their location and significance vis-à-vis existing structures, events gain varied meaning and importance. Fourth, and finally, the term is also relevant to the various accounts of the rate of historical change that intersect the same synchronic moment. Diachronic time may be seen to be moving past a particular *Zustand* at different rates and in varying directions, whereby the same chronological event has a different impact on rates of historical movement and change. What accelerates or decelerates historical change in one narrative may have less of an impact in others.

With this being said, it is important to note that for political theorists there are certain limitations or rather opportunities for refinement to Koselleck's temporal thesis and broader theorisation. In light of the above, contrary to many of Koselleck's remarks, for our purposes synchronicity need not necessitate nonsynchronicity. In political thinking the layers of time

[307] Koselleck, 'Some Reflections on the Temporal Structure', 11.
[308] See Koselleck, 'Introduction to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*', 30; and Koselleck, Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past*, 90.
[309] For more on this see Michael Freeden, *Liberalism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 38.

and diachronicity often interact and contest one another. Longer-term structures and horizons impact the short-term, and vice versa. While Koselleck clarified this in other places, his use of the metaphor *Zeitschichten* does not capture the interplay between layers and rival temporalisation.

Meanwhile, there is a more fundamental question that concerns the intersection between time and language both internally and externally to ideological concepts. Koselleck was always confident that 'there is an entire socio-political vocabulary which refers to coefficients of movement and change',[310] and for decades now, conceptual historians and theorists attuned to the trade who are interested in the temporality of language have continued to refer to Koselleck's theory of temporalisation and locate temporality through various temporal indicators and coefficients attached to concepts. The presence of an '–ism' or '-ization' are two popular tip-offs; while for other concepts the temporal dimension is more explicitly thematised, as in the case of progress or history. Thirdly, temporality may also be revealed by a concept's altered meaning and application, as in the case with the modern use of concepts like revolution or crisis (*Krise*); or by contrast they can exemplify stabilised meanings.[311]

But therein lies a problematic in Koselleck's temporalisation theory that has existed from the start – that time, temporality, historicity, etc. are not only found in explicitly temporal or temporalised concepts. Indeed, there are also times and time horizons to be found within seemingly non-temporal concepts like those of liberty, equality and toleration. The study of temporalisation should therefore include not only concepts of movement, but temporal horizons extending from and attached to concepts with no explicit temporalisation. One way of overcoming the singular non-temporality of concepts is to develop methods for

[310] Koselleck, 'The Temporalisation of Concepts', 20.
[311] He often cites constructional forms as an example of this, mentioning the classifications made in Plato's *Laws*, Aristotle's *Politics* and Polybius's theory of the cycle of constitutions. See, for instance, Koselleck, 'History, Histories, and Formal Time Structures', in *Futures Past*, 100.

locating temporality in the associative words of a concept – thereby exposing what we can call the temporalities of the non-temporal. Ideology scholars are well positioned to do this. For instance, a concept's temporal horizon pertains both to internal components of a concept (e.g. concepts like emancipation, opportunity and civic humanism that are often components of the concept liberty) and in a concept's relationship with other words and concepts exterior to it (e.g. liberty and references to scientific progress or evolutionary development). It is therefore important for researchers to map out the location of concepts in terms of their proximity to other concepts within an ideological cluster. Like the conceptual components and relationships outlined by Freeden's morphological approach, these relationships may be ineliminable, quasi- or entirely contingent. This said, it would be exceedingly rare for an ideology to ignore temporality entirely. Even if this is the case, atemporality or non-temporality, the latter exemplified in the attempt to deny historical change, for instance, is still a temporal consideration. Elements of Fascism is one example of this.[312]

Another way to incorporate Koselleck's work into the study of political ideologies, and political thinking more broadly, is to take some of his conceptual history derived thematisations of historical time to identify various reoccurring modes of temporal politicking common to political activity. We can identify these modes in various places – namely, from his temporal and linguistic considerations in *Kritik und Krise*, which I use in the next chapter; the thematisations offered by *Begriffsgeschichte*; and those from the anthropolitical categories and structure considerations in his *Historik*. I use elements of these to offer three *topoi* in the three chapters that follow – on the politicking of contingency, of horizons and of the movement of time.

[312] See Charles S Maier, The Politics of Time: changing paradigms of collective time and private time in the modern era', in Charles S Maier ed. *Changing boundaries of the political: Essays on the evolving balance between the state and society, public and private in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 151-178.

Chapter Two
The Politics of Contingency

> Something begins in order to end:
> and adventure doesn't let itself be extended;
> it achieves significance only through its death.
> …
> Each moment appears only to bring on the moments after
> To each moment I cling with all my heart:
> I know that it is unique, irreplaceable –
> And yet I would not lift a finger to prevent it from being annihilated.
> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea*[1]

Among the varied interests in political theory, a core feature of the concept of politics and what it means to act politically is one that many contemporary political theorists spend surprisingly little time thinking and writing about. Conceptualising politics, nowadays an undersubscribed activity in is own right, usually concerns its space and scope. Politics or 'the political' is seen as a particular domain for interaction that eclipses a second important enterprise – an examination of the action component and performativity of politics as a practice or mode of activity.[2] In other words theorists continue to locate politics spatially, but spend less time theorising the temporal experience of *politicking*.

In broadly neglecting the contingent experience of political practice,[3] and the issues of experience, horizons of possibility, judgement, conditionality and uncertainty it brings, political theorists tend to reserve an interest in the concept of contingency, notably in the area of critical theory, as a reminder of the ephemerality of modern ideas, orders and systems – advanced through arguments about 'detraditionalization', [4] 'dislocation', [5] 'post-

[1] Jean-Paul Satre, *Nausea*, Robert Baldick trans. (London: Penguin, 2000), 59.
[2] On the meaning of the concept of 'the political' as-sphere, see for instance, Emily Hauptmann, 'A Local History of "The Political"', in *Political Theory*, 32 (2004), 34-60; Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political* (London: Routledge, 2005); Kari Palonen, *The Struggle with Time* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2014), esp., 33-64; and for politics as a mode of experience, see for instance, Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).
[3] Kari Palonen has suggested that the concept of 'contingency' is becoming fashionable in political theory, but most of his examples are in fact firmly in the disciplines of history and the history of political thought, and certainly not Anglo-American political theory. See Kari Palonen, 'Editorial: Contingency in Political Theory', in *Rediscriptions: The Finnish Yearbook of Political Thought* 3 (1999), 5-10.
[4] Paul Heelas, Scott Lash and Paul Morris eds., *Detraditionalization* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1995).
[5] Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* (London: Verso, 1990).

foundationalism',[6] 'falling out of history'[7] and time being 'out of joint', to borrow Hamlet's phrase.[8] The response is often a meditation on a Benjaminian or Foucaultian 'ontology of the present' that embraces a prescriptive notion of contingent historicity or a Bergson-inspired temporal experience of 'becoming'.[9] Meanwhile in contemporary political philosophy the most prominently advertised remedies to our situational predicaments often continue to eschew considerations of time, or even space, altogether.[10] This is especially true with a great deal of analytic political theory, and in particular the dominant approaches to philosophical liberalism (and the disagreements they produce), which still rely on neo-Kantian meditations on timeless ethical universals.[11] The drawbacks to this philosophical preference for detemporalisation and 'anti-political reductivism' have not gone unnoticed.[12] One response from certain corners has been a purposeful interest in 'political realism', designed to urge the normatively inclined to alter their approach and reflect on the unavoidable power dynamics and contestations in the political sphere, which call the applicability of various ideal theories into question.[13] But even among political theory realists, the boundaries and limitations of

[6] Oliver Marchart, *Post Foundational Political Thought*: *Political Difference in Nancy, Lefort, Badiou and Laclau* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).
[7] Wendy Brown, *Politics out of History* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), esp. 3-17.
[8] For more on the political theory related to this phrase, see Smita A. Rahman, *Time, Memory and the Politics of Contingency* (London: Routledge, 2015).
[9] On Foucault's genealogy, see Michael Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', John F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon trans., in Paul Rainbow ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 76-100. On Benjamin's concept of '*Jetztzeit*' see, Walter Benjamin, 'On the Concept of History', in Hannah Arendt ed. and Harry Zorn trans., *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections* (London: Pimlico, 1999), 245-255; and see Brown, *Politics out of History,* 91-120, 138-173. On the politics of becoming see William Connolly, *Neuropolitics*: *Thinking, Culture, Speed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).
[10] See, for instance, Sheldon Wolin, 'The liberal/democratic divide: on Rawls' Political Liberalism', in *Political Theory* 24 (1996), 99-119.
[11] For one critique of political moralism, see William Galston, 'Realism in political theory', in *European Journal of Political Theory* 9 (2010), 385–411.
[12] This phrase is from Glen Newey, *After Politics* (London: Palgrave, 2001), 18.
[13] On political realism, see Raymond Geuss, *Philosophy and Real Politics* (Princeton University Press, 2008); Bernard Williams, *In the Beginning Was the Deed: Realism and Moralism in Political Argument*, Geoffrey Hawthorn ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Bonnie Honig and Marc Stears, 'The New Realism', in Jonathan Floyd and Marc Stears eds., *Political Philosophy verses History?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and Mark Philp, 'What is to be done?: Political theory and political realism', in *European Journal of Political Theory* 9:4 (2010), 466-484.

politics are sold as second-order considerations – and often in trying to reconcile contingency with pre-established meta-ethical convictions.[14]

Still, there are a few emergent exceptions to this trend, found most prominently at the intersection between conceptual history and in the study of political ideologies, which in the tradition of a Weberian exercise in *Verstehen* are reinvigorating a primary interest in theorising the everyday practice of politicking simply for its own sake. We can split these efforts into three strands, spearheaded in the area of conceptual history by the work of Kari Palonen and Michael Freeden, who both propose, in their respective ways,[15] that we can better theorise what it means to go about the activity of politicking by analysing the semantic complexity of the localised political discourse used to describe it. In this, their work shows similarities to contextual approaches to understanding political language employed by many historians of political thought, where synchronic meaning and contingency are core themes.[16] To an even larger degree, though, they owe a great deal to Reinhart Koselleck's work in *Begriffsgeschichte*: in its study of the changing meaning of political concepts both synchronically and diachronically, and in his theorising on the relationship between historical experience and linguistic representation.[17]

To explain the three strands of studying the activity of politics, the first refers to Palonen's Koselleck-inspired history of the concept of politics as an 'activity concept', which traces various linguistic references to the experience and practice of politics in the European

[14] On the limits of realism, see Esther Abin, 'Political Realism, Contingency and Philosophy', in *Redescriptions: Yearbook of Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory* 16 (2012/2013), 39-60; and Michael Freeden, 'Interpretative realism and prescriptive realism', in *Journal of Political Ideologies* 17:1 (2012), 1-11.

[15] On differences in their respective approaches, see Michael Freeden, 'Review: Kari Palonen, Politics and Conceptual History', in *European Journal of Political Theory* 15:1 (2016), 124-130.

[16] On the contextual approach, see Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Regarding Method Vol. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). For remarks on contingency and time, see John G. A. Pocock, *Politics, Language, and Time* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); and Quentin Skinner, 'Rhetoric and Conceptual Change', *Finnish Yearbook of Political Thought* 3 (2009), 61-62.

[17] On this relationship, see Reinhart Koselleck, 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', in *The Journal of Modern History* 61:4 (1986), 649-666.

space – be it mostly in Germany, France, Finland and Britain.[18] To do so, he categorises this activity conceptualisation through different historical descriptions of prominent '*topoi*', or themes of the concept of politics, by studying historical references to its routinised moves. And in doing so he associates the temporalisation of politics with common political concepts like 'judgement', 'deliberation', 'policy-making' and the use of the metaphoric of politics as a 'play' or a 'game', all in order to better unpack a linguistically-revealed horizonal component of political practice.[19] Meanwhile, the second strand, advanced in a recent book by Michael Freeden, investigates the language indicative of a distinct and more widespread capacity for thinking politically (e.g. the human capacity to formulate goals, appeal to emotion or channel wills to power, practiced in order to influence how politics devises plans and ways of organising society).[20] This is in many ways an adjacent enterprise to his more longstanding interest in the semantics of political ideologies, which comprises the third strand, where Freeden makes the claim that ideologies operate as semantic suppliers of meaning through contesting the contingent meaning and relationships between well-worn political concepts like 'liberty', 'equality' and 'community' that are the familiar mainstays to political discourse.[21] As discussed in the previous chapter, he suggests we understand ideologies as linguistic systems that undergo morphological changes in meaning and organisation over contingent time and space.[22]

Taken together, each of these can be seen as theoretical attempts to categorise aspects of political practice, whilst at the same time reaffirming that we can only come to understand the activity of politics as a contingent experience through unpacking the moves, horizons and

[18] On the concept of 'politicking', see Kari Palonen, 'Two Concepts of Politics', in *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory* 7:1 (2006), 11-25.
[19] Palonen, *Struggle with Time*, 21-26.
[20] See Michael Freeden, *The Political Theory of Political Thinking* (Oxford University Press, 2013), esp., 22-63.
[21] On ideology in reference to political thinking, see Freeden, 'Language, Interpretation and Ideology', in *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches*, David Leopold and Marc Stears eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 196-215.
[22] See Michael Freeden, 'Political Concepts and Ideological Morphology', in *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 2:2 (1994), 140-164; and Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

intimations of political actors. Yet along these three strands, the recent work on political activity, thinking and ideological discourse still has more to say about a related dimension of the temporalisation of politicking, and indeed Koselleck's thinking,[23] which involves how politics *temporalises* the experience of contingency.

Thus, in what follows, I want to move from focusing on the contingency of politics to theorising what can be called the 'politics of contingency': exploring how political thinking and activity interacts with and harnesses the contingencies of social and historical life for political purposes.[24] My response to contemporary political philosophy and critical theory is twofold: first, that contrary to fashionable readings of modernity, we should understand that political thinking has *always* dealt with (and profited from) issues of historicity and contingency; and second, to political philosophers, it reminds that in their own claims over the timeless their enterprise is simply an iteration of a broader politics of time.

Koselleck's thinking has a great deal of purchase in this discussion, even if Koselleck is himself guilty of characterising a uniform modern teleology. Nevertheless, through a broader reading of Koselleck's reflections on the concept of contingency (*Kontingenz*), I argue that in various places he alights on three dimensions to the contingency concept relevant to the study of the linguistic politics of time, each moving away from teleology to embrace a theory of the plurality of historical times.

The first dimension is Koselleck's Schmittian endorsement of the contingency and contestation that lies at the heart of political activity. This is the normative argument behind *Kritik und Krise*, though one he more-or-less leaves behind thereafter. Still, it is his initial response to historical singularisation. But subsequently, in moving away from Schmitt, he

[23] On the importance of time to his overall thinking, see Reinhart Koselleck, 'Some Reflections on the Temporal Structure of Conceptual Change', in *Main Trends in Cultural History: Ten Essays,* Willem Melching and Wyger Velema eds. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), 7-16.

[24] On the different understandings of the concept of contingency, see Andreas Schedler, 'Mapping Contingency', in Ian Shapiro and Sonu Bedi eds., *Political Contingency: Studying the Unexpected, the Accidental, and the Unforeseen*, (New York: NYU Press, 2007), 59-78.

reformulates his response to singularisation to advocate for contingency and plurality within the theorisation of history. I argue that this theory of history promotes two further conceptions of contingency, both relevant to political theory: first, he approaches the concept epistemologically, where contingency constitutes an indeterminate historical happening as chance (*Zufall*) or surprise (*Überraschung*); and second, he adds an ontological dimension—his own take on the 'ontology of the present'—in relating contingency to the conditions of possible histories. In what follows I take each of these in turn. I then finish the chapter by exploring its implications for theorising a mode of 'contingency politicking' from two angles – on affirming the contingency of politics and the possibility for the linguistic politicking of contingency. But before moving on to this, I offer a prelude on the concept of contingency itself, alighting on salient conceptual meanings relevant to Koselleck's contribution.

Theorising contingency as a temporal concept

In the above discussion, I note that contingency is a frequent issue in the normative and historical approaches to the study of political thought. One epistemological reading of contingency is that it concerns the essential and non-essential properties of various systems of thought.[25] We can define a door as a hinged or revolving barrier; otherwise it is something other than a door. But whether the door is wooden or metal, opens easily or is painted red are peripheral, contingent, qualities. In addition, a second understanding of the concept relevant to the study of political thought refers to the specific contingency of linguistic meaning, given the 'horizon of possible meanings', even a surplus of meanings, both in terms of the definitional meaning of a concept and also in how language assigns meaning to historical

[25] For a useful introduction to the different philosophical conceptions of contingency, see Justus Meyer, 'Contingency', in *Synthese* 8:1/2 (1950/51), 73-90.

experience.[26] To put this in Saussurian terms, linguistic signifiers and concepts are in the end a means of creating a contingent reality.[27]

But when we attempt to thematise the politics *of* contingency and the political use of the concept for doing so, we enter a more complex lexical landscape. For instance, the Oxford English Dictionary offers a range of disconnected permutations of the concept: referring to contingency, contingencies, the contingent and things being contingent-upon something, or even something done contingently – the latter an admittedly moribund usage to mean 'not of necessity' or 'depending on circumstances'.[28] A further problem is that words like 'contingency' or 'the contingent' are infrequently mentioned in everyday political discourse. As Andreas Schedler has shown in his map of the political use of the concept, a cursory search on Lexis Nexus reveals little. When contingency appears it is usually in reference to particular, often technical, issues: to laws and money—'contingency clauses' and 'contingent liabilities'—while politicians and policy documents also discuss contingency in reference to natural disasters and unforeseen circumstances. There are 'contingency plans' for such occurrences and 'contingency budgets' or 'contingency funds' to pay for them. Outcomes may also be 'contingent upon' other happenings. There are home sale contingency clauses, and budgets may be contingent upon tax receipts. Meticulously planned political theory modules may be contingent upon sufficient enrolment.[29]

Meanwhile the philosophical discussion of the concept is far richer. Still, we can pick out a number of common features. As Justus Meyer has written, the concept of contingency has been a longstanding 'refuge for our ignorance (*asylum ignorantiae*)'. It serves when previous experience fails to meet the requirements for predictability or explanation. The laws

[26] On contingency and horizon of meaning see Niklas Luhmann, *The Differentiation of Society*, Stephen Holmes and Charles Larmore trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 345.
[27] See Jonathan Culler, *Ferdinand de Saussure, Revised Edition* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1986), 45-55.
[28] Oxford English Dictionary, *sub verbo* 'contingency', http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/40247?redirectedFrom=contingency#eid.
[29] Schedler, 'Mapping Contingency', 54.

of contingency must therefore start with the principle of *equipossibility*.[30] As events, then, contingencies are non-causal, nor essential. Hobbes wrote that 'by contingents, I understand all things that may be done and may not be done, may happen or may not happen, by reason of the indetermination or accidental concurrence of the causes'.[31]

But identifying contingency is easier than coming to terms with it. Plato's cosmology wrestled with the difference between the eternal, infinite in time and space—and calculable by observing the constancy of celestial motion—from the temporality of the human condition that moves and changes through time.[32] The eternal is being; the created is an imperfect (and unpredictable) becoming.[33] In Augustine the issue of chance is simply a part of the temporal human condition (*Confessions*, XIII).[34] For him the temporal, unlike the eternal, is contingent: 'we cannot truly say that time is, unless because it tends not to be' (*Confessions*, XIV). The source of the temporal is God's Will. God creates time and He resides eternally outside of it. God simply is; he is eternally present. 'For where there is no shape nor order, nothing either cometh or goeth', he says in *Confessions* chapter XII; 'and where this is not, there certainly are no days, nor certainly any vicissitudes of time'. This is not to consider time insignificant, however. As one commentator explains it, 'Augustine neither trivializes time by reducing it to the number of motion nor de-existentializes it by reducing it to mere appearance. Time is always a question of spiritual life and death'.[35] In his thinking of it in this way we can see that Augustine's meditation on time is not merely (or even primarily) about the ontology of time, but an account, and a rather moving one at that, of his coming to

[30] Meyer, 'Contingency', 78.
[31] Quoted in David Wooten, 'Roots of Contingency', in Shapiro, *Political Contingency*, 22.
[32] See Alexander Gunn, *The Problem of Time: An Historical and Critical Study* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1929), 18. On time as eternal for Plato, see his *Timaeus*, in Francis MacDonald Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology: The Timaeus of Plato: Translated with a Running Commentary* (New York: Humanities Press, 1952); and Robert E. Cushman, 'Greek and Christian Views of Time', in *Journal of Religion* 33:4 (1953), 254-265.
[33] A similar point is made in a useful summary by Edith Wilks Dolnikowski in *Thomas Bradwardine: A View of Time and a Vision of Eternity in Fourteenth-Century Thought* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 17.
[34] Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, Henry Chadwick trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
[35] Robert Jordan, 'Time and Contingency in St. Augustine', in *The Review of Metaphysics* 8:3 (1955), 409-410. I take some of the references to the *Confessions* from this article.

understand the possibility of 'existing contingently' – that is, the possibility of fate, not simply at the hands of Divine Will, but unexpected happenings resulting from *human* will. Contingencies are part of the Divinely Willed contingency of human existence—a contingency of *being*—whereby the creatures of God act freely in their temporal existence because, as his Guarantor Solution in the *City of God* reads, 'their future strength is completely determined and their future achievements utterly assured'.[36] For Augustine, and later Boethius, contingency is thus reasoned through the idea of an 'eternal now', the *nunc-stans*, where from the vantage point of eternity, only God could witness every moment in the present and thus make intelligible the purpose of events in the temporal or secular world. To comprehend the meaning of events, man puts his faith in the existence of Divine vision, although one does did not deny man of his own free will.[37]

The problematic to untangle in early Christian thinking, and one that would extend to the Early Modern period, was to understand how virtue could become the victim of *fortuna* under God's Grace. Hume, albeit a non-believer, also struggled to explain the same problem. In the *Treatise* he wrote that, 'to reconcile the indifference and contingency of human actions with prescience; or to defend absolute decrees, and yet free the Deity from being the author of sin has been found hitherto to exceed the power of all philosophy'.[38]

This may be true, but it is also, or at least increasingly became, a matter for politics. To return to Pocock's *Machiavellian Moment*, in the so-called 'Florentine moment' it is political man who pushes away from the idea of the *nunc-stans* towards new attempts to explain (and overcome) man's contingent existence. Pocock writes that 'a vital component of republican theory—and once this had come upon the scene, if not earlier, of all political theory—consisted of ideas about time, about the occurrence of contingent events of which time was the dimension, and about the intelligibility of the sequences of particular

[36] Augustine, *City of God* 5.9; quoted and discussed in Dolnikowski, *A View of Time*, 151.
[37] J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 41.
[38] David Hume, *Treatise*, 103. Quoted in Wooten, 'Fortune to Feedback', 23.

happenings'.[39] To Pocock, the writings of Guicciardini, Machiavelli, Savonarola, among others, all confront the impermanence of the republic in the face of corruption and declining morality, where bereft of a *vivre civile* the republic becomes increasingly governed by *fortuna*, the force which symbolises uncontrolled contingency.[40] Their response is to suggest that the political ordering of society is interdependent with a rational ordering of history.[41] As I touched on in the introduction, *The Prince* argues that the stability of the *politeia* is conditional upon the exercising of *virtù*—weighing up morals and practical expediency—to anticipate and cope with *fortuna* in order to preserve order. In light of this, in the context of discussing *The Prince*, Pocock defines a politics of contingency as, 'the art of dealing with the contingent event…the art of dealing with *fortuna* as the force which directs such events, and thus symbolises pure, uncontrolled, and unlegitimated contingency'.[42] But 'dealing with' leaves the wrong impression, in that the exercising of *virtù* also includes a dimension of *Kairós*, whereby an innovative prince may exploit contingency as opportunity or occasion (*occasione*) in order to gain and hold power.[43] Machiavelli claims that such was the *virtù* of founding legislators and prophets like Cyrus, Theseus, Romulus and Moses that they had only this single need for *occasione* in order to cement their rule.[44] But these figures are the ideal types who built anew on the *tabula rasa* that *occasione* provided. For the prince, on the other hand, seizing power is to inherit a tenuous claim over a republic. Until he can gain sufficient *virtù*, the prince remains shackled to fortune's wheel. In light of this the most famous chapters of *The Prince* instruct him to act with prudence in order to firm his grip on

[39] Pocock, , 3.
[40] See Ibid., 156.
[41] Ibid., 95.
[42] Ibid., 156.
[43] Ibid., 168.
[44] Machiavelli writes in Chapter VI that, 'in examining their actions and lives one cannot see that they owed anything to fortune beyond opportunity, which brought them the material to mould into the form which seemed best to them. Without that opportunity their powers of mind would have been extinguished, and without those powers the opportunity would have come in vain'. I take this from the Mansfield translation. See, Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Harvey Mansfield trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

power. Over time these traits will help him confront contingency more adroitly.[45] In chapter XVIII Machiavelli writes that, 'it is necessary for [the prince] to have a mind ready to turn itself accordingly as the winds and variations of fortune force it, yet…not to diverge from the good if he can avoid doing so, but, if compelled, then to know how to set about it'.[46] Thus to mitigate *fortuna* in the long run he must at least in the meantime approach contingency as an opportunity to develop and demonstrate his *virtù*.[47]

To move on, alongside notions of chance and opportunity, contingency also signifies another important temporal component – concerning the possibility that things could be different. Contingency as such signifies something that is not necessary or inevitable. It simply is the case. Along these lines, and stemming from his search for an epistemological basis for understanding contingency in opposition to Platonic conceptions of truth,[48] Richard Rorty interprets contingency as the recognition that things 'could be otherwise' in order to promote a greater awareness of the 'contingency of all communities' that may, he hopes, strengthen liberal institutions.[49] In addition to this, and perhaps paradoxically, Rorty also speaks of the 'contingency of selfhood', where in his vision of the ideal liberal world freedom is 'the recognition of contingency',[50] an argument related to Palonen's discussion of what he calls a Weberian conception of freedom in terms of the concept of 'objective

[45] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, 174-177.
[46] Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapter XVIII.
[47] In Chapter XX Machiavelli writes that, 'Without doubt princes become great when they overcome the difficulties and obstacles by which they are confronted, and therefore fortune, especially when she desires to make a new prince great, who has a greater necessity to earn renown than an hereditary one, causes enemies to arise and form designs against him, in order that he may have the opportunity of overcoming them, and by them to mount higher, as by a ladder which his enemies have raised. For this reason many consider that a wise prince, when he has the opportunity, ought with craft to foster some animosity against himself, so that, having crushed it, his renown may rise higher'.
[48] Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[49] Quoted and discussed in Keith Topper, 'Richard Rorty, Liberalism and the Politics of Redescription', in *American Political Science Review* 89:4 (1995), 954. On community see Richard Rorty, 'Method, Social Science, and Social Hope', in *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 11:4 (1981), 569-588.
[50] Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, 46.

possibility' (*objektive Möglichkeit*).[51] In this mould, for Weber, freedom is the 'contingency of action'.[52]

Related to this, and finally, is the notion of contingency-as-indeterminacy – meaning that, as Schindler phrases it: things 'could be otherwise in the present. They could have been different in the past. They could change in the future'.[53] Here again we encounter the 'ontology of the present' in response to foundationalist paradigms. Foundationalism, as Don Herzog describes, it is 'grounded on principles that are (1) undeniable and immune to revision and (2) located outside society and politics'.[54] By contrast, 'post-foundationalism' is an interrogation of this attempted 'grounding' of the present – calling into question notions of permanence, universality, totality and essence. This is not to be confused with anti-foundationalism. Rather it promotes the idea of the contingency and contestability of the present.[55] It is not a denial of foundations, but as Judith Butler argues, to recognise that foundations are contingent.[56]

This is by no means a comprehensive exploration of different possible temporal experiences located in the use of the contingency concept. But it gives an overview of the temporal diversity of the contingency concept as it relates to political thought, and to which I suggest Koselleck's thinking is relevant. My argument is that Koselleck picks up on three

[51] See, Max Weber, 'Objektive Möglichkeit und adäquate Verursachung in der historischen Kausalbetrachtung', in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, Johannes Winckelmann ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1988), 266-290.
[52] See Kari Palonen, 'Max Weber's Reconceptualization of Freedom', in *Political Theory* 27:4 (Aug., 1999), 537. Palonen, erroneously in my opinion, does not want to relate Rorty's concept of contingency with political activity, preferring instead a 'Weberian' reading. Yet I find this to be a poor reading of Rorty, who clearly relates contingency and the problematic of metaphysics and idealism to liberal politics and the activities it entails. For instance, in relation to freedom of discussion Rorty refers to, 'simply the sort that goes on when the press, the judiciary, the elections, and the universities are free, social mobility is frequent and rapid, literacy is universal, higher education is common, and peace and wealth have made possible the leisure necessary to listen to lots of different people and think about what they say'. Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, 34. On Palonen's argument, see Palonen, *Das 'Webersche Moment*', in *Zur Kontingenz des Politische* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1998).
[53] Schedler, 'Mapping Contingency', 72.
[54] Don Herzog, *Without Foundations: Justification in Political Theory* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 20. Quoted in Marchart, *Post-Foundational Political Thought*, 20.
[55] See Marchart, *Post-Foundational Political Thought*, 11-33.
[56] See Judith Butler, 'Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of 'Postmodernism', in Judith Butler and J. W. Scott eds., *Feminists Theorize the Political* (London: Routledge, 1992), 3-21.

salient points from the discussion above: first, on the contingency of politics; second, on dealing with the contingent event (*fortuna*); and third, underlying the issue of *fortuna*, on the role of politics in giving temporal meaning to the present – as a *historical* present for political purposes. In doing so, his most significant contribution to the discussion of contingency in political theory—and one that relates him (somewhat) to Foucault—is that he focuses on how language, in the form of social and political concepts, mediates how actors come to terms with the contingent event, and more broadly, the contingency of historical experience. Yet in doing so he does not diagnose contingency as a problem. Rather he sees it as a *solution* to what he feels is a pernicious (and he thinks ideological) tendency among political thinkers to ignore the relevance of the present and deny the contingent possibilities contained in its temporalisation. The key to reasserting the importance of the present, he thinks, is to eschew the tendency to approach politics from the basis of a moralising philosophy of history. One response is to come up with a better way of approaching and writing history (his *Historik*) that is sensitive to the contingency of historical experience; while the other, which he focused on in his early career, is to promote the contingency of politics.

Koselleck's three engagements with contingency

The contingency of politics

Koselleck's on-going exploration of the relationship between language and time, including the issue of contingency and its politicisation, combined the two primary influences on his work: the thinking of Carl Schmitt, in his idea of counter concepts and their contestation at the heart of the concept of the political (*das Politische*);[57] along with Martin Heidegger,

[57] For instance he writes that, 'the linguistic usage of politics, like that of everyday life, is permanently based on this fundamental figure of asymmetric opposition'. Koselleck, 'The Historical-Political Semantics of Asymmetric Counterconcepts', in *Futures Past*, 155-191. On the relationship between Koselleck and Schmitt, see Christian Meier, 'Reinhart Koselleck: a Commemorative Speech', in *Political Concepts and Time: New Approaches to Conceptual History*, Javier Fernández Sebastián, ed. (Santander: Cantabria University Press, 2011), 415-434.

whose thinking on existential temporality Koselleck reformulated into a linguistically-revealed anthropology of socio-historical experiences of time.[58]

In some ways these were different projects—between his early work *Kritik und Krise* and his later work in *Begriffsgeschichte*—but by way of both thinkers, and in moving beyond them, Koselleck's normative aim always remained the same – to combat the tendency to unify historical time. To reiterate his main modernity thesis, as discussed in the previous chapter: Koselleck observed that during the so-called *Sattelzeit* in European history there emerged a sense of a new time (*Neuzeit*), a historical time, whereby the future constituted a horizon of expectation that differed from past experience. Yet it is an ironic process. During this transition the opening up of the future led to subsequent attempts at unifying history into a single whole, into what he called a 'collective singular' (*Kollektivsingular*).

But his empirical findings in conceptual history were in fact a *Begriffsgeschichte*-based corroboration of a thesis he had already advanced in *Kritik und Krise*, where he linked the utopianism of modern philosophies of history to his concern over the possibility of 20th century ideology-driven warfare justified on utopian grounds (*ein Weltburgerkrieg der Ideologien*). Like Schmitt, in *Kritik und Krise* he locates the origins of history-as-process in the Enlightenment, arguing that the 18th century 'critique' of the politics of the absolutist state initiated a dangerous 'crisis' by separating moral idealism from the sphere of political activity. It replaced the activity of politics—with its conflicts and competing interests—with an intellectual pursuit that eschewed dissent in favour of resting aspirations in rational philosophies of history. Koselleck makes the claim that this move was not initially a political decision—for bourgeois society had no political power—but engendered a way of conceptualising social improvement on historical (not political) grounds. Eventually, though, the teleology of Enlightenment moralism became politicised over time, to the point that it

[58] On the connection with Heidegger, see for instance, David Carr, 'Review: Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time', in *History and Theory* 26:2 (May 1987), 197-204.

ended up, Koselleck thought, at the heart of 20th century ideological politics, notably in the antagonism between liberal capitalism and Soviet Communism.[59] In this way Koselleck claims that moral critique brought about a political crisis. The problem was that the intractable enmity between rival ideologies occurred purely on moral and ahistorical grounds. As he remarked in the preface to the English translation of *Kritik und Krise*,

> [In the context of the Cold War] I was trying to enquire into its Utopian roots, which, it seemed, prevented the two superpowers from simply recognising each other as opponents…It was in the Enlightenment, to which both liberal-democratic America and socialist Russia rightly retracted themselves, that I began to look for the common roots of their claim to exclusiveness with its moral and philosophical legitimations.[60]

The salient issue here is that Koselleck locates the danger of utopian thinking, the present crisis, in its view that history does not simply happen; it is planned. Philosophy alienates history from historical and political reality:

> Attempts to allow the philosophy of history to negate historical factuality, to "repress" the political realm, are Utopian in origin and character. The crisis caused by morality's proceeding against history will be a permanent crisis as long as history is alienated in terms of its philosophy.[61]

Like Schmitt, Koselleck grounds his argument in the clash of concepts, and ties it to a conception of politics and the political as a space of essential antagonism and conflict,[62] what Schmitt thought most visible in moments of exception.[63]

But beyond Schmitt's distinction between 'friend' and 'enemy', in *Kritik und Krisis* Koselleck makes the argument that the concepts of 'critique' and 'crisis' comprised a historical dialectic that exposed the tension between a number of further conceptual

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[59] Koselleck remarked that he was initially responding to National Socialism, but it was soon overtaken by the context of the Cold War. See remarks by Jason Edwards, 'Critique and Crisis Today: Koselleck, Enlightenment and the Concept of Politics', in *Journal of Political Ideologies* (2006), 429.
[60] Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*: *Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge, MA.: The MIT Press, 1988), 1.
[61] Ibid., 12.
[62] For an argument that Koselleck maintains his Schmittian outlook throughout, see Timo Pankakoski, 'Conflicts, Context, Correctness: Koselleck and Schmitt on Concepts', in *Political Theory* 38:8 (2010), 749-779. Niklas Olsen makes a different argument, suggesting that Koselleck moves further away from Schmitt. See Niklas Olsen, *History in the Plural: An Introduction to the Work of Reinhart Koselleck* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Press, 2014), 41-100.
[63] See Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology*, George Schwab ed. and trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

oppositions—the relationship between morality and politics, the state and society, the public and private—that first came to the fore in the idea of the Hobbesian state.[64] He starts with Hobbes, as does Schmitt, because for Koselleck it is Hobbes' political thought that made the first move, by replacing the moral alternatives of good and evil with the political alternatives of peace and war.[65] Or more precisely, Koselleck read in Hobbes that given the alternative, in the modern state the only moral imperative relevant to politics was to put an end to civil war in the interest of order and stability. This he saw as the supreme commandment of Hobbesian reason: the state remained morally neutral apart from upholding the morality of law.[66]

But via a tour through various modern thinkers, alongside a more original look at freemasonry and the Bavarian illuminati,[67] in *Kritik und Krise* Koselleck advances the claim that the subordination of private morality to political necessity engendered another, albeit initially obscured, civil war. This is because in the split between private man and the state its subjects had no choice but to turn from politics to individual pursuits, be they economic, cultural or exercising one's freedom of conscience. The latter is the most significant, reckoned Koselleck. For it meant that the quest for moral perfection replaced political participation. And in the separation between politics and the private lay the seedbed for a further break between ethics and politics that eventually led to the moral critique of the absolutist state.[68] In the end, 'criticism spelled the death of kings', as he put it,[69] a phrase strikingly similar to Schmitt's in *Der Leviathan*, where he claimed that Hobbes' account of

[64] He initially wanted to entitle the work, 'Dialectic of Enlightenment', but the title was already taken. See Olsen, *History in the Plural*, 42.
[65] Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, 25.
[66] Ibid., 38.
[67] In the English translation Koselleck admits the limitations of his reading of conventional thinkers. See Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, 3; and Anthony La Vopa, 'Review: Conceiving a Public: Ideas and Society in Eighteenth-Century Europe', in *Journal of Modern History* 64:1 (1992), 86.
[68] Koselleck writes that, 'The bourgeois intelligentsia set out from the private inner space within which the State had been confining its subjects. Each outward step was a step towards the light, an act of enlightenment. The movement which blithely called itself 'the Enlightenment' continued its triumphal march at the same pace which its private interior expanded into the public domain, while the public, without surrendering its private nature, became the forum of society that permeated the entire State. In the end society would knock on the doors of the political powers, calling for attention there, too, and demanding admission. Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, 53.
[69] Ibid., 116.

sovereignty was an inner reservation containing the 'seeds of death' (*Todeskeim*) for the absolutist state.[70] In short, in the form of criticism, morality re-entered politics; but it only did so, Koselleck proposes similarly to Schmitt, by pursuing an activity considered apolitical,[71] thereby upending the overriding status of politics in favour of moral reasoning. According to this account, moralists eschewed traditional politics, for they had no need for it.[72]

Koselleck admonished 20th century ideologies for thinking the same way, its most dangerous attribute being its disengagement from adversarial politics. 'That politics is fate, that it is not fate in the sense of blind fatality, this is what the enlighteners fail to understand', he wrote.[73] As Anthony La Vopa explains it in relation to ideology, 'to Koselleck the essence of modern totalitarian "ideology" in all its varieties was an exclusively moral vision, self-deluding in its blindness to its own political will to power and self-righteous in its refusal to grant moral legitimacy to "political" alternatives'.[74]

Yet my claim here is that Koselleck's normative argument is not simply a call for the reunification of morality and politics,[75] or simply a return of politics, but a recognition that the value of adversarial politics is that it entertains a range of alternative visions – that things could be otherwise.[76] In this way Koselleck is already moving away from Schmitt, whose theory centres on conflict, most famously in the friend/enemy distinction. Koselleck, by contrast, celebrates politics on the grounds of contingency and time.

There is some interaction here too, though. Schmitt applies his antagonistic view of the political, grounded in his theory on the state of exception, to indict liberalism for failing

[70] Carl Schmitt, *Der Leviathan in der Staatslehre des Thomas Hobbes* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlag, 1938).
[71] He writes that, 'the political secret of the Enlightenment lay in the fact that its concepts, analogous to the indirect assumption of power, were not seen as being political. The political anonymity of reason, morality, nature and so on, defined their political character and effectiveness. Their political essence lay in being non-political'. Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, 147.
[72] A similar analysis is made in Jason Edwards, 'Critique and Crisis Today', 438.
[73] Koselleck, *Critic and Crisis*, 12.
[74] La Vopa, 'Conceiving a Public', 77-116.
[75] See, for instance, Edwards, 'Critique and Crisis Today', 438.
[76] In this I am disagreeing with Pankakoski, 'Conflicts, Context and Concreteness', 761.

to come to terms with the permanence of adversarial politics and the political force, will to power and combative intent behind the use of concepts like 'state', 'republic', 'society', 'class', 'legitimacy', 'sovereignty', 'neutrality', etc.[77] In *The Concept of the Political*, he writes that 'it remains self-evident that liberalism's negation of the state and the political, its neutralizations, depoliticalizations, and declarations of freedom have likewise a certain political meaning, and in a concrete situation these are polemically directed against a specific state and its political power'. And a few pages later, he writes that, 'the worst confusion arises when concepts such as justice and freedom are used to legitimize one's own political ambitions and to disqualify or demoralize the enemy'.[78]

Despite the former's aversion to liberal pluralism, the influence of Schmitt on Koselleck is clear here – both in terms of locating contestation in concepts, and in a call for the importance of the political. But Schmitt headed in an entirely different direction in considering Hobbes the first 'great breach for modern liberalism'.[79] Or at least, Koselleck never saw liberalism as the problem. Nor, as Niklas Olsen explains it, does Koselleck 'attempt to exonerate certain German traditions from the past… [or] portray a vision of German conservatism as an alternative "third way" between liberalism and communism'.[80] Rather, for Koselleck, the importance of politics and the possibility of things being otherwise concerned a temporal reorientation back to the present. The problem was that criticism had, 'transformed the future into a maelstrom that sucked out the present from under the feet of the critic', writes Koselleck in *Kritik und Krise*. 'In these circumstances there was nothing left for the critic but to see progress as the temporal structure appropriate to a just way of life'.[81] This is not to say that the contingency of politics—and its different visions for

[77] In this Schmitt is far more honest about the political nature of theorising than many political philosophers.
[78] Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, George Schwab trans. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 61, 66.
[79] I take this analysis of Schmitt from La Vopa, 'Conceiving a Public', 85.
[80] Niklas Olsen, *History in the Plural*, 71.
[81] Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, 9.

society—denies futurity, but at least preserves the possibility of different historical times extending outward from the present.

The contingency of historical events

But Koselleck soon moves away from Schmitt's focus on the political to focus more closely on the historisation of the present – on its temporalisation. Thus his two further conceptions of contingency have to do with the practice of history, and its subsequent politicisation. I gave an account of the politicisation of temporal concepts in the previous chapter. Here I want to focus more closely on the intersection between temporal language and historical events.[82] Again, unlike Gadamer, for Koselleck, language does not encompass the totality of experience. Concepts, he stresses, do not fully represent events; nor do events fully explain the meaning of concepts.[83] Yet as I discussed in the introduction in relation to *Kairós*, one component of Koselleck's theorising speaks directly to the linguistic designation of an 'event' with particular structural and temporal significance. This is to say that events are experienced differently due to the language used to describe them, even as they remain chronologically uniform. [84] The possibility for different temporal structuralisation, via language, thus underscores the essential contingency of the event. Concepts, 'not only teach us of the singularity (for us) of past meanings, but also contain structural potential, dealing with the contemporaneous in the non-contemporary (*die Gleichzeitigkeit der Ungleichzeitigen*),[85] which cannot be reduced to the pure temporal succession of history'.[86] In relation to writing history Koselleck argues that,

> Concepts that comprehend past states, relations, and processes become for the

[82] For an overview of the literature on the 'political event', see Iain MacKenzie, 'What is a Political Event', in *Theory and Event* 11:3 (2008).
[83] On this see Jan Iverson, 'About Key Concepts and How to Study Them', in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6:1 (2011), 65-88.
[84] Koselleck, *Futures Past,* 95.
[85] Koselleck, 'Representation, Event, and Structure', 112. Here I maintain the translation *die Gleichzeitigkeit der Ungleichzeitigen* as offered in *Futures Past* (as the contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous), even though one can also translate this, more accurately, as I have done elsewhere, as the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous.
[86] Koselleck, 'Representation, Event, and Structure', in *Futures Past*, 112.

> historian who employs them formal categories which are the conditions of possible histories. Only concepts with a claim to durability, repeated applicability, and empirical realizability—concepts with a structural content—open the way today for a formerly "real" history to appear possible and to be represented as such.[87]

In other words, concepts allow historians to designate events with the temporal dimension of *Kairós*. But more so than in history, the politicisation of the event also concerns the second meaning of the concept: *Kairós* as a time for action. As Palonen puts it, 'the [Kariotic] moment is understood as not only convenient for action but also a prerequisite of its existence'.[88]

Many will recall Harold Macmillan's oft-quoted quip that in governing the difference between success and failure is ultimately determined by 'events, dear boy, events'.[89] In his memoirs Macmillan wrote that 'in politics…the essence of the game is "timing"'.[90] Yet there is an important difference here between 'contingencies' as an accident or the unexpected and the essential contingency of an event. There is a similarity here to Walter Benjamin's concept of *Jetztzeit*, representing a 'now time' that invites one to consider a revolutionary break within the chronological continuum of history (which for him is the 'empty time' of capitalist history). Designating a moment as a *Jetztzeit* is his call for acting 'kariotically'.[91] It is a term encapsulating the politics of timing and political claims over a moment in time as the right time—an accident or otherwise—where a historical moment becomes a political moment. In the *Republic*, Plato writes that 'for what is really kingship must not itself perform practical tasks but control those with the capacity to perform them, because it knows when it is the right time to begin and set in motion the most important things in cities and when it is the

[87] Ibid.
[88] Palonen, *The Struggle with Time*, 243.
[89] Whether he said this is a matter of dispute. See Robert Harris, 'As Macmillan never said: that's enough quotations', in *The Daily Telegraph* (4 June 2002). Recalled at http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/3577416/As-Macmillan-never-said-thats-enough-quotations.html
[90] Harold Macmillan, *The Past Masters: Politics and Politicians, 1906-1939* (London: Macmillan), 105. Quoted in Kari Palonen, 'Political Times and the Rhetoric of Democratization', in *The Ashgate Research Companion to The Politics of Democratization in Europe*, Kari Palonen, Tuija Pulkkinen and José María Rosales eds. (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2008), 151.
[91] See Benjamin, 'On the Concept of History', 245-255.

wrong time (*Akairós*)'.[92] This political temporalisation of the contingent event does not deny the chronological sequence of events, but interrogates their relationship and apparent continuity. Kairological time is a 'nodal (knotted) line', as Hegel put it.[93] Or as Karl Löwith describes, *Chronos* is a sequence of indifferent 'nows', while kariological time refers to significant 'nows'.[94] Thus, without a conception of *Kairós*, as discussed in relation to 9/11, any sense of time beyond measurement lacks the necessary tools for assigning significance and meaning. As political concepts, then, *Kairós* and *Akairós* speak to the politics of identifying and designating particular moments, and the possibility to individualise and interrogate these moments in relation to other events – to frame and play with their implications in different ways.

There are three prominent moves. The first is to maintain an event as a moment of surprise, marking a point of rupture or of inflection that alters the course of a narrative. Second, an event may also be folded into existing narratives and explained by patterns of understanding. In other words, politics explains and contests the temporal meaning of the ontic event – as dislocation, continuation, affirmation or irrelevance.[95] Third, political thinking can also purposefully ignore contingency or designate moments to be irrelevant to their wider framework. In the most extreme cases it claims to 'break away' from contingent time altogether. Indeed, as mentioned at the start of this chapter, the non-time is a favoured move among normative political philosophy, where ends are reasoned via transcendent ethical formulations that purposefully disarticulate with the time-bound. Placing faith in the

[92] Plato, *Republic*, Book I [332-333]. See Plato, Republic, G.M.A. Grude trans., revised by C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1992).
[93] G W F Hegel, *Logic*, §§ 108-109. Quoted in Christian Fuchs, *Internet and Society: Social Theory in the Information Age* (London: Routledge, 2008), 18.
[94] Karl Löweth, *Meaning in History*: *The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 185.
[95] A similar point is made by Andrew Barry in 'The Politics of Contingency: Events, Travelling Models, and Situations', *Working Papers of the Priority Programme 1448 of the German Research Foundation* num. 19 (Leipzig and Halle, 2016), 4.

motivational homogeneity of rational choice based on self-interest is a useful trick, at least in academic circles, for proving resiliency against the peskiness of contingency.[96]

Before moving on, let me offer two further examples of the linguistic politicking of the event. One common move is the kairotical politics of crisis or emergency. Following on from his use of the concept in *Kritik und Krise*, Koselleck's later conceptual history of 'crisis' (*Krise*) traced through its incorporation as a political concept of emergency, ends or transition (*Verlaufsbegrif*).[97] In his entry into the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* he wrote that, 'applied to historical time, "crisis", since 1780, has become an expression of a new sense of time which both indicated and intensified the end of an epoch'.[98] As a 'temporal indicator'[99] it offered political actors a powerful concept for temporal combat (*Kampfbegriff*) to mark the present as a decisive moment setting out 'a multiplicity of mutually exclusive alternatives'.[100] It constitutes an assessment of the meaning of a situation for the purpose of differentiating events, soaking them with the sentiment of urgency. *Kariós*, when signified as crisis, demonstrates that a contingency is not simply a moment of change, but an occasion or moment of contested opportunity and possibility—the timing of political action and 'good timing'—bringing up Churchill's remark that governing should 'never let a good crisis go to waste'.

Another example is the designation of events or periods of rupture—concepts such as a 'new time', 'critical situation', 'turning point' or 'founding moment'—that are used to mark a discontinuity between the past and future. From a historiographical view *Sattelzeit* is one example of this; another is Joseph Schumpeter's notion of 'creative destruction'

[96] See Philip Pettit, 'Resilience as the Explanandum of Social Theory', in Shapiro, *Political Contingency*, 84.
[97] Reinhart Koselleck, 'Crisis', Michaela Richter trans., in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67:2 (April, 2006), 361.
[98] Ibid., 358.
[99] See Koselleck, 'The Need for Theory in History', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 5.
[100] Koselleck, 'Crisis', 370.

(*Schöpferische Zerstörung*).[101] Koselleck often referred to the concept of 'revolution', which *Begriffsgeschichte* shows as moving from a cyclical concept, as it is in the Hellenist notion of the cycle of constitutional forms,[102] to its later employment, at least since the 18th century, to designate certain events and periods of upheaval or civil war (e.g. a Marxist revolution or the Maoist Cultural Revolution), or a longer duration where occurrences significantly altered daily life (e.g. the Industrial Revolution).[103] As Aleida Assmann wrote, 'Utopias and revolutions have been intimately linked since the period of early modernity; both are philosophical and political means to break up time, to induce a temporal rupture for the forging, staging and establishing of the "new"'.[104]

Contingency and the historicity of the present

But in a third, and final look, at Koselleck and contingency, I want to suggest that what Assmann describes, along with many of the examples above, is more broadly a politicking of the 'ontology of the present'. As discussed in chapter one, in Koselleck's move away from Schmitt's political solution to historical singularisation, we should appraise Koselleck's *Historik* as new alternative to singularisation: an 'ontological turn' that consisted of developing a historical anthropology linking historical semantics to the temporal structures of the historical present – or otherwise put, to one's historical situation. On a historiographical level, then, the possibility for writing history in the plural is through coming to terms with varied temporal experiences of historical actors – of their past futures. Following his writing of *Kritik und Krise*, in describing his new venture in a letter to Schmitt, we see the increasing influence of Heidegger's *Being in Time*:

> The reduction of all intellectual expressions to the historical situation puts an end to all further relativisation forwards and backwards, up and down. The finality

[101] See Joseph A Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 73-79, 88-92; and on socialism, 172.
[102] Koselleck discusses this in '"Progress" and "Decline"', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 221.
[103] Koselleck, 'The Historical Concept of Revolution', in *Futures Past*, 43.
[104] Aleida Assmann, 'Transformations of the Modern Time Regime', in Chris Lorenz and Berber Bevernage eds., *Breaking Up Time: Negotiating the Boarders Between Present, Past and Future* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2013), 45.

> (*Endlichkeit*) of the historical human beings should thus be the centre of attention, not in regard to individual existence [contra Heidegger], but with respect to history's eternal coming into being: that is, with respect to the structures of a "situation" without which such as thing as history would not exist.[105]

To put it in Heideggerian terms, Koselleck believes that the 'facticity' of the modern situation, a being-in-the-world, marks a perceived contingency of the present in relation to the future – a situation that began in modernity. The future is not 'already there' but is unknown (*Unbekaant*). The concept of *Verzeitlichung* represents the difference between what was always a future anticipated as reoccurring experience to one of an open future (*Offene Zukunft*). But unlike Heidegger, who emphasises the futurity of *Dasein*—being-ahead-of-itself (*Zukunft*; the meaning literally being 'coming towards') in relation to one's presence and already-been-ness (*Gewesenheit*)—Koselleck's *Neuzeit*, is on an anthropological, not existential level. Nor is he primarily concerned with 'finality' in terms of mortality, as much as he is with the idea of 'thrown-ness',[106] on a social level, in relation to an imprecise historical situation. This social dimension is a stark turn away from Heidegger's existentialism; and significantly, it entertains the possibility to contemplate a future beyond one's lifetime – allowing, among other things, for considerations on *Where we are going?* as a society, a tribe, a nation. Thus, to reiterate, Koselleck criticised Heidegger for focusing only on the individual, and ignoring the fact that, on one hand, we develop individual horizons in the context of a social milieu; and on the other hand, and more interestingly, that our horizons themselves are often social, collective horizons.

I discuss this in more detail in the next chapter, but it is important to say here, in light of the normative bent of *Kritik und Krise*, that Koselleck's 'anthropological level' is still

[105] Quoted in Niklas Olsen, 'Carl Schmitt, Reinhart Koselleck and the foundations of history and politics', in *History of European Ideas* 37:2 (2011), 201.
[106] See Martin Heidegger, *Being and* Time. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson trans. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), 426-427. I discuss this further in chapter 3.

primarily an effort to come to terms with modern horizons of expectation.[107] Like *Kritik und Krise* and its call for a return to the contingency of politics, his *Histork* is also, at least primarily, a response to the current crisis in European history, caused by singularisation on one hand and relativism on the other. Indeed, in his letter to Schmitt, Koselleck complained that, 'historicism has reached the resigned conclusion that the relativity of all historical events and values must be subjected to total "relativity"'. As an alternative, he continues, one should, 'break through to a historical ontology, which is not merely the latest methodological approach, but the beginning of a conceptualisation, which makes it possible to cut the historical philosophy off from its water supply and consequently give an answer to our concrete situation'.[108]

Therefore we should see his anthropological focus as a further development in light of the core issues already addressed initially by way of promoting politics, and later by locating a plurality of times in modern concepts of movement (*Bewegungsbegriffe*). As discussed in the first chapter, in the concepts of *Verzeitlichung* and *Bewegungsbegriffe* Koselleck indicates a definite historical motion where an unprecedented form of contingency was first conceptualised.[109] Anthropologically, again, Koselleck located the emergence of a new time (*eine Neue zeit*), which was a new modern time (*eine Neuzeit*) by applying first-person categories – that of the space of experience (*Erfahrungsraum*) and the horizon of expectation (*Erwartungshorizont*).[110]

But in light of the emphasis on expectation and the notion of the open future there are important clarifications to be made by political theorists. As historians singularised history, it is also important to note that ideological visions also cut through the open future with

[107] See Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, 'Koselleck, Arendt and the Anthropology of Historical Experience', Tom Lampert trans., in *History and Theory* 49 (May 2010), 235.
[108] Quoted in Olsen, *History in the Plural*, 64.
[109] This is more or less a paraphrasing of Palonen in, 'Contingency, Political Theory and Conceptual History', 190.
[110] See Koselleck, '"Space of Experience" and "Horizon of Expectation": Two Historical Categories', in *Futures Past*, 255-275.

particular prognoses, something that Koselleck does not dispute. He often reiterates that the concept of progress (*Fortschritt*) is emblematic of the *Neuzeit*.[111] While the future is unknown in the *Sattelzeit* there is a resounding faith, conceptualised in progress, that it will be an improvement on the past. Unlike revolution or crisis, progress is, as Koselleck explains it, a repetition of ruptures, or what he called 'temporal ruptures originating in continuously reproduced hiatus-experiences'.[112] Progress continually promotes the sense of a 'rift opening up between accumulated experience and future oriented expectation [where] the difference between past and future grows, so that eventually time is experienced as a break, as a transitional period in which the new and unexpected are continuously revealed'.[113]

Progress, a common concept to ideologies, is thus an example of the ideological mapping of the future. Koselleck accepted, again showing the influence of Heidegger, that there are always narrowing structures to the human condition. Rather than simply an open future as the unknown, then, progress speaks to a narrower plurality of possible futures. There is thus a layering of *possible* historical extensions – the 'diachronicity of the nondiachronic'. Ideologies point out the possible and the impossible. Put in another way, to return to the theme of *Kairós*, while the previous section had to do with the kairological meaning of events, this refers to the contested historicity of a more complicated open future – one that includes the past structures of repetition that he discussed in his essays on historical theory. The political ontology of contingency is always the reconciliation of the past with the future – even if this reconciliation is to identify a clean break between the two. The politics of contingency—as progress, becoming, revolution, etc.—is the politics of a Heideggerian 'between-ness', something I will pick up on again in the next chapter.

[111] Koselleck and Christian Meier, 'Fortschritt', in Brunner, Conze and Koselleck eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* vol. 2, 539-717.
[112] Discussed in Assmann, 'Transformations of the Modern Time Regime', 43.
[113] Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik Geschichtlichter Zeitem*, 336. Quoted in Assmann, 'Transformations of the Modern Time Regime', 44.

Thus, in sum, we see that by way of concepts Koselleck was able to combine the Schmittian conception of the essential contestability of society with a Heideggerian ontology of history, thus taking on singularisation on one hand and relativism on the other. As Niklas Olsen describes it, 'Koselleck was hoping to show a mode of political order that respects human 'finality' and in which categories such as "friend" and "enemy" and "master" and "slave" are not filled out in excessively asymmetrical fashions that generate exclusion, aggression and conflict, but in ways that aim at political recognition and plurality'.[114]

But lastly, we cannot forget the past in this discussion. Indeed a further solution to a contingency of being, and one that Koselleck does not entertain given his political priorities, is the possibility for a reconnection or at least a reconstitution of the present with structures of the past. Koselleck is too wedded to futurism, while critical theorists too quick to eschew what they think is the 'straightjacket' of past structures and institutions. By contrast the theorising of politics must recognise the common practice, and utility, of orientating by way of glancing backwards.

The politicking of contingency

In light of this discussion on the different dimension of contingency, by way of conclusion I want to touch on what may be called the 'politics of steering'. It is common to think of politics in terms of change: offering new visions, new dawns and change we can believe in. But the politics of contingency, to return to republican and ancient conceptions, is also a matter of maintaining stability – of keeping the show on the road.

To return to *The Machiavellian Moment,* J. G. A. Pocock surmises republican politics as 'the play of the contingent'.[115] The unavoidability of contingency may be construed as something to celebrate or a condition for which the prudent politician must be aware. As I

[114] Olsen, 'Carl Schmitt, Reinhart Koselleck and the foundations of history and politics', 202.
[115] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, 8.

will discuss further in chapter six, Michael Oakeshott distinguishes a contingent mode of political activity from what he calls a rationalist politics based on future-oriented faith. It eschews routinized practice in favour of moral earnestness; while by contrast, contingency sensitive politics is a temporally present 'attending to the general arrangements of a collection of people'.[116] While Oakeshott's conception of political practice eschews rationalism and future oriented faith, the pursuit of intimations is also separate from a politics of scepticism, which, rooted in past experience, only embraces a politics of ceremonial play for its own sake.[117] In Oakeshott's view, neither extreme is attractive: past tradition-oriented play and future-oriented earnestness must be partners in a middle-ground politics sensitive to contingency.[118] Oakeshottian politics is, as one commentator put it, an 'art of contingency'.[119]

In this view, rather than implementing ideas and norms, contingent political activity is something akin to navigating. Lord Rankeillour wrote that 'politics implies the business of governing, and governing means the art of steering…[which] implies wind, waves and rocks, and the success of the steersman or captain depends on the capacity of his rudder, and his crew'.[120] These are practical realisations with philosophical roots. In his *Laws* Plato claims that it is chance (*τύχη*) and occasion (*Kairós, Kaipón*) that govern our affairs.[121] In the *Republic*, Plato likens governance to the navigation of a ship—the ship of state—and indeed our word 'governing' derives from the Greek word for steering (*κυβερνᾶν*).[122] For Plato the good ruler is a skilled helmsman who can steer the ship of state through calm and rough seas.

[116] Oakeshott, 'Rationalism and Politics', in Timothy Fuller ed., *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays* (1991), revised and expanded edition (Indianapolis, Liberty Fund), 60.
[117] Michael Oakeshott, *The Politics of Faith and the Politics of Scepticism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).
[118] Oakeshott, *The Politics of Faith and the Politics of Scepticism*, 110-113.
[119] I borrow this phrase from Suvi Soininen, *From a 'Necessary Evil' to the Art of Contingency: Michael Oakeshott's Conception of Political Activity* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2005). For Oakeshott, she says, politics is a type of 'recognised contingency', 184.
[120] Rankeillour 'Politics and Politicians', in *Thoughts and Fancies* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1939), 11-12. Partially quoted in Palonen, *The Struggle with Time*, 228.
[121] Plato writes that 'Chance *(tyche)* and occasion *(kairos)* cooperate with God in the control of all human affairs'. Plato, *Laws* 709b. Quoted in J. E. Smith, 'Time, Times and the Right Time', in *The Monist* 53:1 (1969), 8.
[122] Plato, *Republic* [488-489].

In Book VI of the *Republic* Socrates says to Adeimantus that, 'a true captain must pay attention to the seasons of the year, the sky, the stars, the winds, and all that pertains to his craft if he is really going to be expert at ruling a ship' [488B].[123]

The question is how and to where one is navigating. Steering does not require a particular lodestar or final destination; though nor does it reflect a politics of moral relativism. Like events, it is to recognise the contingent nature of human conduct and moral agency.[124] The politics of steering is a deliberative and reflective activity that recognises the range of possibilities and directions that contingency presents.[125]

For Machiavelli, contingency as *Fortuna* is not metaphorically represented as a boundless sea but by a river. Contingency remains an unavoidable part of the human condition, a reality of the temporal *civitas terrena* as opposed to the *civitas Dei*, though Machiavelli stresses that amid a condition of uncertainty, man retains the capacity to mitigate the river's potential for flooding. In *The Prince* he remarks that in fair weather, men are advised to build defences and barriers so that the next flood harmlessly passes away by canal. Like the river, 'so it happens with *Fortune*', he writes, 'who shows her power where valour has not prepared to resist her, and thither she turns her forces where she knows that barriers and defences have not been raised to constrain her'.[126] Man cannot avoid contingencies, but for Machiavelli he is not governed by contingency either. Ensuring the survival of the state requires the foresight to prepare the flood defences.

But when we think *about* politics we cannot ignore its contingency nor that contingent political activity and thinking often confronted the *possibility* of contingency, either in an

[123] Here Socrates is speaking of the problem with ordinary people running a government: 'Imagine then a ship or a fleet in which there is a captain who is taller and stronger than any of the crew, but who is a little deaf and has a similar infirmity in sight, and whose knowledge of navigation is not much better. The sailors are quarreling with one another about the steering – every one is of the opinion that he has a right to steer, though he has never learned the art of navigation' [488b].
[124] See Michael Minch, *The Democratic Theory of Michael Oakeshott* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2009), 88-89.
[125] On Oakeshott and 'recognised contingency', see E Podoksik. 'Oakeshott's Theory of Freedom as Recognized Contingency', in *European Journal of Political Theory* 2:1 (2003), 57-77.
[126] Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 120-121.

effort to avoid or embrace it. I end by saying that Weber is a useful example of contingency as a particular 'mode' of politicking. He describes the practical vocation of politics as a combination of past-present principles and present-future considerations. If the subject matter of politics is power—for its own sake or to pursue one course of action over other possibilities—the charismatic politician's guidance is a responsibility for the foreseeable consequences of present judgment.[127] Instead of a politics guided solely by present wants or deontological ends, the contingent reality of politics requires a combination of the 'ethic of principled conviction' (*Gesinnung*) where ends sanctify the means, and 'the ethic of responsibility' (*Verantwortung*), where one must consider the consequences of action.[128] In bringing these together, Weber calls for a politics of contingency that reconciles value reason with a purposive reason that links present goals to future consequences.[129] In doing so, while politics is certainly in the moment, political conduct done properly requires one to rise above present considerations. He tells us that political judgment is 'the ability to maintain one's inner composure and calm while being receptive to realities, in other words *distance* from things and people'.[130] This notion of distance, recalling Nietzsche's 'pathos of distance', is to rise above our presentness and reason between ethical norms on one hand and a responsibility for the consequences of political action on the other.[131] Put in another way, it requires a politics of horizons – to which I turn next.

[127] Max Weber, 'Politics as a Vocation', in Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs eds., *Weber: Political Writings* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), 353-356.
[128] On these two ethics, see Peter Briener, *Max Weber and Democratic Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 171-172.
[129] Weber, 'Politics as a Vocation', 368. On subjectivity of conviction and objectivity of responsibility, see Kim Sung Ho, *Max Weber's Politics of Civil Society* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 99.
[130] Weber, 'Politics as Vocation', 353.
[131] This he claims is a 'responsibility for the future'. Ibid., 356.

Chapter Three
The Politics of Horizons

"Communism is already visible on the horizon," declared Khrushchev in a speech.
Question from the floor: "Comrade Khrushchev, what is a 'horizon'?"
"Look it up in a dictionary," replied Nikita Sergeevich.
At home the questioner found the following explanation in a reference work:
'Horizon, an apparent line separating the sky from the earth,
which retreats as one approaches it'.
– Aleksander Drożdżyński, *Der politische Witz im Ostblok*[1]

We have memorised America,
how it was born and who we have been and where
…
We know what we have done and what we have said,
and how we have grown, degree by slow degree,
believing ourselves toward all we have tried to become –
just and compassionate, equal, able, and free.
All this is in the hands of children, eyes already set
on a land we never can visit—it isn't there yet—
but looking through their eyes, we can see
what our long gift to them may come to be.
If we can truly remember, they will not forget.
– Miller Williams, *Of History and Hope*[2]

As discussed in the previous chapter, while there has always been intellectual and methodological overlap between conceptual historians and theories of political thinking, in recent years scholars in both fields have gone further to foster a greater degree of cross-pollination.[3] In particular, the methods of *Begriffsgeschichte* continue to be especially relevant to ideology studies, a sub-field of political theory finally liberated from its Marxian undertones to focus more broadly on ideologies as a ubiquitous semantic component of political thinking on philosophical and vernacular levels.[4] Scholars in this linguistic turn claim that our various '-isms' are be best understood as definable images and ways of understanding the world that are communicated through language – through the uses of open-

[1] A. Drozdzynski, *Der politische Witz im Ostblok* (Düsseldorf, 1974), p. 80. Quoted in Koselleck, *Futures Past*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 16, p. 261.
[2] Miller Williams, 'Of History and Hope', 1997 Inaugural Poem, in Miller Williams, *Some Jazz A While: Collected Poems* (Champaign, IL.: University of Illinois Press, 1999).
[3] See, for instance, *Conceptual History in the European Space*, Edited by Willibald Steinmetz, Michael Freeden, and Javier Fernández Sebastián (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Publishing, 2017).
[4] See Aletta J. Norval, 'The Things We Do with Words', *British Journal of Political Science*, 30, no. 2 (2000); and Jonathan Leader Maynard, 'A map of the field of ideological analysis', *Journal of Political Ideologies* 18, no. 3 (2013), 299-327.

ended concepts like freedom, justice, community that continuously reappear in various guises across a range of different ideological formulations.[5] Studying these conceptual constellations on a theoretical level endeavours to map out the key arrangements, meanings and weights of importance given to these concepts, which political actors refer to and wield with various levels of sophistication and complexity.

Even in the case of the most rigid of ideologies, though, these conceptual meanings and arrangements shift across time and space. Understanding them properly therefore requires more than a synchronic snapshot, but also diachronic evaluation. It is no surprise, then, that ideology analysts would show an affinity with the temporal considerations familiar to conceptual historians. But one difference is that ideology theorists do so by looking beyond single concepts, still the preference among conceptual historians, to instead look at how single concepts *interact* with each other over time in order to better grasp the organisational fluidity of the conceptual systems of political thinking.[6] Surveying the morphology of ideologies over time shows that certain characteristics are ineliminable, while others are more contingent. Some have central importance, while in other instances they may be peripheral. The temporal dimension is thus one of 'quasi-contingency', to borrow a term from Michael Freeden.[7]

But this does not exhaust the temporal dimension. My argument in this chapter is that another temporal aspect to the semantic control of language that remains unexplored by ideology theorists (and even by conceptual historians) involves the *horizonal* dimension of concepts, a temporal dynamic on a phenomenological level that lies at the heart of the empirical and theoretical work of Reinhart Koselleck, in relation to his longstanding interest

[5] See Michael Freeden, 'Political Concepts and Ideological Morphology', *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 2, no. 2 (1994), 151-152.
[6] See Michael Freeden, 'Conceptual History, Ideology and Language', in Steinmetz et al., *Conceptual History in the European Space*.
[7] See Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 66.

in the connection between language and temporal experience.[8] Rather than the contingency or quasi-contingency of concepts, this is to grasp the contingent *historicity* of temporal concepts. In this chapter I endeavour to explore this overlooked area by proceeding in three steps. First, I offer a brief sketch of the phenomenological use of the horizon concept, picking out important elements for our consideration. Second, I relate these elements to the use of the concept of horizon in Koselleck's oeuvre. Finally, building on his theorisation of horizonal semantics, I set out an approach to understanding what I call a 'horizonal mode' of temporal politicking. In doing so, the aim of the chapter is to show that we can relate the semantics of political thinking to horizons in two ways: first, on the level of concepts, in terms of the temporal horizons articulated in language; and second, in how the contestation of horizonal experience constitutes a particular category of the politics of time.

Temporalising the horizon concept

I want to begin with the observation that in its everyday use the concept of horizon never loses its physicality.[9] We recognise that the horizon marks the division between earth and sky, and the line beyond which we cannot see. It is something we observe, and its appearance depends on our point of observation. One never reaches the horizon, for it continuously moves away as we approach it. We can only see it as it appears in our various impressions: it can be narrow or wide, close or far away. On a sunny day, whilst sailing on the ocean or driving across the North American prairie, one gets a sense of the horizon's expansiveness—a line stretched across in the distance—while in other environs and instances it is obscured behind natural and man-made forms. We may think of a true horizon and a horizon as we see it at a particular moment.

[8] On this relationship, see Reinhart Koselleck, 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', in *The Journal of Modern History* 61(4) (1986), pp. 649-666.
[9] See Ramón Ramos Torre, 'Time's Social Metaphors An empirical research', *Time and Society* 16, no. 2/3 (2007), 176-181.

Our ubiquitous encounters with and conceptualisations of the physical horizon lend the concept as a useful and well-worn metaphor for explaining how we act in and understand the world in different modes of experience. Books and travel help us broaden our horizons of understanding; university education opens up horizons of opportunity (we academics hope). Tellingly, the concept also surfaces in some of our most complex intellectual meditations. In a helpful survey, the literary theorist Hans Robert Jauss has sketched out the meanings and employment of horizon from the Greek word *horisdein* (*ὅρϜος*), meaning border or to delimit or cut off, through to its use in literary and historical hermeneutics to represent contingent perspective.[10] For Plato, Jauss reminds us, the horizon stood for the orbit of the sun, whose light revealed the suprasensual world as the world of true being. Or used theologically it marked the divide between temporal and eternal things. In its later usage, though, its meaning changed from a divide to denote, instead, the perspectival limits and also the condition for human experience.[11] Heidegger wrote that 'aim, view, field of vision, mean…both the sight beheld and seeing in a sense that is determined from out of the Greek, but that has undergone the change of *idea* from *eidos* to *perceptio*'.[12] In epistemology the horizonal line became a matter of consciousness, which Kant separates between our 'particular and limited private horizon' and the 'absolute and universal horizon' that delineates the extent of human knowledge.[13] In epistemology, and in phenomenology too, horizons are often separated in

[10] On the latter, see Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 301-304; and former, see Hans Robert Jauss and Elizabeth Benzinger, 'A Symposium on Literary History', *New Literary History* 2, no. (1970), 7–37.
[11] See Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Boston: Tufts University) Recalled at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0057%3Aentry%3Do%28%2Fros.
[12] Hans Robert Jauss, 'Horizon Structure and Dialogicity', in *Question and Answer: Forms of Dialogic Understanding*, Edited and translated by Michael Hays (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 197-207.
[13] It is important to point out that Kant's understanding of time is something antecedent to and a condition of experience. It is time, not the horizons of temporality, that is Kant's concern. See David Couzens Hoy, *The Time of Our Lives: A Critical History of Temporality* (Boston: MIT Press, 2019), 7.

this way: between our internal subjective horizons and an external universal, what Husserl calls the horizon of horizons (*Horizont der Horizonte*).[14]

It is Husserl who first, or at least most vividly to my mind, uses the horizon metaphor in reference to the idea of a lived or experiential time – what the philosopher David Hoy calls our human experience of temporality to helpfully separate it from a Newtonian objective or universal time.[15] This distinction should remind us that in response to Augustine's oft-mentioned problematic of *What, then, is time?*, there are, to follow Paul Ricoeur's separation in *Time and Narrative*, two contrasting philosophical standpoints—time as measure and time as experience—that aside from the ontological and epistemological implications is also relevant to the study politics.[16] We must always keep in mind, for instance, that in relation to the politicisation of our being-in-the-world is the adjacent politics of the clock, the revolutionary calendar and time's commodification.[17] There is always an on-going interplay between the experiential and durational 'times of politics', to borrow a term from Kari Palonen, whose own conceptual history of the concept of politics offers a useful typology of the perspectival horizons of political activity.[18] Palonen rightly claims that the temporal horizons of political activity face the acute realities of the limits to and scarcity of time in politics—set by electoral cycles, term limits, legislative calendars, etc.—which gives cause for the horizonal jockeying with what to do with such limited times.[19] His understanding of the playing with time in political activity can thus be summed up as the interaction between the structural demarcation of political times on one hand, with the Weberian notions of contingent opportunity (*Möglichkiet*) and the 'horizon of the possible' (*Horizont der*

[14] See Saulius Geniusas, *The Origins of the Horizon in Husserl's Phenomenology* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2012).
[15] Hoy, *Time of Our Lives*, xiii.
[16] For a fuller discussion of this, see Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time* (London: Verso, 1995), 44-55.
[17] See David Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983).
[18] Kari Palonen, *The Struggle with Time* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2014).
[19] Kari Palonen, *The Politics of Limited Times: The Rhetoric of Temporal Judgment in Parliamentary Democracies* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2008), 17-22.

Möglichen), on the other.[20]

In dealing with this on a philosophical level, let me return to Ricoeur's two standpoints. The first refers to the unalterable yet infinitely divisible 'external' time. This cosmological understanding of time is the measure of motion, best exemplified, he thought, in Aristotle's *Physics* and its discussion of the ordering of events as a sequence of 'now-points', analogous to a geometric point (stigmē). As discussed in the introduction, time for Aristotle, is nothing but the measure of movement – how we understand motion between demarcated and related 'Nows' (tò nyn, the now). Aristotle says in the *Physics* that time is 'the number of motion in respect of "before" and 'after"' [219a]. It is something external to us, but must be measured by those who count: 'there would not be time if there was not soul' [223a21-223a25].[21] For Aristotle, then, within the observation of a succession of instances there is also a consciousness of the temporality of change (of present, past and future) even if this understanding of time is never fully worked out in his thought.[22]

Rather, it is in Augustine's *Confessions* where an internal experiential time, and its relation to external time (one created by God in Augustine's case: *Confessions*, Book XI, chapter XIII), is on much firmer ground, and in whose thinking Ricoeur finds the best example of his second 'phenomenological' understanding of time as present perception. For Augustine, experiential time is not thought of in terms of the counting of instances, but it is something that exists only in the temporally constituted mind, where we come to communicate the experience of 'human time' through the three-fold dimensions of past, present and future. Time is a matter of perception (*sentire*) entirely within the present, from where we conceive of the simultaneity of the present with a notion of present-past and

[20] Kari Palonen, 'Max Weber's Reconceptualization of Freedom', in *Political Theory* 4, no. 4 (1999), 523-544.
[21] Aristotle, *Physics*. Translated by Robert Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
[22] For elaboration on this and its relation to his *Politics*, see John G. Gunnell, *Political Philosophy and Time* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1968), 229-240.

present-future.[23] In present experience we find in our present awareness (*intentio*) the intentional *stretching* of the mind (*distentio animi*) where past is retained as memory and future foreseen as expectation. As Augustine wrote in Book XI, there is 'a present (*praesens*) of bygones, as present of presences (*praesentibus*), a present of future things' [*XI. xx (26)*].[24]

I want to keep hold of the Augustinian image of the stretching of time-consciousness because it reappears, in secularised form, over a thousand years later in Husserl's use of the horizon concept in his discussion of the temporal experience of retention (memory) and protention (anticipation).[25] We cannot dwell here for long, but suffice to say that for Husserl the horizon concept generally refers to a world or field of experience (*Wahrnehmungsfeld*), and in specific reference to time-consciousness the horizon refers to the temporal extensions rendered from the impressions and perceptions of our present 'Now'. In this way, the horizon is an extension from the present yet also constitutes it – a stretched present. Or as he put it, a 'stretched being-all-at-once at length' (*Strecken-Zugleich*),[26] where 'every present moment of experience has about it a *fringe* of experiences, which also share the primal now-form'.[27] It is within this stretched-horizonal Now where Husserl thinks we experience the flowing of the present, and our (admittedly rather limited) sense of past experience and future expectation. The fringe signifies the expansion of the present but also its horizonal limits. Husserl relates this stretched or extended present to listening to a piece of music: in order to comprehend sound, the present must include the horizons of protention (the about to be) and retention (the just past). He writes that,

> Perception itself, as the "flowing-static" present, is constituted only through the fact that the "Static" Now (as deeper intentional analysis shows) has a horizon with two

[23] For both standpoints see, Paul Ricoeur, *Truth and Narrative* Vol. One. Translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).
[24] Augustine, *Confessions*, Henry Chadwick trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 235.
[25] For an exemplary comparison of the two thinkers, see Eva Brann, *What, Then, is Time* (Lanham, MD.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 111-156, and on stretching of time, see esp. 154-156.
[26] Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, John Barnett Brough trans. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991), 60.
[27] Husserl, *Ideas* (Para. 82), quoted in Brann, *What, Then, is Time*, 141. [My emphasis].

> differently structured sides, known in intentional language as a continuum of retentions and protentions.[28]

Or as he explains in the *Ideas*, the horizon of the extended-present comprises of a threefold horizonal structure: of what is now (*der Horizont vom Gegenwart*), what will be (*der Horizont vom Nachher*) and what has been (*der Horizont vom Vorhin*).[29]

I touch on this because it showcases how the temporal horizon simultaneously represents extensions from the present yet also marks their outer boundaries. Others have picked up from Husserl on this: while for Husserl the horizon(s) extend outward from the present, the existential structure of temporality in Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* switches this around. Heidegger places our 'being there' *within* the horizonal boundaries of being-unto-death (*Sein zum Tode*), whilst also giving it an important orientating function.[30] Like Husserl, Heidegger also has a threefold understanding of our temporal being, but one that is future-oriented. We come to understand our temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) as a present anticipation of the end, in relation to our past. Temporality, in his understanding, 'has the unity of a future which makes itself present in the process of having been'.[31]

This is an admittedly hasty tour through some notoriously difficult waters. But I do so in order to stress a number of core elements to the horizon concept. In all these uses, to briefly touch on them, I want to highlight three common traits that we see given different emphases in political thinking: to varying degrees, the horizon marks a *perspectival* and *orientating boundary* within different modes of experience. As the Oxford English Dictionary defines it, the horizon is 'the boundary or limit of any "circle" or "sphere" of view, thought, action, etc. (often with direct reference to sense; that which bounds one's

[28] Husserl, *The Crisis of the European Sciences*, para. 49. Quoted in Brann, *What, Then, is Time*, 141.
[29] On the temporal horizons, see, for instance, Edmund Hussrel, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 46. Also see Eddo Evink, 'Horizons of Expectation: Ricoeur, Derrida, Patočka', *Studia Phaenomenologica* 13, no. 1 (2013), 297-323, esp. 299-230.
[30] For a comparison of their uses in social theory, see Barbara Adam, *Time and Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 9-47.
[31] Heidegger, *Being in Time,* quoted in Osborne, *Politics of Time*, 59.

mental vision or perception; limit or range of one's knowledge, experience, or interest)'.[32] In discussing its use in the thinking of Nietzsche and Husserl, Charles Bambach writes along similar lines that the horizon concept designates 'a limit or threshold within which to situate one's own being, a boundary against which possibilities and resolutions can be projected, measured, and ultimately decided'.[33]

However, it is especially important to recognise—and retain—the spatial-temporal dynamics of the metaphor. To offer a truncated definition, we can best understand the horizon, I think, as the demarcation of an above-mentioned 'field of vision', as Husserl referred to it at times,[34] and in ways similar to what Gadamer, in his hermeneutical usage, described as a visual field or 'range of vision' from a specific point of view.[35] From our contingent perspective, our horizon field not only demarcates the outer edge but the experiential space within it: dividing the known from the unknown, the possible and impossible, the political and non-political. While temporally, the vision field refers to the inherent subjectivity (and in our case the political contestability) of the *distentio animi* – our experience of temporality within the stretched dimensions of past, present and future that we first encounter in Augustine's *Confessions*.

Before moving on, one further element is worth mentioning. As Barbara Adam has discussed elsewhere, from Heidegger we come to recognise that the horizonal experience of our present also concerns the 'in-between'; that is, the in-between-ness of the present in relation to the stretched out past (in terms of experience or memory) and future (in terms of

[32] *Oxford English Dictionary*, *sub verbo* 'horizon', recalled at http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/88458?rskey=9s0bXp&.
[33] See Charles Bambach *Heidegger, Dilthey, and the Crisis of Historicism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 254. Quoted and discussed in William McNeill, 'The Decent of Philosophy' in Andrea Rehberg ed., *Nietzsche and Phenomenology* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 113.
[34] See Edmund Husserl, *Die Lebenswelt. Auslegungen der vorgegebenen Welt und ihre Konstitution. Texte aus dem Nachlass* (1916-1937), *Husserliana* 39 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 53-143.
[35] This phrase is also used in George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 30. For Gadamer's reference, see *Truth and Method*, 301.

anticipation or aspiration).[36] In Heidegger our *Dasein* is always occurring in this between (*Zwischen*) – our being between birth and death, between a beginning and end which we must come to understand.[37]

In a similar vein, in *The Life of the Mind* Hannah Arendt discusses Kafka's parable of man's entrapment between the two antagonists of origin and the future.[38] 'Man lives in the 'in-between', she writes, 'and what he calls the present is a life-long fight against the dead weight of the past, driving him forward with hope, and the fear of a future (whose only certainty is death), driving him backward toward "the quiet of the past" with nostalgia for and remembrance of the only reality he can be sure of'. 'We are not only in space', she continues, 'we are also in time, remembering, collecting and recollecting what no longer is present out of "the belly of memory" [Augustine *Confessions*, Book X]), anticipating and planning in the mode of willing what is not yet'.[39]

For Arendt this break or rift in time relates to the vision and riddle section of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, where he tells the demon that the gate called 'Moment' or 'Now' (*Augenblick*, the blink of an eye) is the confluence between two never-ending pathways: an eternal lane extending backwards, and another leading forward towards an eternal future.[40] Whether we think of these stretches as bookended or open-ended, for Arendt, at least as she intimates in *The Life of the Mind*, the break is a moment for contemplation not

[36] Barbara Adam, *Time and Social Theory*, 30-31.
[37] Heidegger writes that, 'Thrownness and that Being towards death in which on either flees it or anticipates it, form a unity; and in this unity birth and death are "connected" in a manner characteristic of *Dasein*. As care, *Dasein* is the "between". See Martin Heidegger, *Being and* Time. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), 426-427.
[38] In *Aphorisms* Kafka writes: 'He has two antagonists; the first presses him from behind, from his origin. The second blocks the road in front of him. He gives battle to both. Actually, the first supports him in his fight with the second, for he wants to push him forward, and in the same way the second supports him in his fight with the first, since he drives him back. But it is only theoretically so. For it is not only the two antagonists who are there, but he himself as well, and who really knows his intentions? His dream, though, is that some time in an unguarded moment—and this, it must be admitted, would require a night darker than any night has ever been yet—he will jump out of the fighting line and be promoted, on account of his experience in fighting, to the position of the umpire over his antagonists in their fight with each other'. Quoted in Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind.* Volume One: *Thinking* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1978), 202.
[39] Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind Volume One: Thinking* (Secker and Warburg, London 1978), 201-203.
[40] Fredrich Nietzsche, Walter Kaufmann ed., *The Portable Nietzsche* (London: Viking, 1994), 268.

necessarily a theory on the temporality of action – even though Kafka's parable is clearly about the active human fight between the pressures of past and future.[41] This is a pity; for the rift in time is not only a matter for contemplation, though that too, but a matter for thinking about what to do. As Flaubert said *A Sentimental Education*, 'the thought of the future torments us, and the past is holding us back…this is why the present is slipping from our grasp'.[42]

But the temporal in-between is not about simply being and thinking, but *doing*, and asking *what is to be done?*, to borrow Lenin's phrase. From this gap, our horizons may constitute a *temporality for action* on individual or political levels – in many ways in response to the predicament of our disorientating in-between-ness brought by the erosion of formerly dominant cyclical and eschatological temporal frameworks. Outlining the horizonal fields of vision is a routine way of negotiating and profiting from—not simply fighting, as with Kafka's take—the relationship between past and future. Indeed, when we sit back and think about it, political thinking, however sophisticated, is often about offering a temporal narrative of *where we are*, as a society, in relation to *where we have been* and *where we want to go*. Even in simple albeit very powerful phrases, we see a horizonal present as a gap in time, not just for man, but also for the activity of politics in which he engages.

The semantics of horizonal temporality

The question for political theorists is in how the gap in time is navigated horizonally. And following Koselleck, my suggestion is that it is not only in the solitary thinking *ego* or the *vitae activia* where we locate the political horizons of the Now, but rather in the *semantics* of political thinking – "Brexit means Brexit" and "Make America Great Again" being two apposite examples. For both identify the present situation—considered either a 'political

[41] A similar argument is made by Oliver Marchant in his 'Time for a new beginning, Arendt, Benjamin, and the Messianic', Conception of Political Temporality', in *Redescriptions: Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory* 10 (2006), 134-149.
[42] Gustave Flaubert, *A Sentimental Education* (London: Harmondsworth Publishing, 1964), 134.

present' or the 'politicisation' of the present—and gain temporal meaning in shaping its horizonal relationship with the past and future.

In regards to conceptual history and political theory, as mentioned at the start, an underutilised entry point for better unpacking this relationship between linguistic meaning and horizonal experiences of time is in Koselleck's unique theorisation of historicity. For one of his key contributions to historical theory (and by extension to political theory) is in relating the contingent meaning of key historical concepts to social experiences of historical time, in the gap in-between past and future, or what he calls the 'space of experience' (*Erfahrungsraum*) and 'horizon of expectation' (*Erwartungshorizont*). He is not the first or only scholar to relate horizons to social activity, but Koselleck still remains unique because he encourages us to look specifically at how the *language* of historical and socio-political concepts—indeed, the purveyors of political thought—relate to and supply experiences of time. On his two categories, Koselleck writes,

> Experience and expectation are two categories appropriate for the treatment of historical time because of the way that they embody past and future. The categories are also suitable for detecting historical time in the domain of empirical research since, when substantially augmented, they provide guidance to concrete agencies in the course of social or political movement … But our two concepts are not only contained within the concrete process of history and help its forward movement. As categories they are also, for our historical knowledge, formal determinants that disclose this process. They are indicative of the temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) of men and thus, metahistorically if you wish, of the temporality of history.[43]

For Koselleck, then, these categories refer anthropologically to *in actu* historical experiences of temporality and also historiographically serve as formal categories for the *ex post* 'thematisation' of historical experience. In other words, these categories help conceptual historians clarify important moments of historical change through studying the shifting linguistically-revealed temporal experiences of historical actors (*Vergangene Zukunft*).[44] And it is in this formalised sense that Koselleck identifies the emergence of modernity and its

[43] Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 258.
[44] Koselleck, *Practice of Conceptual History*, 111.

horizonal preference for the open future (*Offene Zukunft*) as opposed to the pre-modern practice of forecasting the future based on past experience (*Historia Magistra Vitae*).[45] In modernity the horizon of expectation becomes the dominant temporal category.[46]

It is problematic, however, or at least unfortunate, that Koselleck decided to reserve the horizon concept only to futurity. On this he is unequivocal: for him, space constitutes the collection of experiences brought together from the past to the present, and as an *Erwartungshorizont*, the horizon always remains something that takes place in the present that is 'not yet' or 'non-experienced', a future made present (*Vergegenwärtigte Zukunft*). It marks the dividing line between what we can envision for the future and the unknown or unexpected. He writes that 'hope and fear, wishes and desires, cares and rational analysis, receptive display and curiosity: all enter into expectation and constitute it'.[47]

But this is unnecessarily restrictive. For one thing, given the clear influence of Gadamer on his thinking, it is curious that he does not also attribute the horizon concept to a present temporal experience of the past, an obvious implication of the presence of past things in the present.[48] Even in future oriented modernity a society's temporal horizons are always conditioned by its space of experience, even if the *content* of experience differs from what is expected in the future, a point made in a useful commentary by Anders Schinkel.[49] As Koselleck himself said, there is 'no expectation without experience, no experience without expectation';[50] and elsewhere that the past and the future are always 'joined together in the presence of both experience and expectation'.[51]

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[45] See Koselleck, 'Historia Magistra Vitae: The Dissolution of the Topos into the Perspective of a Modernized Historical Process', in *Futures Past*, 26-42.
[46] See Ibid., 255-275.
[47] Ibid., 259.
[48] For the influences of Gadamer and Heidegger on Koselleck, see Niklas Olsen, *History in the Plural: An Introduction to the Work of Reinhart Koselleck* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013), 26-29.
[49] This point is first made by Anders Schinkel in 'Imagination as a Category of History: An Essay concerning Koselleck's Concepts of Erfahrungsraum and Erwartungshorizont', in *History and Theory* 41:1 (February, 2005), 47.
[50] Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 257.
[51] Koselleck, *Practice of Conceptual History*, 127.

Attaching a horizon component to Koselleck's space of experience is significant because it helps differentiate predictive and prognosticative horizons from the expectative and aspirational. Koselleck's own extra-linguistic theorisation of experience and structures of repetition already speak to time strata extending from the past into the present and future—the 'prognosticative structures' of historical time—including naturalistic structural givens (climate, geology, etc.) and sedimented institutions that offer a degree of pre-semantic temporal stability. Fleshing this out further, Michael Pickering encourages us to amend Koselleck's categories to include a 'horizon of experience' to better reflect the boundaries of understanding or possibility set by present-past experience, and also a 'space of expectation' to refer to events that are anticipated to happen based on experience.[52] In a similar vein, Alexandre Escudier, in his own analysis of the categories, makes expectation do more of the work: separating out what he calls 'cognitive predictive elements' and 'normative expectational elements'. One is based on experience (predictive/rationalistic) and the other rendered from it (normative/ethical).[53] Meanwhile, Anders Schinkel takes yet another route by adding a third category, that of imagination (*Einbildungshegriffe*), which exists between experience and expectation to signify how one draws from past experience to think up the possibilities of something different for the future.[54]

Without doing undue violence to Koselleck's work, what this important variation shows us, I think, is that it is not the categories of experience or expectation which are the operative *locus*, but the phenomenological concept of horizon itself. And if I am correct in this reading, Koselleck is therefore accommodating a much broader range of temporal

[52] Michael Pickering, 'Experience as a Horizon: Koselleck, Expectation and Historical Time', in *Cultural Studies* 18, no. 2/3 (2010), 277-280.
[53] Alexandre Escudier, "'Temporalization' and Political Modernity: A Tentative Systematization of the Work of Reinhart Koselleck", in Javier Fernández Sebastián ed. *Political Concepts and Time: New Approaches to Conceptual History*, (Santander: Cantabria University Press & McGraw-Hill, 2011), 131-178.
[54] Schinkel writes that 'It is imagination that nestles itself between experience and expectation…Experience always shapes expectation through the mediation of imagination. It takes imagination to have expectations at all – to be able to distinguish the future from the past, and to have some sense of what this future might be and to have an attitude toward it'. See 'Imagination as a category'. Schinkel, 'Imagination as a Category', 48.

possibilities, inviting us therefore to carry on with our two lines of enquiry: first, to better unpack the horizonal temporality internalised in political language and in its association with different concepts; and second, to categorise the different dimensions of horizonal time in the concept of politics.

I discuss the latter in the following section. But first, on the temporality of language, it is important to emphasise that in Koselleck's innovative approach to historical theory, linguistic structure is not only synchronic, as it is in structural linguistics, or contextual as many in the Cambridge School insist, but also *diachronic* insofar as linguistic meaning reflects temporal structures across time.[55] 'Any synchrony is *eo ipso* at the same time diachronic,' as he put it.[56] And as Helge Jordheim has discussed in a number of influential articles, what Koselleck means is that within a concept are particular structural elements, or what he calls, 'structural possibilities' that extend 'Janus-faced' –[57] referring backwards to different meanings and inputs gathered over time and also forwards towards anticipated or possible experiences.[58] 'All key words in political and social language', Koselleck writes, 'have a complex multilayered temporal structure (*Temporale Binnenstruktur*) reaching beyond the particular contemporary reality, both forwards and backwards'. They contain remnants of past experience and 'components pointing to the future' (*Zukunftskomponente*).[59] Appreciating this structural complexity allows the historian to identify different representations of time through analysing historical language.[60]

[55] On the contextual approach, see Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Regarding Method Vol. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[56] Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 30.
[57] A term used by Koselleck. See, 'Prefaces to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*', 9.
[58] See Helge Jordheim 'Does Conceptual History Really Need a Theory of Historical Times?', *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6(2) (2011), pp. 21-41; 'Against Periodization: Koselleck's Theory of Multiple Temporalities', *History and Theory* 51 (2012), p. 152; and 'Thinking in Convergences: Koselleck on Language, History and Time', *Ideas in History* 2 (2007), no. 3: 65–90.
[59] Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', quoted and translated Jordheim, 'Does Conceptual History Really Need a Theory of Historical Times?, 38-39.
[60] Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 95.

This should encourage us to look for horizons in *all* concepts, not simply those that are explicitly temporal. Following the empirical research of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* we are familiar with certain temporal concepts, like progress, or descriptive concepts—like democracy, crisis and revolution—that Koselleck shows us underwent a process of temporalisation (*Verzeitlichung*) to denote historical movement and processes. But is not only in temporal concepts, or so-called 'concepts of movement' (*Bewegungsbegriffe*), where we find horizonal meaning. We should also look for the temporal horizons infused in seemingly time neutral concepts like liberty, justice and equality. When we consider this for a moment we realise that almost all political concepts contain such horizons, to varying degrees, in their semantic use (e.g. liberty as becoming or emancipation; equality as a horizon of opportunity) or can be associated with adjacent temporal concepts (e.g. the relationship between liberty and progress or development; or equality with opportunity or outcome).

Furthermore, the plurality of possible time extensions associated with concepts—and I would add to this common phrases like 'Brexit means Brexit' and 'Make America Great Again'—speaks to Koselleck's regular use of the idea of the layering of times (*Zeitschichten*) or what he calls the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous (*die Gleichzeitigkeit der Ungleichzeitigen*). That is, there are different meanings and related time-strata associated with a concept (or phrase) that do not necessarily correspond.[61] But rather than always being nonsynchronous in political semantics, we should entertain the possibility that these time horizons are often in direct competition with each other. To borrow another neologism from Michael Freeden: political semantics may be seen to 'decontest' the temporal horizons of a

[61] See Reinhart Koselleck, *Zeitschichten: Studien Zur Historik* (MIT Einem Beitrag Von Hans-Georg Gadamer Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2000), p. 9; and for the best commentary, see Jordheim, 'Does Conceptual History Really Need a Theory of Historical Times?'.

concept.[62] In other words, ideologies and political thinking more broadly, will attribute a specific horizon to a concept, recalling the Koselleckian idea of 'singularisation', as opposed horizonal alternatives.[63]

The horizons of politics and the politics of horizons

Moving beyond the horizons of concepts, another approach is to look at the horizonal temporality of the concept of politics itself. Conceptualising politics as an activity, as opposed to designating 'the political' as particular social sphere, allows us to consider its different modes, where we can consider horizonal politics as a mode of temporal politicking. In this section I want to explore this horizonal subsection from two angles: on a micro-level, returning to the internal components of the horizon concept (on perspective, orientation and boundary); and following this, on a macro-level, to look at two categories of horizonal politics.

Turning to the micro-level of perspective, we must remember that unlike external time structures, horizons are situational and subject to perspectival interpretation and change. It is, as Gadamer claimed, 'something into which we move and something that moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving'.[64] One could say that we can only be where we are, but a major part of perspectival politics is to first identify the point of perspective – to situate the political present 'in time'. In relation to politics we should not consider perspective or context to simply reflect a horizonal present as a point instant or a present

[62] See Michael Freeden, 'The Morphological Analysis of Ideology, in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*. Edited by Michael Freeden, Lyman Tower Sargent and Marc Stears (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[63] For instance, see Koselleck, 'Historia Magistra Vitae', in *Futures Past*, 35. Or, to illustrate this further, think of the horizon of competing past remembrances and future expectations embedded within the concept 'community'. For communists, community may evoke a particular memory of egalitarian agricultural societies, but it is foremost a concept of change and movement. It represents the solidarity among the working class in their effort to bring about a fairer and more equal society through the elimination of private property. While for conservatives, community speaks to a set of traditional or even timeless moral values. It is a term promoting stability and connectivity with the past. Therefore, the semantic battle over 'community' is not only about the meaning of the concept, but over the temporal horizons it evokes.

[64] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 303-304.

'Now' in the Aristotelian or chronological sense, but rather as demarcated durations packaged in different ways as 'moments', to again use J. G. A. Pocock's term, that are given what Hartmut Rosa calls a situational identity.[65] In horizonal politics the present situation is identified as a 'Kairological now', where thinking separates any time from a moment with socio-political meaning. The Kairological associates ideational situating with Henri Bergson's idea of time as a living *durée*, where political thinking can transcend and organise the present in relation to the past and future. As Kai Lindroos nicely explained in relation to the thinking of Walter Benjamin, 'politics deals with manoeuvring between the temporal dynamic of movement and its standstill, and simultaneously attempts to liberate the space of action towards a new direction, opened from the specific collision of the past and present experiences, which [Benjamin] referred to as Now-time (*Jetztzeit*)'.[66] Political thinking cannot escape this present, but can define it and give it temporal meaning.

Semantically, these demarcated temporal moments attain horizonal significance through a number of common political tropes. Horizonal presents are defined as 'historical turning points', 'crises' or 'forks in the road'. During the 2016 European Union referendum in Britain, the Vote Leave campaign billed the vote as a once in a lifetime chance to 'take back control of this great country's destiny', as the MP Boris Johnson explained it. He told voters that, 'you can change the whole course of European history'.[67] Elections may also gain horizonal significance when billed as generation defining events, as David Cameron claimed ahead of his electoral victory in 2015.[68] Or for Canada's New Democratic Party, electoral defeat the same year was said to have 'opened a horizon for bold new policies' in order to

[65] JGA Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).
[66] See Kai Lindroos, *Now Time Image Space: Temporalization of Politics in Walter Benjamin's Philosophy of History and Art* (Jväskylä: SoPhi, 1998), 12.
[67] Macer Hall, 'Boris Johnson Urges Brits to "Take Back Control"', *The Daily Express* (June 30, 2016). Recalled at http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/681706/Boris-Johnson-vote-Brexit-take-back-control.
[68] David Cameron speech on website of *The Guardian* (30 March 2015). Recalled at http://www.theguardian.com/politics/video/2015/mar/30/david-cameron-election-speech-video.

revive the centre-left.[69] Perspectival moments also often relate to the precariousness or uncertainty of the present and present-future. For Hobbes, only an artificial state can secure a stable present and future. Otherwise man is left to his violent natural state, where there is 'no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain; and consequently no culture of the earth', and therefore, 'no account of time; no arts; no letters, no society'.[70] By contrast, Charles Taylor describes how pre-modern societies maintained a secured 'a priori' that offered a degree of horizonal stability through a Divine or a least some pre-given 'great chain of being'.[71] Karl Löwith in his *Meaning in History* argues that in the place of Providence, modern man sought an 'established horizon' in a secularised version of Christian hope and salvation. Faith in God's providence turned into a belief in man's capacity to provide his own earthly happiness.[72]

These last two examples also speak to the second component, on orientation. In horizonal politics we often understand our political situation in relation to a directional lodestar. Sheldon Wolin has described the artistic or architectonic impulse of political theories to 'project political order into a time that is yet to be'. This is true, he reckoned, even of conservatives like Burke, who attempted to 'project a continuous past into the future'. Or like de Maistre, who 'sought to recapture a "lost past" in the hope that it could be restored in the future'.[73] Orientation may refer to the horizon of the possible or an imagined future and past meant to influence the present. To differentiate the possible and imagined, it is better to split such expectational horizons into two types: what Luhmann split between horizonal

[69] Martin Lukacs, 'The Leap Manifesto opens horizon for bold new politics in Canada', *The Guardian* (15 April 2016). Recalled at: http://www.theguardian.com/environment/true-north/2016/apr/15/the-leap-manifesto-opens-horizon-for-bold-new-politics-in-canada.
[70] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 84. For a fuller discussion see, David Carvounas, *Diverging Time: The Politics of Modernity in Kant, Hegel, and Marx* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2002), 9-11 and David Carvounas and Craig Ireland, 'Precariousness, the Secured Present and the Sustainability of the Future: Learning from Koselleck and extrapolating from Elias', in *Time and Society* 17:2 (2008), 159-161.
[71] See Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition: An Essay by Charles Taylor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).
[72] Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 111.
[73] Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1960), 17-18.

'present futures' on the one hand, representing restricted possibilities, from normative 'future presents', on the other hand, which constitute the creative visions that are rendered from experience but may be outside the realm of present possibility.[74]

Orientation also concerns prioritising certain distances and moments in time over others. They denote inspiration and possibility—what was and what we can see—but also serve as endpoints, goals or points of interest lying out in the short-, medium- or long-term. Unlike Husserl's restricted view of the extended moment—the proximity of the 'temporal fringe' between the 'just-past' and the 'about-to-be'—politics is the temporal playing with the much wider extensions than the 'horizon of the now'. In politics there is a constant tension between governing for the immediate or the distant future. Political scientists often write about the 'intertemporal dilemmas' in making policy choices;[75] while in his *Restatement*, John Rawls wrestled with 'how far the present generation is bound to respect the claims of its successors'.[76] In his 2010 Liberal Democrats conference speech, the MP Nick Clegg promised to 'keep our eyes on the horizon, not the headlines. Building, brick by brick, day by day, the changes Britain needs'.[77]

The third and last internal component is the demarcation of horizonal limits. As I discussed above, the horizon concept is one that denotes *boundaries* that delimit what we can see, or a *divide*, between possible and impossible, the seen and unseen, priorities and trivialities. Emphasising this boundary component separates horizons from political visions pure and simple. As images of society, visions in political thinking concern the content, the interior field, whilst horizons also concern the perimeter.[78] Implicitly or explicitly, all visions

[74] See Niklas Luhmann, *The Differentiation of Society*, Stephen Holmes and Charles Larmore trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 278-279.
[75] See Alan M. Jacobs, *Governing for the Long Term: Democracy and the Politics of Investment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[76] John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 159.
[77] Nick Clegg, Conference Speech, Liverpool (20 September, 2010). Recalled at http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2010/9/20/nick-clegg-2010-conference-speech-in-full.
[78] On visions in political thinking, see Michael Freeden, *The Political Theory of Political Thinking* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), chp. 7.

are horizonal, one might say, but horizon lines can also be set first and foremost *as horizonal boundaries* that may restrict or cut off possibilities.

Husserl described the horizon as 'a continuous ring around the actual field of perception', claiming that the horizon remains a blurred or 'misty' background.[79] But the power of political horizonal boundaries is often in making them explicit (or at least explicitly misty). Nor do the boundaries of political horizons denote a world. Rather, in political thinking and practice horizons are *movable* boundaries that orient, open-up and constrain political activity. Concerning the potential realisation of a Palestinian state, Condoleezza Rice, President George W. Bush's Secretary of State, spoke of the need to outline a clear 'political horizon' before entering negotiations with the Israeli and Palestinian governments.[80] While J S Mill described an open horizon of possibility and human developing in his metaphor of a tree of experimental living, which 'requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing'.[81] All of this comprises the discourse of horizonal time.

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At the same time we can assess horizonal politics on a macro-level, in terms of the categorisation of horizonal politicking. To account for the differences in relation to politics, I propose we consider horizonal politics according to two overlapping spatial-temporal categories of political experience: what I call the 'horizons of politics', referring to the scope and temporal reach of political thinking and activity, and also, the 'politics of horizons', denoting the contestation and overall politicisation of time horizons.

The 'horizons of politics', a term I deliberately pluralise, concerns the varied and contested boundaries of political activity. They mark the extent, the outer edge, of the

[79] Edmund Hussrel, *Ideas*, 102.
[80] See Elliot Abrams, *Tested by Zion: The Bush Administration and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014), 221.
[81] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1978), 56-57.

understandings, scopes, purposes and possibilities of political activity. Such boundaries are susceptible to external pressures and shocks, and are also internally malleable – set out deliberately by political actors in time and space. Political thinking widens or narrows, opens or closes, extends them out or brings them forward.

To be more precise, the spatial quality of horizons concerns the interior area of the vision field, representing the *scope* or *range* of possibilities, along with the potential *reach* of political activity as a mode of experience that abuts and intercedes with the other activities and domains. This horizonal space is different from 'the political' as an assigned domain for the conduct of deliberative and adversarial political activity.[82] Rather it is an ideationally constructed vision field that demarcates the possibilities of politics and also areas of society relevant to politics. It is not simply where politicking is located, but the extent of where political activity is (or at least can be) experienced. While temporally, the horizons of politics refer to what Luhmann called the 'temporal horizons relevant for possibilities of action'.[83] It is so in two ways. First, horizons are contingent 'in time', while second, horizons demarcate the range and reach of political thinking in relation to the phases of past, present and future. Here the vision field refers to the temporal extensions from the present – the varied teleological visions that may orient politics along a course or process towards a particular destination.

We see these horizons in political thought, but also in the temporal horizons of day-to-day political activity – what may be called the various 'timeframes of politics'. It is commonplace to grumble that politicians only think ahead towards the next election, but in

[82] On boundaries of the political, see for instance, Alessandro Pizzorno, 'Politics Unbound', in *Charles S Maier* ed., *Changing Boundaries of the Political* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 27-28. On the meaning of the concept of 'the political' as sphere, see, for instance Emily Hauptmann, 'A Local History of "The Political"', *Political Theory*, (32) (2004), pp. 34-60; Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), Palonen, *The Struggle with Time*, esp. pp. 33-64, and as a mode of experience, see Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958). On Politics as experience, see John H. Schaar and Sheldon S. Wolin, 'Essays on the scientific study of politics: A critique', in *American Political Science Review* 57:1 (1963), 125-50.
[83] Luhmann, *Differentiation of Society*, 290.

fact policymaking is replete with different horizon lines marked out in the future – from budget forecasts and sunset clauses to five-year plans and multi-annual economic development strategies.[84] David Stockman, the budget director in the Reagan administration, questioned why they should waste 'a lot of political capital on some other guy's problems in 2010'.[85] By contrast, in his farewell address, President Dwight Eisenhower spoke about the importance of governing in the interests of future generations:

> Another factor in maintaining balance involves the element of time. As we peer into society's future, we—you and I, and our government—must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering, for our own ease and convenience, the precious resources of tomorrow. We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without risking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage. We want democracy to survive for all generations to come, not to become the insolvent phantom of tomorrow.[86]

From the contested of the horizons of politics, there is the accompanying category of the 'politics of horizons'. This includes the various ways that political actors play with the scope and temporal reach of politics. But the politics of horizons also encompasses the *politicisation* of a wider horizonal milieu in social and individual life. Scientific breakthroughs, environmental catastrophes or the storm clouds of an economic downturn can all be said to lie on the horizon, and thus influence (or not) what politics is to do in the meantime.

Political horizons inhabit a crowded temporal space, as we experience time on various individual and group levels, what Hartmut Rosa separates into our routinised everyday times, the experienced lifetime associated with *Dasein*, and an epochal time that encompasses the long-term structures and rhythms of historical time.[87] The power of the politics of horizons is in how it can permeate each level of society—the public and private, the horizons of our

[84] See, for instance, Daniel Tarschys, 'Time Horizons in Budgeting', in *OECD Journal on Budgeting* 2, no. 2 (2002), 77-104.
[85] Quoted in William Grieder, *The Education of David Stockman and Other Americans* (New York: Dutton, 1982), 43.
[86] Dwight Eisenhower, Farewell Address to the Nation (17 January, 1961), recalled at http://mcadams.posc.mu.edu/ike.htm.
[87] Rosa, *Social Acceleration: A New Theory of Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), p. 10.

everyday or lifetime—whereby collective socio-political horizons may control, eradicate or protect our own horizonal experience. Political thinking may also simplify the complexity and simultaneity of our temporal horizons. Luhmann provides the useful term of 'temporal integration', relating to how social systems attempt to reduce the complexity of time, communicating 'temporal horizons for selective behaviour' by articulating a past, explaining contingency and orienting the present-future.[88]

Of course, the 20th century is littered with state efforts to order collective life through 'visions of compulsion' and to influence or control the times of its citizens. Time becomes a commodity pulled between public and private interests, reminding us of Rousseau's dictum that 'as soon as man is alone he is nothing'.[89] As he says in the *Social Contract*, 'the good path [the general will] must be pointed out to it. It must be made safe from the seduction of private wills. It must be given a sense of time and place…everyone is equally in need of guides'.[90] Arendt reflected that under totalitarianism all human action is subordinated to a continuous temporal movement. She wrote that, 'supra-gigantic forces whose movements race through humanity, dragging every individual willy-nilly with them—either riding atop their triumphant car or crushed under its wheels—may be various and complicated: still, it is surprising to see how, for all practical political purposes, these ideologies always result in the same "law" of elimination of individuals for the sake of the process or progress of the species'.[91] These examples may look extreme to twenty-first century readers. But consider the pernicious phrase, 'will of the people', which, alas, still has much currency in contemporary discourse – its horizon still ominous.

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[88] Luhmann, *Differentiation of Society*, 350.
[89] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, Willmoore Kendall trans. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1985), 21.
[90] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, Book II, Chapter VI, in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Basic Political Writings*, Donald A. Cress trans. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987), 162.
[91] Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding 1930–1954: Formation, Exile, and Totalitarianism* (New York: Schocken, 2005), 341. Quoted in Kathrin Braun, 'Biopolitics and Temporality in Arendt and Foucault', in *Time and Society* 16:1 (2007), 15.

The future of horizons

By way of conclusion, I want to briefly relate this horizonal politicking to a common apprehension that regularly crops up in social and critical theory over the narrowing or shortening of our horizons brought about by the quickening pace and instability of our so-called post- or late-modern temporality. The historian François Hartog's popular phrase, 'regimes of historicity', denoting the domination of a particular order of time, speaks to this rising feeling of an eroded modern future orientation, since replaced by a pervasive presentism. Hartog writes that,

> Futurism has sunk below the horizon and presentism has taken its place. We cannot see beyond it. Since it has neither a past nor a future, this present daily fabricates the past and future it requires, while privileging the immediate.[92]

If observably unmoored from the past and future, the present receives a diverse range of diagnoses; though commercialism usually comes in for harsh criticism. In *The Condition of Postmodernity,* David Harvey suggests that capitalism has brought about a 'time-space compression' that shrinks the horizons of our private and public life. We have not only experienced the annihilation of space through the increased speed of transport and modes of communication, he reckons; but also a shift from a future oriented time-as-becoming to a presentist time-as-being. 'The future has come to be discounted into the present'.[93] Helga Nowotny speaks along similar lines, to the post-modern elimination of the future, replaced by an *extended* present overwhelmed with immediate decisions and revisions with little consideration as to the future consequences:

> The future became accessible under the condition of remaining inaccessible. Today, this distance is threatening to collapse. Expectations no longer hold the glittering promise of a horizon that is still to be reached, and experience as the basis from which one wants to extrapolate future expectations, has lost much credence. The category of the future is shrinking towards becoming a mere extension of the present

[92] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, Saskia Brown trans. (New York: Columbia University Press), 113.
[93] David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 291.

> because science and technology have successfully reduced the distance that is needed to accommodate their own products.[94]

Meanwhile Hermann Lübbe switches this image around by theorising a *contraction* of the present (*Gegenwartsschrumpfung*) as a temporal consequence of rapid innovation, 'whereby the space of time for which we can calculate our living conditions with a degree of constancy is shortened'.[95] Past and future have little influence on this contracted present: society loses its historical consciousness, while assurances of a stable career and a comfortable retirement in the future now depend on the whims of technological advancement.

In truth, one may choose from a number of possible culprits behind this presentism. The writings of Paul Virilio reserve special scorn for the military industrial complex and its appetite for acceleration, where political power rests on the control of speed. The faster dominate plodding rivals.[96] Neo-liberalism, a phrase often banded about carelessly, is characterised to demand speed and efficiency regardless of the consequences. Competition rewards the swift. Impatient investors demand immediate returns. Traders after quick profit outmanoeuvre the average stock market punter, often to the latter's detriment. On a larger scale, globalisation sweeps away traditional and even industrialised economies, leaving skills moribund and entire workforces 'left behind'. Meanwhile, World Bank bureaucrats continue to demand rapid structural adjustments to developing economies as a condition of a loan package, even though, as the economist Ha-Joon Chang has pointed out—for some rather inconveniently—most Western nation states never developed out of subsistence and mercantilist economies on such a steep curve.[97] But it seems that the West's addiction to acceleration requires that for developing countries time is of the essence: distant prospects

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[94] Helga Nowotny, *Time: The Modern and Postmodern Experience* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 1985), 16.
[95] Hermann Lübbe, 'The Contraction of the Present', in *High-Speed Society: Social Acceleration, Power, and Modernity*. Edited by Hartmut Rosa and William Scheuerman (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 159.
[96] See *The Virilio Reader*. Edited by James Der Derian (Oxford: John Wiley and Sons, 1983), p. 76.
[97] Ha-Joon Chang, *Kicking Away the Ladder: Development Strategy in Historical Perspective: Policies and Institutions for Economic Development in Historical Perspective* (London: Anthem Press, 2002).

must be rushed into the present.

These portrayals are seductive, though their penchant for alarmism is often overdone in places. They neglect the futurism still firmly entrenched in the ethos of places like Silicon Valley. Nor is capitalism entirely bereft of a longer-term horizon of care. Still, these warnings about the pervasive irrelevance or uncertainty of the future coincide with efforts to change this. Environmentalists, in particular, argue forcefully for longer-term horizons and an appreciation of the rhythms of the natural world. In the face of the risk posed by environmental degradation, Ulrich Beck advocates for new horizons of stability and sustainability.[98] Campaigners rush to protect the wilderness that remains, while the slow-food movement—whose icon is the snail—aims to preserve traditional and local practices more in harmony with nature. Its commitment to 'virtuous globalisation' is not entirely nostalgic, but wants to embrace its positive elements to revive old ways.[99]

Much of this is occurring outside the traditional sphere of the political. Many think this is because the horizons and pace of politics are too desynchronised from the presentism that pervades contemporary society and the long-termism meant to counter it. While Jürgen Habermas, among others, extol the virtues of the measured pace of deliberative democracy, others worry that it cannot adequately respond to these time flows.[100] Hartmut Rosa considers this desynchronisation to be a 'temporal crisis of the political'.[101] I return to this issue in the following chapter.

On one hand this chapter is meant to push back against these theories of structural regimes and epochal shifts, even if, on the other hand, we should not deny the possibility for dominant horizonal coordinates from time to time. But on the whole, my intention is to

[98] Ulrich Beck, *World at Risk* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).
[99] On the time politics of the slow food movement, see Bonnie Honig, *Emergency Politics: Paradox, Law, Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 57-64.
[100] Jürgen Habermas, 'Three Normative Models of Democracy', in *Democracy and Difference*. Edited by Seyla Benhabib (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 21-30.
[101] Rosa, *Social Acceleration*, 251-276.

emphasise the horizonal simultaneity, complexity and contestation that lies at the heart of politics and broader social discourse. To only attribute horizons to structural preconditions does a disservice to our efforts to better understand the diverse horizonal possibilities articulated in the semantics of political thinking. For a core component of political activity is the attempted mediation or synchronisation between different, often conflicting, horizons – between those promoted in ideas and those dictated by the rhythms and constraints posed by our political institutions.

Whether this is good or bad, desirable or not, is for another thesis. My claim here is simply that it is hard to imagine politics without horizons, and we should better appreciate their importance. Posing questions over what we should do with these horizons only proves my point. Political thinking may insist on clearer horizons, plural horizons or no horizons. Indeed, given their complexity, some may prefer letting things come what may, embracing Michael Oakeshott's preference for political activity to simply 'sail a boundless and bottomless sea…[with] neither starting-place nor appointed destination'.[102] The horizon is there, but as something merely to look at as we sail on.

[102] Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*, Timothy Fuller ed., revised and expanded edition (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund), 60.

Chapter Four
The Politics of Movement

> "When I began to work in my presidential office in Prague Castle, I found no clocks at all, and this was for me a strong symbol; for long endless years there had been no need to look at the time, because time did not exist. History had stopped, and not only in the Castle of Prague, but in the whole country. Today, history is rushing ahead…and seems to be making up for lost time. All of us, you as well as me, have to re-enter the course of time."
> –Václav Havel[1]
>
> "Speed is everything, it is the indispensable ingredient of competitiveness."
> – Jack Welch, CEO of General Electric[2]
>
> "Politics is a strong and slow boring of hard boards."
> – Max Weber[3]

When thinking about the different ways politics instigates social change it is common to reserve a special category for 'movements', deemed political or social, bringing to mind salient episodes like the American civil rights movement or the South African anti-apartheid movement, along with any number of labour and anti-war movements that occur with regularity. On one hand, the categorisation of a type of political activity as 'a movement' or as a type of 'movement politics' recognises an important spatial distinction. 'Consciousness is only possible through change; change is only possible through movement', as Aldous Huxley reminds us in *The Art of Seeing*.[4] But we do not recognise all political change as movement-induced change. And this is first and foremost because of a spatial consideration. We classify movements as undertakings from a social group who do not control the levers of power. Their well-honed tactics for instigating political change lie or at least originate for the most part outside the institutional sphere of politics. It is a separate space that political theorists attempt to account for in the broader designation of 'the political', even if its

[1] Speech to Federal Czechoslovakian Assembly (1990), in Václav Havel, *L'Amour et la verité* (Paris: Editions de l'Aube, 1990). Quoted in Jean Chesneaux, 'Speed and Social Democracy: An Uneasy Dialogue', in *Social Science Information* 39:4 (2000), 419.
[2] Janet Lowe, *Jack Welch Speaks* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1998), 47.
[3] Max Weber, *Political Writings*, Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 396.
[4] Aldous Huxley, *The Art of Seeing* (New York: Harper and Row, 1942), 32. He actually takes this phrase from the French psychologist T. H. Ribot, in *The Psychology of Attention* (1890) (London: Kessinger Publishing, 2007), 52.

boundaries and defining features are often poorly distinguished.[5] The force of movements may resonate in the voting booth or on the legislative floor, may even enlist state officials to their ranks, but the power of a movement stems from its populist origins – from the street, the concert hall and through countless leaflets and placards. As Martin Luther King remarked, 'there is no noise as powerful as the sound of the marching feet of a determined people'.[6] This is why we often think of movements first and foremost as social or popular movements rather than political movements, even if they certainly are political, and the ultimate goal is often to bring about change through eventual state action.[7]

But at the same time there is also a temporal dimension to movement politics that spans more than its spatial counterpart. We can call it the 'politics of movement'. From Aristotle we come to see time as quantitative motion or movement, while any experience of social movement of course also implies the passage of time.[8] One protest or one poll does not make a movement. Movements take time. This is a banal point. The more complicated issue, however, is over the qualitative measure of movement – a consideration in relation to historical time. One simple distinction requires that a series of events occurring over time—demonstrations, votes and sit-ins—must be part of a *process* that when taken together constitutes a visible whole moving in one direction towards an identifiable goal. But this can be broken down further. In an essay on social movements and time Doug McAdam and William Sewell split the 'process times' of social movements into three categories helpful for our investigation here.[9] The first are long-term gradual processes that may have punctuated moments, but are noticeable in their stability and uniform directionality over a period of time.

[5] See Seyla Benhabib ed., *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).
[6] Quoted in John Lewis and Michael D'Orso, *Walking in the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (New York: Mariner Books, 1999), 180.
[7] On this see, Joseph Gusfield, 'The Study of Social Movements', in D. L. Sills ed., *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Collier and Macmillan, 1968), 445-452.
[8] Aristotle, *Physics*. Translated by Robert Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
[9] Doug McAdam and William Sewell Jr, 'It's About Time: Temporality in the Study of Social Movements and Revolutions, in Ronald R Aminzade et al. eds., *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 91-101.

They are movements over the *Longue Durée*, some with bookends of a 'start' and 'end', others extending *ad infinitum*. They may be incremental or cumulative. Marx's historical materialism is the most commonly offered example of a long-term process of this sort. It is one marked by events, even events of upheaval, though the underlying structures of historical movement always remain (until revolution).[10] By comparison, the second form of movement process is cyclical, not linear, constituting in the social movement literature at least, the routinised occurrence of 'protest cycles' recurring over a period of time.[11] Looking across space and time sociologists notice repeatable 'stages of unrest' that often correlate with other processes occurring simultaneously.[12] These cycles move to a medium-term rhythm. Lastly, the third movement time is short-term, usually featuring happenings within a 'transformative event'—an economic crash or the storming of the Bastille—[13] that McAdam and Sewell define as 'punctual and discontinuous rather than cyclical, linear or continuous'.[14]

This last categorisation we can quibble with. We do not have to necessarily treat 'transformative events' as movements in and of themselves, but as events that spark a movement, or turbo-charge an existing movement. As Marx claimed, emancipatory violence is 'the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one'.[15] McAdam and Sewell acknowledge the generating effect of events to some degree, writing that, 'particular contingencies faced by actors at particular times may have structural effects over a very long run'.[16] Still, it seems rather out of place to denote singular events, especially contingencies, as processes.

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[10] See Karl Marx, *Early Political Writings*, Joseph O'Malley ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 119-181.
[11] On 'process-framing' see, Ervin Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986).
[12] See Sidney Tarrow, *Democracy and Disorder* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).
[13] See William Sewell Jr., 'Historical Events as Transformative Structures: Inventing revolution at the Bastille', in *Theory and Society* 25 (1996).
[14] McAdam and Sewell 'It's About Time', 102.
[15] Quoted in, Hannah Arendt, 'Tradition in the Modern Age', in William Richter ed., *Approaches to Political Thought* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 77.
[16] McAdam and Sewell, 'It's About Time', 102.

Nevertheless, an upshot to their inclusion of the contingent event is the reminder that with movements, in all three categories, political actors and institutions have variable capacities for control. For the sociologist Hartmut Rosa, a leading voice in social acceleration theory, political activity is in part an attempt by democratic governing institutions to control the moving time structures (*Zeitstrukturen*) of the life-world – by constructing, preserving or transforming them.[17] In this sense politics undertakes a 'steering function', as mentioned in the last chapter, that is pushing or guiding change, and setting its pace along a particular developmental path stretching from past to future in historical time. As Alistair McIntyre has argued, orientating in this way, via government steering or not, is a common human response to the contingency of social life. 'We always move towards placing a particular episode in the context of a set of narrative histories', he writes. 'We render the actions of others intelligible in this way because action itself has a basically historical character…an action is always an episode in possible history'.[18] In other words, experience always has the potential to be constitutive of a possible process.

Of course political actors and institutions are only one set of process-generating and steering entities. Yet Rosa argues that in modernity politics comes to dominate the tiller, claiming that during the rise of state power vis-à-vis the church in particular, 'politics [was] held responsible for a very specific task within historical time'.[19] To put it in Koselleck's terms, this is to say that in the period politics orientated and steered movements in starkly different ways to the natural, cultural and eschatological movements that had traditionally set the rhythms of social life. In its newfound capacity for steering, it was politics which set the directional coordinates of historical time seen or put 'in motion' due to a number of structural accelerators and ideational horizons of expectation. Summing up the temporal importance of

[17] See Hartmut Rosa, *Social Acceleration*, Jonathan Trejo-Mathys trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), xxxviii. On steering see, Uwe Schimank*, Theorien gesellschaftlicher Differenzierung*, 2nd ed. (Oplanden: Lesk and Budrich, 2000), 274f.
[18] Alistair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2007), 249, 251.
[19] Rosa, *Social Acceleration*, 252.

politics in the modern period Koselleck remarked that in France, 'Louis XIV was celebrated as the *maître du temps* because he ruled the present by his wisdom, the past by his memory and the future by his foresight'.[20]

But the new reality, thinks Rosa, and something Koselleck never engaged with, is that by 'late-modernity' political actors and institutions had lost their place as a 'social pacesetter'.[21] Politics is left behind. The reason for this, social theorists like Rosa argue, is that the intrinsic temporalities of democratic politics—set by temporal restrictions built-in to its law-making process—[22] render it incapable of keeping up with the rate and new forces of social change. Rosa writes that, 'time within politics is becoming thoroughly disorganized and confused … bringing the classical modern conception of the role of politics within time to the brink of collapse'.[23] This is not a narrow issue simply to do with regulation failing to keep up with innovation, for instance (though a salient example nowadays).[24] Instead Rosa and others diagnose that external forces are almost *universally* supplanting the temporal function of political thinking, especially on the level of historical time. Politics has especially lost its grip on orientating the present in relation to the future. It is now outside entities found in San Francisco and New York, not Washington, which are in a better position to situate the present 'in time' (*In-die-zeit-Gestelltseins*) in relation to the past and future – offering new answers to *'Where are we?'* in relation to *Where have we come from?* and *Where are we going?*

[20] Quoted in Koselleck, 'Is there an Acceleration of History?, in Hartmut Rosa and William Schuermann eds., *High-Speed Society: Social Acceleration, Power and Modernity* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 118.
[21] Rosa, *Social Acceleration*, 260.
[22] To explain this he remarks on passages in Locke and Montesquieu that speak to the temporal difference between slower and deliberative legislative processes in comparison to the fast action of the executive. See John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapter XI and XII and Charles de Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, Book XI, Chapter VI. Discussed in Rosa, *Social Acceleration*, 253.
[23] Ibid., 262.
[24] See Shedon Wolin, 'What Time is it?', in *Theory and Event* 1(1) (1997). Recalled at: https://muse.jhu.edu/article/32440

Regardless of whether we want to agree with the entirety of the social acceleration thesis, which is highly selective, from a scholarly distance we should see that in fact there are two issues of temporality going on here—one structural, the other dimensional—that are both relevant to the study of political thinking. On the level of structure, Rosa divides acceleration into three categories: first, that of technical acceleration (e.g. production speeds, transport, digitisation); second, the acceleration of social change, measured, for instance, by Hermann Lübbe in the changes of periods of stability and the 'rate of obsolescence';[25] and third, what Rosa calls the 'pace of life' – measured by the 'acceleration of the pace of action'.[26] The dimensional upshot of these accelerators is not only the separation of past experiences and horizons of expectation, but the inability of political thinking to think horizonally beyond the present. This I discussed in the previous chapter. But the issue is relevant to the discussion here because when looking for the culprit many point a finger at acceleration. For instance, the historian Jean Chesneaux comments that politics *needs time* in order to engage in 'the dialogue between past, present and future', which he thinks is, 'fundamental for the proper exercise of democracy'.[27] Sheldon Wolin, from a political theory perspective, makes a similar argument about the *desynchronisation* between the pace of politics and the social world, a common theme in the literature on time and politics.[28] To quote him at some length, Wolin writes that,

> Political time is out of synch with the temporalities, rhythms, and pace governing economy and culture. Political time, especially in societies with pretensions to democracy, requires an element of leisure, not in the sense of a leisure class (which is the form in which the ancient writers conceived it), but in the sense, say, of a leisurely pace. This is owing to the needs of political action to be preceded by deliberation and deliberation [sic],[29] as its "deliberate" part suggests, takes time because, typically, it occurs in a setting of competing or conflicting but legitimate considerations. Political

[25] Hermann Lübbe, 'The Contraction of the Present', in Rosa and Scheuerman, *High-speed Society*, 159-179.
[26] Hartmut Rosa, *Social Acceleration*, 74-80.
[27] Jean Chesneaux, 'Speed and Social Life', 410.
[28] Rosa also discusses the issue of synchronisation in, *Social Acceleration*, 71-72, 251-276, along with Robert Hassan, *Empires of Speed* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 6. This is also a theme in Kari Palonen, 'Political Times and the Rhetoric of Democratization', in Kari Palonen, Tuija Pulkkinen and José María Rosales eds., *The Ashgate Research Companion to Political Democratization in Europe* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).
[29] Wolin repeats this word in the text.

> time is conditioned by the presence of differences and the attempt to negotiate them. The results of negotiations, whether successful or not, preserve time: consider the times preserved in the various failed attempts to deal with the secession crises prior to the [American] Civil War. Thus time is "taken" in deliberation yet "saved." That political time has a preservative function is not surprising. Since time immemorial political authorities have been charged with preserving bodies, goods, souls, practices, and circumscribed ways of life.[30]

The across-the-board desynchronisation between 'political time' and 'social time(s)' is another debatable topic. But what it does show is that in their tripartite classification of movements, McAdam and Sewell confuse what are two sides of the movement coin. On one hand, political thought and activity may serve as a 'locomotive of history', to use Marx's phrase – as an accelerator or decelerator.[31] As the philosopher Paul Virilio fretted, 'so much of ideology is about mobility'.[32] But political activity and thinking is also in *response* to movements that are not, or at least not directly, of politics' own making. Instead, they may be politicised.

Thus in theorising movement, we must recognise that there are always myriad movements and rhythms taking place internal and external to political activity—a dynamic *movement landscape* indicative of the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous—over which political actors and institutions must adroitly navigate. As George Gurvitch describes the complexities of social time: there are 'convergent and divergent movements which persist in a discontinuous succession and change in a continuity of heterogeneous moments'.[33]

This notion of a 'movement landscape' is especially important because it picks up on two types of movement that Koselleck mentioned in his scattered remarks on the topic, both of which I elaborate on in what follows. One concerns the structural processes of the social world to which politics must react; whereas the other is the expectational components internalised in the semantics of ideology that encourage or attempt to arrest processes of

[30] Shedon Wolin, 'What Time is it?', [no page number].
[31] See Karl Marx, *Die Klassenkämpfe in Frankreich, 1848 bis 1850* (Berlin: K Vorwärts, 1895), quoted in Koselleck, 'Acceleration of History', 119.
[32] Paul Virilio, *Speed and Politics*, Mark Polizzotti trans. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 53.
[33] Georges Gurvitch, *The Spectrum of Social Time* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1964), 18.

social and political change. He is again especially useful because here too Koselleck stresses that there is a dynamic interaction between history and language, between structures of movement and what he calls 'concepts of movement' (*Bewegungsbegriffe*) that set history in motion.

Interestingly, however, the social theories of temporal acceleration and those on movement politics, even those who quote Koselleck with regularity, more or less ignore the importance of language to movement, focusing instead on structures external and internal to political activity.[34] In response, in what follows, I want to look more closely at Koselleck's theorisation of movement, and its implications, to suggest that a key source of political power at the heart of movement temporalisation lies in its linguistic mediation. For the sake of clarity, I will state here that three issues emerge: first, the difference and relationship between internal and external time structures; second, the relationship between concepts and structures of movement; and finally, a tripartite set of key issues internalised in the movement concept – structures of movement, the pace of movement and the mechanisms of propulsion.

Language, experience and structures of movement

As the above discussion demonstrates, a number of social and political theorists, some of whom I mention above, have written extensively about the temporalities of democracy and the sociology and phenomenology of social acceleration. All focus to a great extent on institutional and legal processes and the democratic state's capacity to respond sufficiently to innovation and the challenges posed by a rapidly changing social world. They often take their cue (interestingly) from Carl Schmitt's critique of liberal democracy, though most argue from the left.[35] Some are bullish about the challenge. In *Neuropolitics* William Connolly argues that social acceleration has resulted in a rise of movement politics (designated spatially) and a

[34] One brief exception is Hassan, *Empires of Speed*, 93-94.
[35] See Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Concepts on the Concept of Sovereignty*, George Schwab trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

broader democratisation of political possibilities that occur outside the traditional halls of power, rather than an evolution of institutional processes.[36] William Scheuerman takes the opposite tack, hoping for reformed regulatory processes, since he is wary of ceding too much self-regulatory power to outside entities or to the executive in times of emergency. But on this score he is less confident. 'Speed cries out for transnational governance while simultaneously undermining normatively acceptable forms of it', he writes at one point.[37] In these accounts the concept 'neoliberalism' holds a prominent role—adding ideational fuel to a social world dominated by speed and the *Flash Boys* who profit from it.[38] Still, neoliberalism is a concept poorly defined and misunderstood throughout the critical theory literature.[39] Meanwhile, other critical theorists concern themselves with what they see as the temporal straightjacket of the determinative narrative of 'liberal progress',[40] one often fused with elements of neoliberalism,[41] even if they neglect to recognise the possibility for different forms of liberal progress or the common liberal view on the possibility for plural temporal processes.[42] Nevertheless, the main alternative is a call for plurality (albeit already a liberal idea), often argued for via a Bergson-inspired 'politics of becoming' as a middle ground between a singular narrative of 'liberal progress' and Nietzschian relativism.[43] But on the whole these works do not concentrate on the linguistic mediation of the politics of

[36] William Connolly, *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 161. Also see Michael J Shapiro, 'Time, Disjuncture and Democratic Citizenship', in Aryeh Botwinick and William E Connolly eds., *Democracy and Vision: Sheldon Wolin and the Vicissitudes of the Political* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).
[37] William Scheuerman, *Liberal Democracy and the Social Acceleration of Time* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 226.
[38] See Michael Lewis, *Flash Boys* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2014).
[39] On neo-liberalism, see Ben Jackson, 'At the Origins of Neo-Liberalism', in *Historical Journal*, 53 (2010), 129-51; Angus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion* (Cambridge: HUP, 2012); Philip Mirowski and Dieter Plehwe eds., *The Road from Mont Pèlerin* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); Carl Friedrich, 'The Political Thought of Neo-Liberalism', in *American Political Science Review* 49 (1955), 509-25.
[40] See, for instance, Wendy Brown, *Politics out of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).
[41] For example, see Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 2012).
[42] See, Michael Freeden, *Liberal Languages: Ideological Imaginations and Twentieth Century Progressive Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); and David Leopold, 'A Cautious Embrace: Reflections on (Left) Liberalism and Utopia', in Ben Jackson and Marc Stears eds., *Liberalism as Ideology: Essays in Honour of Michael Freeden* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 9-33.
[43] On his difference between 'clock time' and 'lived time' (temps et durée), see Henri Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (Paris: Alcan, 1889). For a useful secondary source, see Suzanne Guerlac, *Thinking in Time: An Introduction to Henri Bergson* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006).

'becoming' beyond their own corpus of words used to describe it (rather imprecisely, it must be said), in terms of 'development', '*durée*', 'emergence', 'possibility', 'plural tempos', among others, along with the word 'becoming' itself.[44]

Hence, given this state of affairs, a conceptual history approach to movement politics offers a valuable contribution to this discussion on numerous fronts. For instance, one may ask whether 'becoming' is purely a temporality of the present. Or as Koselleck would argue, does it contain within it past experience and future horizons? How could it not? There are also similarities between Koselleck's call for the pluralisation of times (pasts and futures) and Connolly's politics of becoming in relation to issues of identity and difference.[45] Both can be seen to embrace the idea of the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous, what Connolly alludes to in his phrase 'asymmetrics of pace',[46] and the possibility for a 'time of the other', to use the anthropologist Johannes Fabian's phrase.[47] Moreover, Koselleck's theory of modernity also speaks to the political difficulty (and in some situations even impossibility) of reconciling generational past structures with present expectations.[48] In a world of rapid change, how can the past govern the future? Thomas Paine thought that rule from the grave was the 'most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies'.[49] But the other extreme also holds its own relativist dangers. There is a constant tension, therefore, between the dual challenges of continuity and renewal that Kosselleck revisits over and over in his empirical and

[44] See, for instance, Connolly, *Neuropolitics*; Justin Chandler Mueller, *Temporality and Political Obligation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015); Christopher Pendergast, 'Codeword Modernity', in *New Left Review*, November-December (2003); Bonnie Honig, *Emergency Politics: Paradox, Law, Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); and Hassan, *Empires of Speed*.
[45] William Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization* (Minneapolis: University of *Minnesota* Press, 1995).
[46] William Connolly, 'Nietzsche, Democracy, and Time', in Herman W. Siemens and Vasti Roodt eds., *Nietzsche, Power and Politics: Rethinking Nietzsche's Legacy for Political Thought* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co, 2008), 110.
[47] See Johannes Fabian, *Time and the other: how anthropology makes its object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).
[48] See Koselleck, 'Transformations of Experience and Methodological Change: A Historical-Anthropological Essay', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 53-54.
[49] Thomas Paine, quoted in Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Penguin Books, 1963), 233.

methodological work on historical structures and temporal horizons.[50]

What I want to concentrate on in this section, though, given the lack of an analysis of concepts among many of these critical theorists, are three components to Koselleck's work relevant to the specific issue of the linguistically mediated politics of movement – on his theory of acceleration, structures of movement, and concepts of movement.

My overall claim in this section is to suggest that for Koselleck there are two key observations in his theory of movement found both in his conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*) and theorising of possible histories (*Historik*): on one hand, that there are linguistic *indicators* of movement and acceleration (*Beschleunigung*) found internal and external to the semantics of political thinking—thus either political or potentially politicised—and also, on the other hand, that we understand concepts as '*instruments* for the direction of historical movement [my emphasis]'.[51] The internal components of structure, pace and mechanisms of propulsion, which I mentioned above, can be found in both the 'indicator' and 'instrument' forms.

The acceleration thesis

Let me first start with his thesis on acceleration, one that is well known, including among sociologists like Rosa, even it is often criticised (rightly) as overly simplistic.[52] Empirically speaking, his thinking on the acceleration of time derives from the study of two key historical occurrences, one an event, the French Revolution, and the other a process, the Industrial Revolution. Both are historical occurrences that Koselleck thinks altered the experience of the rate of historical change and hence the movement of historical time. The former derived its experience (and expectation) of acceleration from revolutionary *ideas*, while the latter

[50] In terms of this issue in relation to constitutionalism, see Jürgen Habermas, 'Constitutional Democracy: a Paradoxical Union of Contradictory Principles?', William Rehg trans., in *Political Theory* 29:6 (December 2001), 766-781.
[51] Koselleck, 'Modern Concepts of Movement', in *Futures Past*, 251.
[52] For instance he is wrong to say that movement in modernity becomes an 'irreversible temporal process'. Koselleck, in *Futures Past*, ibid.

from external *structures* that brought about change at a pace greater than ever before. The implication of this is that one indicates the role that language plays to accelerate change, while the other relates to how structural forces of acceleration enter the semantic field of politics.

To start with the external structures, Koselleck claims that for historical actors in the *Sattelzeit*, in the wake of technological and industrial innovation there is an accelerating 'alteration in the rhythm of temporal experience' where the rate of change increases geometrically across the same interval of time.[53] 'Technology determined units of time detached themselves from the traditional temporal rhythms connected to nature'. From the time it takes to travel distances, to rapid developments in communication, modernity sliced time in shorter and shorter durations.[54] It is not time that sped up, but the social processes occurring in time.

This is an observation that has not gone away. For Peter Conrad the acceleration of time is in fact the essence of modernity,[55] while Manuel Castells contends that our networked society is one that 'flows' so fast that time has become timeless.[56] These are both building on Koselleckian themes. In modernity, 'time is constantly outstripping itself', Koselleck writes.[57] But the most important issue for him is that external acceleration is a key factor on an experiential level, at the heart of the modern separation between past experience and expectations of the future. Koselleck writes that,

> Change, *mutation rerum,* can be reported in all histories. What is modern is change that calls forth a new temporal experience: [where] everything changes faster than could have been expected or had earlier been experienced. Through the shorter space of time, a component of unfamiliarity enters the everyday of those affected that cannot be derived from any previous experience.[58]

[53] Koselleck, 'Modern Concepts of Movement', in *Futures Past*, 241.
[54] Koselleck, 'Is there Acceleration to History?, in Rosa and Scheuerman, *High-Speed Society,* 126.
[55] Peter Conrad, *Modern Times and Modern Places: How Life and Art Were Transformed in a Century of Revolution, Innovation and Radical Change* (New York: Knopf, 1999).
[56] Manuel Castells, The Rise of the Network Society: Economy, Society and Culture vol. 1 (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2000).
[57] Koselleck, Is there Acceleration to History?, in Rosa and Scheuerman, *High-Speed Society*, 124-125.
[58] Ibid.

However, again, we should account for the observation of acceleration as two different types. [59] For Koselleck, it refers to the experience of acceleration ushered in by industrialisation and rapid technological innovation, [60] and also on account of rapidly changing political dynamics. Or put in another way, the experience of acceleration can be a result of the space of experience or the horizon of expectation. On the space side, the experience of acceleration is deduced by comparisons with previous conjunctions of events in order to measure the rate of change; while on the other hand, acceleration is associated with a normative goal – where it is 'much less a controlling experiential concept than a utopian concept'.[61] Or as Hannah Arendt would refer to it, a 'teleology of action'.[62] In relation to expectation, the political debate then becomes a question of anticipation, expectation, hope, possibility, delay and impatience – *When?* and *How quickly?*. Indeed, Koselleck noticed modern man's propensity to 'foreshorten' time, where processes are sped up in reaction to delays or in the interest of pre-established normative desires. Koselleck writes that,

> Processes of acceleration are always possible as a postulate and can constantly be conjured up anew, irrespective of whether they can be fulfilled. It is a concept of expectation that can be repeated at any time. Purely subjective, it can be deduced from temporal slowdowns, foreshortenings, or delays—categories of things wished for or of disappointed hopes.[63]

Koselleck was fond of recounting a Soviet quip instructing one to 'sleep faster, comrade!'.[64] Indeed much of Lenin's rhetoric is emblematic of Bolshevik impatience. 'The Party's role as defined by its leadership is conceived in terms of rapid and continuous change', Lenin said, 'with the emphasis to date on mobilisation rather than distribution, on potentiality for a future

[59] Ibid. For a similar argument see Alexandre Escudier, 'La sentiment d'accélération de l'Historie chez les Modernes: elements pour une historie', in *Esprit* 6 (2008), 165-191.
[60] Koselleck, 'The Modern Concept of Revolution', in *Futures Past*, 50.
[61] Koselleck, 'Is there Acceleration to History?', in Rosa and Scheuerman, *High-Speed Society,* 113. And see Koselleck, 'Die Verzeitlichung der Utopie', in *Utopieforschung*, vol. 3. (Frankfurt and Maim: Suhrkamp, 1982), 1-14.
[62] Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (London: Penguin, 2006), 76.
[63] Koselleck, 'Is there an acceleration of history?', in Rosa and Schuremann, *High-Speed Society*, 128.
[64] Ibid., 116.

rather than present equity'.[65] In many ways Bolshevik ideology was an exemplar of the politics of speed (*Geschwindigkeit*). In the midst of industrialisation, Stalin said, 'Since we [the Bolsheviks] have come to power and taken upon ourselves the task of transforming the country on the basis of socialism, we are responsible for everything, the bad as well as the good…But in order to accomplish this task we must systematically achieve a fast rate of development of our industry'.[66]

From these examples we can already begin to identify different features of the politics of temporal movement, most of them surrounding the indicators and rates of change. In fact the concept of 'change' itself, in terms of its mechanisms and rate, is indispensable to the *topos* of movement politics. In 'Time and Revolutionary Language', Koselleck writes that in modern Germany, 'there was no central category of political theory or social program that did not depend upon an indicator of change'.[67]

On this issue of change we can return to Gabriel Motzkin's observation about the varying 'intensity' of historical change, something I touched on in chapter one,[68] along with the facet of 'duration', which he also mentions. The implication for *Begriffsgeschichte* is that each concept not only contains future, present and past, but also within it different durations and 'intensities' of movement. Durationally speaking, some concepts are short-term, such as 'moment' or 'chance'. Others are long-term, such as 'period' or 'era'. Meanwhile some concepts can accommodate the short- medium- or long-term – 'change' being one example. Simultaneous to this there is also a movement implication associated with, but also potentially incongruent with, this horizonal variation, what Motzkin refers to as the aforementioned metric of 'intensity'. Some concepts, usually those referring to short-term

[65] Quoted in Ken Jowett, 'Time and Development Under Communism', in Dwight Waldo ed., *Temporal Dimensions of Development Administration* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1970), 240.
[66] Joseph Stalin, 'Indusrialization of the country and the right deviation', in *Pravda*, No. 273 (November 1928), reprinted in *Works*, Vol. II (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), 255-302.
[67] Koselleck, 'Time in Revolutionary Language', *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 9:2 (1983).
[68] Gabriel Motzkin, 'On Koselleck's Intuition of Time in History', *The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts: New Studies on Begriffsgeschichte*, Melvin Richter and Hartmut Lehmann eds., Occasional Paper 15 (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 1996), 41-45.

moments, imply a rapid burst of change, while others imply gradual change. But horizonal extensions and intensity do not necessarily correspond. For instance, a call to begin a new era (long-term) can be accompanied with a call for rapid change (short-term). Nevertheless, given his focus on the transformation of temporal experience in the *Sattelzeit*, Koselleck's set of concepts of movement during this period all signify, for the most part, an increase in and desire for rapid change. Concepts indicated this and were themselves a factor in motivating action.

The broader implication of these findings is that acceleration is not simply a passive experience, but something intimately linked with the employment of historical and political language. And if this is the case, then it certainly need not only refer to the concept of acceleration. For if we decouple issues of intensity and horizon from Koselleck's theory of modernity, then there is greater scope to incorporate acceleration within a much wider horizon of linguistically mediated movement temporalisation. It is my claim, then, that his acceleration thesis is in fact a *subset* of the wider issue of movement, which we see on the levels of structure and language.

Structures of movement

In looking at the structures of history, it is worth starting by noting, again, that Koselleck discusses his theory of possible histories amid a 20th century milieu sceptical of a view of history-as-process. To take one of his contemporaries as an example, Arendt reckoned that, 'the modern concept of process pervading history and nature alike separates the modern age from the past more profoundly than any other single idea'.[69] For her the prevailing view that a historically developed process gives meaning to a singular event quashes the capacity for human freedom, the freedom to start anew.[70] 'What the concept of process implies', Arendt thinks, 'is that the concrete and the general, the single thing or event and the universal

[69] Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future,* 63.
[70] On this see, Ari-Elmeri Hyvönen, 'Invisible Streams: Process-thinking in Arendt', in *European Journal of Social Theory* 19:4 (2016), 538-555.

meaning, have parted company. The process, which alone makes meaningful whatever it happens to carry along, has thus acquired a monopoly of universality and significance'.[71]

But by comparison, while Koselleck agreed with her apprehension, he never abandoned the possibility, and indeed the need, for process-based histories. From the historical discipline, as discussed in previous chapters, he too identified a singularised conceptualisation of history, as *Geschichte*, and in particular a philosophised history (*Geschichtsphilosophie*), as a hallmark of modernity, a product of the Enlightenment reaction to the absolutist state whereby the action of men was seen as part of a single process of critique.[72] As he argued in *Kritik und Krise*, critique replaced the possibility for change through political contestation, for that was blocked by the absolutist state, to instead rest aspirations on singularised theories of historical process (*Gerarbeite*). The key linguistic organiser of historical movement in this period was the concept of progress (*Fortschritt*), replacing the earlier concept of *profectus*, meaning advance.[73] Progress, by contrast, carried with it a coefficient of change, a future horizon divorced from past structures of experience.[74]

As I argued in chapter two, *Kritik und Krise* should be read as Koselleck's initial response to the modern tendency of singularisation and what he considered to be its disastrous implications for politics. The work was a call for temporal pluralism in the historical discipline that accounted for what he would later refer to, in his methodological pieces, as the synchronic layering of different diachronic trajectories. *Zietschichten* was thus not a rejection of historical process, but a reminder of its plurality.

Indeed, a key issue in considering the modern historisation of time was the separation, yet still the on-going interaction, between a singular and static natural time and dynamically

[71] Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, 64.
[72] Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1988), 8.
[73] Reinhart Koselleck, *Zeitschichten: Studien Zur Historik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2000), 323.
[74] See Koselleck and Christian Meier, 'Fortschritt', in Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1979), 539-717.

moving historical times. Koselleck thinks that in histories written during *Sattelzeit* it is not so much that temporal movement replaced stasis—for natural time moves too—but that the unity of natural time is replaced by the simultaneity (and indeed non-simultaneity) of ways of narrating movement on top of it.[75]

Empirically he thinks the plurality of possible historical time processes were 'indicative of a specifically modern history'[76] even though he acknowledged that there are clear articulations of historical processes in earlier historical works, for instance in those by Thucydides, Augustine and Bossuet.[77] The difference is that these histories were written according to stable *natural* processes – the constant flows of our day-to-day, the passing seasons, the space between birth and death, the succession of rulers *saeculum* to *saeculum*. This is a reflection that 'in everyday experience, an external or objective natural time always 'flows on"'.[78] In this sense, the movement of history occurs automatically: historians simply have to, as it were, fill in the temporal space. But in the *Sattelzeit* this began to change. As Kant proposed, instead of history following chronology, it is chronology that follows history.[79] By denaturalising time, to an extent, the movement of time was no longer solely chronological—and nor was it, incidentally, eschatological either—but historical, allowing for different and often competing time flows according to structures and rhythms formed by history itself.

But if this is the case it requires serious methodological consideration, especially in light of what Koselleck thought were the 20th century abuses of history. In his essays on

[75] Koselleck writes that, 'if one assumes that historical time remains embedded within natural time without being entirely contained in it; or, to put it differently, that whereas chronological time may be relevant for political decisions, historical interrelations cannot be measured with a clock; or, to put it differently yet again, that the revolution of the stars is no longer (or not yet again) relevant for historical time, we must find temporal categories that are adequate to historical events and processes. 'Koselleck, 'The need for theory in history', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 6.
[76] Koselleck, 'Is there Acceleration to History?', in Rosa and Scheuerman, *High-Speed Society,* 116.
[77] See Koselleck, *Zeitschichten*, 137-142. Discussed in Helge Jordheim, 'Against Periodization: Koselleck's Theory of Multiple Temporalities', in *History and Theory* 51 (2012), 161.
[78] Koselleck, 'Modern Concepts of Movement', in *Futures Past*, 229.
[79] Ibid., 236.

developing a *Historik* Koselleck thought it incumbent upon historians to use appropriate techniques to 'render historical motion visible', as he put it, which he discussed at length in light of the predictive methods employed in Lorenz von Stein's essay on the Prussian constitution, and in his discussion of the possible formal time structures of history, to name two examples.[80] In the latter essay he writes that, 'the temporal determinations of historical occurrences once encountered empirically, can be as numerous as all the individual "events" which one meets with *ex post*, in the execution of action or in anticipation of the future'.[81] But this said Koselleck was not entirely consistent on how to go about structuring events. Or to put it more favourably, he recognised that given the diversity of temporal strata, historians needed a set of different temporal approaches. There are, he insists, 'quite diverse temporal reaches of historical movement'.[82]

But in looking at his different methodological essays, it is clear that he thinks we 'render' historical movement in three primary ways.[83] The first concerns the extra-linguistic 'pre-given' structures that underlie history. This category includes the climactic, geologic and zoological features that man shares with other animals, along with certain meta-historical categories that form the basis for human history – the formal categories of generations, in/out, master/slave, up/down, among others that he thinks pervade histories.[84]

The second approach is on the level of events, given their 'repeatability' (*Wiederholbarkeit*) and 'irreversibility' (*Irreversibilität*). Here he proposes that one way of ordering events is in accounting for different 'structures of repetition' (*Wiederholungsstrukturen*) in order to identify continuity and discontinuity in the 'structural

[80] Koselleck, Historical Prognosis in Lorenz von Stein's Essay on the Prussian Constitution', in *Futures Past*, 58-71. The work is Lorenz von Stein, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich von 1789 bis auf unsere Tage*, Three Volumes (Leipzig: O. Wigand, 1850).
[81] Koselleck, 'History, Histories and Formal Time Structures', in *Futures Past*, 95.
[82] Ibid., 105.
[83] There is a third way, in terms of generations or 'generativity', which I don't discuss here. On this see, Alexandre Escudier, 'La temporalité historique comme objet de réflexion dans l'épistémologie modern de l'historie', in *Divinatio. Studia culturologica series* 18 (2003), 35-65.
[84] Reinhart Koselleck, 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', in *The Journal of Modern History* 61(4) (1986), 650-653.

conditions' of historical time (*Strukturelle Bedingungen*). These 'structural conditions' do not necessarily require causal links (mechanistic, nomothetic links of 'before' and 'after') but more simply that historians investigate the 'structural possibilities' of events (be they material, economic, political-juridical, etc.).[85] In his most direct essay on the topic he writes that,

> With respect to individual events, therefore, there are structural conditions which make possible the course of an event. Such structures may be described, but they can also be included in the context of a narrative, provided that they assist in clarifying events through their nonchronological, causal character.[86]

Whether repeatability requires causality is something on which he was never consistent. But nevertheless, historical analysis on the level of event and structure allows the historian to deduce theories of stability and change over the long-term. 'Structures are comprehensible only in the medium of the events', he writes, 'within which structures are articulated, and which are tangible as structures within them'.[87]

On a third level, meanwhile, Koselleck believed historians can also account for structural change and continuity in terms of temporal experience. This is to say that conceptions of movement, acceleration and deceleration (like Rosa's remark on the pace of life), require that one approach theories of historical movement through the everyday experience of historical actors, on the level of past and future (the Augustinian *distentio animi*). In relation to Stein's use of a theory of historical movement—what Stein called a 'labyrinth of movement'—[88] Koselleck remarks that its prognostic strength was in the specific perspectival localisation (*Standortsbezogenheit*) in the eyes of historical actors. In praise of Stein, Koselleck writes that, 'if history is experienced as the movement of diverse streams whose mutual relations constantly undergo different degrees of intensification,

[85] Discussed in Alexandre Escudier, "'Temporalization' and Political Modernity: A Tentative Systematization of the Work of Reinhart Koselleck", in Javier Fernández Sebastián ed., *Political Concepts and Time: New Approaches to Conceptual History*. (Santander: Cantabria University Press & McGraw-Hill, 2011), 137-138.
[86] Koselleck, 'Representation, Event, and Structure', in *Futures Past*, 109.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ludwig von Stein, *Sozialen Bewegung*, vol. 1, 84,146, 502. References in Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 60.

petrification, or acceleration, then its general motion can be apprehended *only from their consciously adopted point of view*' [my emphasis].[89] Koselleck thought this separated Stein's sociological survey from other 19th century historians peddling singularised philosophical conceptions of history. Koselleck writs that Stein, by contrast, 'used the tools of the one [the professional historian] to disclose the unilinear teleologies of the other [philosophers of history] as ideal constructions, just as he knew how to appraise, without prejudice, the interests, hopes, and plans of all parties as the historical potentialities of a common movement'.[90]

In the interest of proper contextualisation, it is undoubtedly true that Koselleck discussed these issues of event, structure and movement in terms of historical method. But these relationships also surface again in his later anthropological turn, especially in relation to some of his remarks on historicity and its politicisation. For in 'thinking historically'—and by extension in the politicking of thinking historically—there is a similar nexus between events, structures and movements that Koselleck thematises in his anthropological pairing of *Erfahrungsraum* and *Erwartungshorizont*. Here the 'space of experience' contains two types of movement: the 'structural pre-givens', the extra-linguistic elements I mentioned earlier in regards to writing history, and also an awareness of the multitude of different 'structures of repetition'—be they economic, political, technological—that move at different rates and extend into the future.

Aside from their impact on writing history, then, Koselleck is aware that these levels of movement (though always reserving the capacity for contingent surprise) also concern, on a much wider level, how actors account for passively experienced external structures, on one

[89] Koselleck, 'Historical Prognosis', in *Futures Past*, 62.
[90] Ibid. In doing so, Koselleck wrote further that Stein, 'developed a theory of history. He used it to open up all events: their enduring preconditions on the one hand, and the forces lending them motion on the other. Stein was a historical ontologist in the full and ambiguous sense of the word. He separated historical duration and historical contingency (*Zeitlichkeit*) only theoretically and only to establish the uniqueness of given circumstances. This theoretical procedure has proved itself. He gained two mutually illuminating aspects without having to make either of them absolute'. *Futures Past*, 62.

hand, and conceptualising movement in terms of the horizon of expectation on the other. In short, both experiential structures and expectational horizons concern issues of movement – issues of fast and slow, acceleration and deceleration, the too-early and too-late, to name but a few.

My claim, then, is that by way of concepts, ideologies, on the level of structuring events and horizons function as a key player in framing how we view such movements politically – in their structures and mechanisms of movement (the element of propulsion) and pace. Ideologies do not usually do so from the perspective of historical science, Marx being an exception, but still employ similar techniques to exploit various structural possibilities (or impossibilities).

Let me offer an example. A salient illustration of the politics of movement is found in the debate over the movement concept 'climate change', where political actors (from different ideological viewpoints (liberal, progressive, green, conservative, libertarian) pour over a mountain of data and statistical modelling to identify (often tendentiously it must be said) various structures of movement extending into predictive future time. A major hurricane or drought often prompts renewed reshuffling and adjustments to predictive structures. These external movement processes, passively experienced, are then subsequently politicised again in relation to how the state should or should not respond to predictive trajectories, depending on whether climatic movements are seen to be accelerating, fluctuating or stabilising.

At the same time, there are also 'expectative elements' (i.e. normative ends) *internal* to an ideological lens that also relate to movement, process and speed. In the interest of a goal, ideologies may engender impatience while others may promote a vision of measured or organic change.[91] To return to our example, a core goal of environmentalism, or what ideology scholars often identify as 'green ideology', is what Mathew Humphrey has called

[91] On 'organic development' in liberalism, see L. T. Hobhouse, *Liberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964).

the 'ecological restructuring' of the relationship between humanity and nature.[92] This may require little more than a cognitive shift, but the policy implications are vast. How quickly should society change its behaviour in order to 'restructure' or 'balance' the relationship between man and nature? Or to put it closer to our terms: what are the mechanisms and by what speed should society move to restructure the relationship? Indeed there are different ways of moving this relationship and different speeds for doing so – between setting up a cap and trade system, radically altering emissions and efficiency standards, or endorsing violent means to dismantle infrastructure.[93] On the level of ideology, all of these possibilities resonate in language – in ecologisms like 'radical environmentalism', 'conservation', 'eco-terrorism', among others.[94]

The language of movement

To now move from structure to concepts more explicitly, whether in relation to climate change, globalisation or European integration, the politics of process—those external and internal to political enterprises and ideologies—has engendered a rich rhetorical ecosystem of movement concepts and coefficients of movement that can be attached to or internalised within a temporal concept (*Verlaufsbegriff*). While another set of temporalisations concern the seemingly atemporal concepts like liberty, equality and justice, which are temporalised in their associations with other concepts and through grammatical indicators.

The political requirement for concepts of movement is a matter of historical and social experience: the aforementioned 'movement landscape' is a layering of movements moving at different rates and according to different rhythms to which the language of politics must take account. As Henri Lefebvre observes, 'Everywhere where there is interaction

[92] Matthew Humphrey, 'Green Ideology', in Michael Freeden, Lyman Tower Sargent, Mark Stears eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 423-427.

[93] See Edward Abby, *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (New York, Penguin Classics, 2004). The book, a work of fiction written by an American naturalist, is about a group of activists who try to dismantle the Glen Canyon Dam.

[94] On the language of green ideology see, Yanis Stavrakakis, 'Green ideology: A discursive reading', in Journal of Political Ideologies 2:3 (1997), 259-279.

between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy, there is rhythm'.[95] But movement is more than rhythms, more than process: there are a range of flows and breakages in the times of movement that we see indicated and established in the discourse of politics. As Gurvitch lists, there are continuous natural times, erratic times, cyclical times, retarded times, time in advance of itself (rushing forward; or indeed, we can add, times delayed), along with explosive revolutionary time.[96]

In his contribution to this, as I already touched on in chapter one, part of Koselleck's modernity thesis includes what he calls the emergence of 'concepts of movement' (*Bewegungsbegriffe*), whereby concepts that previously referred to spatial entities in past experience (e.g. democracy, the state, the republic) underwent a process of temporalisation (*Verzeitlichung*), and were thus open to temporal contestation. [97] As such, concepts both indicated movement and contributed to movement.[98] While Koselleck stresses that concepts of movement first appeared in historical writing, they soon become relevant to issues of the state, developing a 'pragmatic dimension' identifying and precipitating various *political* movements (here defined temporally instead of spatially).[99] Having 'become the navigational instruments of the changing movement of history…they become factors in the formation of consciousness and the control of behaviour'.[100]

The previously mentioned concept of progress (*Fortschritt*) is an obvious example of

[95] Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, time and everyday life* (London: Continuum, 2004), 15.
[96] Gurvitch, *The Spectrum of Social Time*. To offer all eight types: there is enduring time (time slowed down, over a long duration); deceptive time (where under an apparent calm, sharp crises in fact produce a time of uncertainty or surprise); erratic time (time of irregular pulsation between the appearance and disappearance of rhythms, the time of uncertainty); cyclical time (a motionless or static time); retarded time (which is too long awaited); alternating time (time alternating between delay and advance); the sense of time pushing forward (time in advance); and explosive time (revolutionary ferment and collective creation). These are listed in David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 224-225.
[97] See Koselleck, 'Modern Concepts of Movement', in *Futures Past*, 222-254.
[98] A similar comment is made by Helge Jordheim in, 'Europe at different Speeds', in Willibald Steinmetz, Michael Freeden and Javier Fernández-Sebastián eds., *Conceptual History in the European Space* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Press, 2017), 48.
[99] Koselleck, 'Modern Concepts of Movement', in *Futures Past*, 248.
[100] Koselleck, 'Historical Time and Social History', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 129.

this, what Koselleck deemed 'the first genuinely historical category of time'.[101] Like *Geschichte*, in the concept of progress the main consideration of modern politics was not the past space of experience, according to narratives like Plato's cyclical revolution of regimes or Polybius' cycle of constitutions, but the future-oriented horizon of expectation that, to put it in movement language, left the past behind. Spengler's concept of decline would arrive later.[102] Other examples are the concepts of 'development' (*Entwicklung*), 'emancipation' (*Emanzipation*) [103] and a number of descriptive concepts supporting the movement coefficients of '–ism' or 'isation'.[104] In addition, Koselleck charts the transition from static description to linear temporal motion in the difference between 'democracy' and a moving 'democratisation', or between 'republic' and 'republicanism'.

The -isms aside, other concepts remained intact but inherited new movement characteristics. The concept of crisis (*Krise*) would also undergo change from an indicator of an important moment or situation (*Kairós*) to becoming a factor in irreversible changes in society that cleaved present-future expectation from past experience. It marked the novelty of an epoch (*Kairós* as a historical moment).[105] Similarly the concept of 'revolution' no longer represented the reoccurrence of situations, but starting with the French Revolution marked instead a new world order defined by rapid change and upheaval, followed by a prognosis of permanence.[106] Along these lines, Chalmers Johnson describes revolutions as a certain *type* of movement, as accelerators of change.[107] Indeed, for Koselleck too, especially within the

[101] Koselleck, 'Perspective and Temporality', in *Futures Past*, 140.
[102] See Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West* [Abridged] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Koselleck, '"Progress" and "Decline": An Appendix to the History of Two Concepts', in *Practice of Conceptual History*, 218-235; Koselleck and Christian Meier, 'Fortschritt', in Brunner, Conze and Koselleck eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* vol. 2, 539-717.
[103] See Koselleck and Karl Martin Gras, 'Emanzipation', in Brunner, Conze and Koselleck eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1984), 153-197.
[104] See Koselleck, 'Modern Concepts of Movement', in *Futures Past*, 222-254.
[105] See Koselleck, 'Crisis', Michaela W. Richter trans., in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 67 (2006), 357-400.
[106] Koselleck, 'Revolution', in Brunner, Conze and Koselleck eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* vol. 4 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1984), 653-788.
[107] Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change*, 2nd edition (London: Longman, 1982), 138.

singularised concept—The Revolution—the experiences of acceleration and future directionality became salient. Koselleck wrote that for Robespierre, 'the acceleration of time is a human task, presaging an epoch of freedom and happiness, the golden future'. Robespierre himself pronounced that, "the progress of human Reason laid the basis for this great Revolution, and you shall now assume the particular duty of hastening its pace".[108] Incidentally, in this instance Koselleck also adds a spatial element to revolution, noting that in the upheaval of the entire social structure it became a path from political to a wider social revolution. 'All political unrest involves social elements', he writes, 'But what is new [in the French context] is the idea that the objective of a political revolution should be the social emancipation of all men, transforming the social structure'.[109]

At the same time, movement contestation also comes in the form of counter-concepts, which directly challenge certain movement contentions. Koselleck discussed the use of counter-concepts like 'aristocracy', 'monarchy' and 'tradition' that eschew a horizon of expectation and 'surrender to the past the forms of behaviour or constitutional elements thereby implied'.[110] Such concepts evoke notions of continuity, stability, order or a preference for measured or organic change. They do not necessarily deny movement, but challenge its interpretation.

In summing up, it is important to remember, to return to the issues of synchronicity and layering, that different concepts may be applied to the same identified movement. Nor does the meaning of each concept designate a single type of movement. Concerning the former, this means that what is a social movement for some is an uprising for others. GDP can be a process of economic growth or an indicator of increasing productivity at the expense of the worker. On the second point, there are always asynchronous movements contained within the abstraction of concepts – different mechanisms and paces of progress; different

[108] Quoted in Koselleck, 'Modernity and the Planes of Historicity', in *Futures Past*, 12.
[109] Koselleck, 'The Modern Concept of Revolution', in *Futures Past*, 52.
[110] 'Modern Concepts of Movement', in *Futures Past*, 249.

durations and meanings of crisis; slow or rapid revolutions. For instance, unlike others, for Tocqueville the French Revolution was not a concentrated moment but the erosion of the ideology of the ruling regime over a longer period of time.[111] Each concept therefore contains different movements simultaneously, associated with past uses of the term that 'moved' in various ways and at different speeds. The difference between historical movement concepts and ideological ones—not that this is really a strict separation—is that ideological concepts and the movement layers within them are always a matter of contestation. Actors attach different labels to movements or contest them internally. The concepts 'emancipation' and 'development' are two salient examples of this, as is the concept of 'change'. Each contains a surplus of structures, mechanisms of *propulsion* and different paces of action.

The mechanisms of movement

I introduce an emphasis to the above sentence because within this tripartite classification of movement the issue of propulsion remains unelaborated thus far. 'There is no unique absolute time', Stephen Hawking claimed, 'but instead each individual has his own personal measure of time that depends on where he is and how he is moving'.[112] The political theorist in the Koselleckian tradition would amend this claim to include the social as something equally if not more important than the individual. But it is the *how one is moving* that is important here. In other words, what makes movement move? This too is a matter for politics, and the words propulsion and mechanism are useful to fleshing this out. Propulsion designates the act of pushing or driving something forward or onward, along with the condition of being impelled or pulled onward (or pushed outward in the case of expulsion). On one hand, we already consider ideologies and their normative ends as prominent examples of normative propulsion, of driving social change forward and impelling actors to act in a certain way, by force or

[111] See Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Ancien Régime and the French Revolution*, Jon Elster ed. and Arthur Goldhammer trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[112] Steven W. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time* (New York: Bantam, 1988), 33.

enticement.[113] On the other hand, this is often to underappreciate that there are structures and 'drivers' of movement internalised in the morphological structures of ideologies that are often located in the use of certain temporal concepts – e.g. tradition, liberty, progress, democracy. Yet on a further level there are mechanisms of propulsion *within* a single concept.[114] On a macro-level, all understandings of progress share a common denominator: progress is a sequence of events, through time, where a continuous rupture of experiences brings about a differentiation between present experience and what was experienced before.[115] But the mechanism(s) by which this occurs is open. Progress may rely on scientific innovation, education or free will. As another example, democracy is a movement concept on account of the process of governing and making laws: but the mechanism of change may differ depending on it being direct or parliamentary, considered deliberative or agonist.

To illustrate this further let us consider a quote from *The German Ideology*:

> Communism is for us [Marx and Engels] not a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the premises now in existence.[116]

I quote this passage because it serves as an illustration of how ideologies are often only encasings of a more complex movement structure. The important movement concepts within their concept of communism are 'established', signifying the construction of something, versus 'conditions' or 'premises', both referring to historical time and space. For Marx, history was a storehouse of division, exploitation and alienation—a 'panorama of sin and suffering'—but also one which *as a process*, a 'phenomenology' of material relations, would

[113] See *Oxford English Dictionary*, *sub verbo* 'propulsion', recalled at http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2355/view/Entry/152866?redirectedFrom=propulsion#eid
[114] Jon Elster considers mechanisms as 'plausible, frequently observed ways in which things happen'. See Elster, *Solomonic Judgments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), viii. Also see Arthur Stinchcombe, 'The Conditions of Fruitful Theorizing about Mechanisms in Social Science', in *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 21:3 (1991), 367-387.
[115] In his entry into the GG Koselleck refers to 'temporal ruptures as originating in 'continuously reproduced hiatus-experiences'. See Koselleck, 'Fortschritt', in Brunner, Conze and Reinhart Koselleck, *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, 392.
[116] Marx, Engels, *The German Ideology*, Part One (London, 1970), 56–57.

ultimately lead to the dissolution of society and thus the end of the class struggle between men which hitherto defined it.[117] The process of history, propelled by labour and class division, both explained man's predicament and his ultimate emancipation. From his early writings right up to *Capital*, Marx's use of history always advances along two courses: to use terms from Hayden White, history for Marx is both 'mechanistic-materialistic', according to the means and modes of production (i.e. structural tendencies as 'laws of motion'), and also an 'organicist-idealistic' account of the evolution of man's understanding of his alienation and exploitation, and the development of conditions that would eventually enable him to escape it (i.e. a theory of revolutionary consciousness).[118] In other words, these processes of propulsion (and at times impedance) are internalised in the temporal concepts of 'history', 'alienation', etc. Thus Marx's so-called scientific philosophy of history contains on one hand a synchronic analysis of the structure of social relationships, and on the other a diachronic analysis of the process that will end in the eventual transcendence of class-based society into 'an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all'.[119] Indeed, development is another contested movement concept here. In all this we should note that for Marx and Engels, communism is not simply established; it is a culmination of processes that eventually transitions from the capitalist epoch to the final social form.[120]

To put this back in conceptual history terms, we see that the association between communism and movement refers to the movement coefficients internalised within his

[117] Quoted in Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 281.
[118] White, Ibid., 286.
[119] Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, in *Later Political Writings*, Terrell Carver ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 20.
[120] See Trent Schroyer, 'Marx's Theory of Crisis', in *Telos* 14 (1972), 109-111. As Schroyer said, 'Marx's crisis theory was an attempt to reconstruct the constitutive dynamics of capitalist accumulation *and* the social consequences of this dynamic. Marx viewed the emancipation of the economic system from the restraints of traditional social norms as the revolutionary innovation of the capitalist epoch and the driving force that progressively replaced social relations (traditional normative controls) by relations of production', 109. And see Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: 1948), 55*ff*.

conception of history. And if we look more closely at his account of history, we see certain movement concepts doing the heavy lifting, others less so. Marx and Engels' use of 'crisis' is one example. As Koselleck outlines in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, they primarily use 'crisis' an economic concept accounting for reoccurring crises in the processes of production (i.e. the overproduction of capital).[121] Still, in other places, crisis functions as a concept of revolutionary hope. On one hand, then, crisis marks a reoccurring moment in cyclical temporal movement—a feedback loop of moments 'when economic cycles begin to turn'—and on the other, the eventual epochal moment upon which the proletariat class will eventually bring down the capitalist order. Routine economic crises thus mark a mechanical mode of history, while an eventual epochal 'realisation', another propulsion term, will precipitate the revolutionary conclusion of their idealist account. At the end, the continual crises of over-production—which is for Marx the overall crisis of capitalism—merges with a crisis of capitalist rationalisation, whereas Engels writes, 'mankind's leap from the realm of necessity will lead to the realm of freedom'.[122]

The underlying tension in Marxism going forward is between the 'push' of history and the 'pull' of a socialist utopia. This is an important distinction between Marx and Lenin – between a temporality of being and becoming.[123] As Ken Jowett argues, 'Against Marx, Leninism is characterized by a lack of trust—of history, of the proletariat, and of any social-political force outside the party control'.[124] Rather than relying on capitalism eventually eroding through an increasingly unsustainable set of crises, Lenin claimed that it was incumbent upon the revolutionary class to act. 'We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries', said Lenin. 'We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do

[121] See Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*, Part II (Vol. IV of *Capital*) (Moscow: 1968).
[122] Engels, 'Herrn Eugen Duhrings Umwilzung der Wissenschaft. "*Anti-Dtihring*"' (1878), MEW vol. 20 (1962), 264. Quoted in Koselleck, 'Crisis', 396-397.
[123] See Max Heirich, "The use of Time in the Study of Social Change", *American Social Review*, XXIX (June, 1964), 387.
[124] Jowett, 'Time and Development under Communism', 236.

it, or they crush us. This is what our obligations to the workers and peasants of the USSR dictate to us'.[125] Or to quote Che Guevara, 'the revolution is not an apple that falls when it is ripe. You have to make it fall'.[126]

Conclusion

> Why has the pleasure of slowness disappeared?
> Ah, where have they gone, the amblers of yesteryear?
> Where have they gone, those loafing heroes of folk song,
> those vagabonds who roam from one mill to another and bed down under the stars?
> Have they vanished along with footpaths, with grasslands and clearings, with nature?
> – Milan Kundera, *Slowness*[127]

To sum up, this chapter makes the claim that one *topos* of the politics of time is the use of language and ways of structuring events to render and come to terms with different temporal movements within what I call a social-political 'movement landscape'. The politics of movement is either to politicise external structures of movement or to promote theories of movement internal to an ideological vision of the social world. To return to a core theme in Koselleck's theory of historical time, the movement landscape is indicative of the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous. At one synchronic instant there is a simultaneity of different movements that are incongruent and often competing and interacting with each other. In this landscape there are myriad types of movement—individual, social and natural—some political and others routinely politicised. Each ideology imposes, rejects and embraces these movements and rhythms, but the three core attributes of movement politics I have explored above tend to persist – issues of structure, pace and the mechanics of propulsion. Some movements may be seen to move uniformly and naturally; others routinised in the practice of politics; while others are propelled or pulled by different mechanisms and horizonal forces. Yet all three attributes are linguistically contested in the semantics of

[125] Vladimir I Lenin, 'The tasks of Business Executives', in *Leninism* (London, 1940), 366.
[126] Ernesto Guevara, *Che Guevara speaks: Selected Speeches and Writings,* Steve Clark ed. (New York: Grove Press, 1968).
[127] Milan Kundera, *Slowness*, Linda Asher trans. (London: Faber and Faber, 1996).

ideology – in the language of fast and slow, revolution and moderation, deliberation and decisiveness.

Still, some thinkers contest process. In *Rhythmanalysis* Henri Lefebvre writes that, 'the rhythm that is proper to capital is the rhythm of producing (everything: things, men, people, etc.) and destroying (through wars, through *progress* through inventions and brutal interventions, through speculation, etc.)'. Others fight over the type of process. As discussed earlier, the debate between 'being' and 'becoming' is salient within the politics of movement, on vernacular and scholarly levels. Theorists like Connolly, Brown and Honig write against a politics of being, in favour of one of becoming. Being privileges the spatialisation of time—the boundaries of Being or a secure process—whereas becoming is the annihilation of space by time.[128] It is a 'regime' of presentness, as François Hartog might call it, though one that celebrates its horizonal potential.[129] On a vernacular level too, while these terms are infrequent, we find debates over progress and tradition; nostalgia and a longing for change; the marches of five-year plans and the Romantic notion of individuality and liquidity.

Elsewhere the pace of change is the central issue. On intensity Claude Lefort wrote in relation to Marx that, 'from the heart of Great History with its slow pulse – where conflicts take centuries and sometimes millennia to develop and do not necessarily resolve themselves at a certain stage by passing directly on to a higher mode of production – there emerges an accelerated history, that of a breathless world carried away by the fever of creation and destruction'.[130] More recently Castells remarked that the, '"spirit of informationalism" is the culture of "creative destruction" accelerated to the speed of the optoelectronic circuits that process its signals. Schumpeter meets Weber in the cyberspace of the network enterprise'.[131]

[128] See Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 273.
[129] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, Saskia Brown trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).
[130] Claude Lefort, *The Political Forms of Modern Society: Bureaucracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986), 140.
[131] Castells, *Network Society*, 199.

In his 2004 Labour Conference speech, Tony Blair remarked that 'the present is thrown out with scarcely time to become familiar; before a new future emerges to assert itself'.[132]

For some acceleration is a positive development. Celebrating the acceleration of life de-shackled from the past, Filippo Marinetti's religion-morality of speed claimed that Futurism 'will defend man from the decay caused by slowness, by memory, by analysis, by repose and habit. Human energy centupled by speed will master Time and Space'.[133] By contrast, taking an alarmist view, Virilio diagnosed the experiences of rapid change as part of the 'dromologic revolution', *dromos* being the Greek word for racetrack, claiming that bodily and spatial experience was being overtaken multiple times over by the production of speed. In Virilo's dromological world, distances are eradicated and locality replaced by dromogeneous speed-space (*espace-vitesse*). We are heading towards living in 'zero time', he mourns, where 'we will no longer admire the landscape but only watch our screens and monitor our interactive trajectory – that is, a "journey" with no distance, a "travelling time" with no actual passing of time'. [134] The political implication of this, for Virilio, is 'dromocracy' and in particular the military-industrial domination of the faster, what he calls 'movement power'.[135] As Jeremy Rifkin similarly argues in *Time Wars*, domination is the control of speed.[136]

Virilio and Rifkin wrote in a Cold War milieu. Nowadays it is finance and globalisation that sets the pace. For instance, the phrase 'left behind' is a familiar one to current politics. Rosa and Wolin worry that democratic politics is being left behind other social accelerators – discourse and deliberative democracy squeezed by forces, where the usual democratic processes necessary to produce legislation are increasingly bypassed. In the

[132] Tony Blair 2004 Labour Conference Speech. Accessed at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3697434.stm
[133] Filippo Marinetti, 'The Futurist Manifesto', in Rosa and Scheuerman, *High-speed Society*, 57.
[134] Paul Virilio, 'The State of Emergency', in *The Virilio Reader*, James Der Derian ed. (Oxford: John Wiley and Sons, 1983), p. 76.
[135] Paul Virilio, 'Pure War', in *The Virilio Reader*, 55.
[136] Jeremy Rifkin, *Time Wars*: *The Primary Conflict in Human History* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1987).

2017 healthcare debate in the United States Senate, Senator McCain recently pleaded with his Republican colleagues to 'return to regular order', as they hurled towards a vote by using a fast-track 'budget reconciliation' process.[137] But the forces calling for change, particularly partisan in the US context, do not allow for the time horizons and time-patterns of a traditional legislative body.[138] Jürgen Habermas' passionate calls for deliberative democracy seem increasingly out of reach.[139] Meanwhile the movement concept of 'left behind' also refers to a group of voters, alienated in today's globalised economy, who as a result are susceptible to messages of economic populism that aim to reverse aspects of globalisation.[140] Whereas, as mentioned in a previous chapter, in so-called developing economics the 'Washington Consensus' responds to globalisation by promoting programmes of swift 'structural adjustment' as opposed to the gradual stages of economic development that many Western capitalistic powers had themselves gone through. Outside of America, it seems, those left behind must rush—or be rushed—to catch up.

Another response to this is not to 'catch up' or 'go back', but the politics of slowness. Bonnie Honig describes the Slow Food movement, whose main organisation's logo is the snail, as an emerging alterative away from the dominant tempos of mass (and fast) food production and consumption.[141] Such movements are not only spatial—they propose a lifestyle, not just ways of cooking and eating—but they are also temporal as well in their attempt to interrupt current processes and routines and return to a slower pace of life. Carl Honoré's book *In Praise of Slow* became an international bestseller as a handbook for slow

[137] 'John McCain, Op-ed: 'It's time to return to regular order', in *Washington Post* (31 August 2017). Recalled at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/john-mccain-its-time-congress-returns-to-regular-order/2017/08/31/f62a3e0c-8cfb-11e7-8df5-c2e5cf46c1e2_story.html?utm_term=.547942ecadec.
[138] See Hartmut Rosa, *Alienation and Acceleration: Towards a Critical Theory of Late-Modern Temporality* (Copenhagen: Nordiskt Sommaruniversitet Press, 2013), 56.
[139] Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, W. Rehg trans. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).
[140] For examples of ideological responses to this, see Michael Jacobs and Mariana Mazzucato eds., *Rethinking Capitalism: Economics and Policy for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth* (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016).
[141] Bonnie Honig, *Emergency Politics*, 57-64.

living, where he lauds the 'worldwide movement' to challenge speed.[142] The sociologist Judy Wajcman makes similar remarks in her book *Pressed for Time*, pointing the blame at economic drivers.[143] Finally, a last example is the debate between moderation and 'incrementalism' on one side, versus calls for radical change on the other that rages between ideologies and inside single ideologies.[144] Here too the politics of movement can overlap with the distinction between deliberative institutions and mass movements calling for structural change – a simultaneous battle over time and space.

[142] Carl Honoré, *In Praise of Slow: How a Worldwide Movement is Challenging The Cult of Speed* (London: Orion Books Ltd., 2005).
[143] Judy Wajcman, *Pressed for Time: The Acceleration of Life in Digital Capitalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
[144] A recent book that addresses this is Arelian Craiutu, *Faces of Moderation: The Art of Balance in an Age of Extremes* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

Chapter Five
Historical Time in the Liberalism of J. S. Mill

> One impulse from a vernal wood,
> May teach you more of man,
> Of more evil and of good,
> Than all the sages can.
> – William Wordsworth, 'The Tables Turned'.[1]

At first glance it may seem odd to incorporate a conception of historical time into John Stuart Mill's moral and political philosophy. In his writings Mill never dwells on the concept of time in any direct fashion. In places he uses 'the temporal' as a concept to represent the practical life or the material interests of society set in contrast with the spiritual or religious. We find this in his essay 'Coleridge' (1840), in his discussion of Auguste Comte's separation of spiritual and temporal powers under a new Religion of Humanity (1865) and most prominently in his later *Three Essays on Religion* (1874).[2] In none of these instances, however, is the nature of time a matter of direct enquiry. Still, in looking at two aspects of Koselleck's theory of historical time—on the plurality of times layered in concepts, and in the separation between past experience and future expectation—in this chapter, I want to suggest that a conception of time or temporality still plays a significant role in Mill's moral and political philosophy and is deeply embedded in the concepts employed in the major themes that run through his thought – notions of beginnings and teleological ends, the improvement of character, and the progress of mankind and society over time.

[1] William Wordsworth, *Collected Poems* (New York: Everyman, 1995).
[2] See Coleridge (1840), in John Stuart Mill, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, in 33 vols., J. M. Robson ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963-1991), CW X, 148, 163. [From here on, CW] The Later Speculations of Mr Comte (1865) in CW X, 344; Utility of Religion (1874) in CW X, 405. Also see references in *On Liberty* (1859) in CW XVIII, 226, 237; Spirit of the Age (1831), in CW XXII, 25.

In what follows, I propose that we consider time to be an important feature in Mill's thought in two ways – both stemming from his mental crisis and subsequent movement away from the strict confines of Benthamite utilitarianism. First, on one hand, under the influence of Coleridge, Carlyle and the Saint-Simonians, the young Mill gains a new *awareness* of historical time, where for him the present gains a new significance within the context of a moving and evolving historical time.[3] Starting in the late-1820s, Mill begins to form a relationship between utilitarian philosophy and time, where the greatest happiness principle is not a matter of present calculation, as it is with Bentham, but a by-product of a diachronic view of individual improvement and social progress over time. Second, from this new awareness, on the other hand, Mill also *constructs* a particular view of time based on a multileveled conception of development, centred on the narrative of the improvement of mankind.[4]

While themes of progress, improvement and development are prominent in his better-known works of political thought, I want to suggest that they are most clearly expressed in Book VI of the *Logic* (1843), on the methods of social science. Here he proposes three modes of exploration all relevant to historical time: the scientific method of 'Ethology', the empirical laws derived from the 'Inverse Deductive or Historical Method' and his conception of the 'Art of Life'.[5] Published years before his political texts, these writings on the social or moral sciences can be seen as an attempt to measure change over time and also to propose a temporal roadmap sketching out how we develop and progress individually and socially. This

[3] This is to suggest that Mill recognises, like many of his contemporaries, that the world is radically historical, unstable and changeable – not a natural or eschatological given.
[4] Human improvement and progress are not to be conflated. The former is the key to the latter, which I explain in more detail in section two. See *Logic*, CW VIII, 913-914.
[5] See *Logic*, 'Of Ethology', or the 'Science of the Formation of Character' in CW VIII, Book VI, Chapter V, 861-874; Of the 'Inverse Deductive, or Historical Method' in CWIII, Book VI, chapter X, 911-930; and 'Of the Logic of Practice, or Art; Including Morality and Policy', in CW VIII, Book XI, Chapter XII, 943-952.

temporal vision is one from which he never wavers: 'It is my belief', he writes in the *Logic*, 'that the general tendency is and will continue to be, saving occasional exceptions, one of improvement; a tendency towards a better and happier state'.[6]

To advance my case, this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section outlines Mill's placement of his intellectual contribution within a broader historical context, one he considered a form of *Sattelzeit*. The second section is on Mill's milti-layered construction of historical time, which I divide between the concepts of 'beginnings', 'pathways' and 'ends'. The last section looks at time in relation to Mill's political thought, where his conception of time explains, I want to claim, his overall belief in liberty's function to provide the time and space for the melioritive qualities of thought and discussion to take place. I will conclude, however, by asking whether his faith in the improvement of character and the progress of ideas over time may compromise the liberalism that he is recognised to defend so assiduously.

Mill's growing awareness of historical time

In a well-known passage at the beginning of his *Autobiography* (1873) Mill gives two principal reasons for documenting the story of his intellectual development. Both refer to the importance of education, either taught or self-taught. He writes that, 'in an age in which education, and its improvement, are the subject of more, if not profounder study than at any former period of English history, it may be useful that there should be some record of an education which was unusual and remarkable'. The second motive, meanwhile, refers more

[6] *Logic*, CW VIII, Chapter X, 913-914.

broadly to the importance of his 'intellectual and moral development' within the 'age of transition' in which he is writing.[7]

In this passage, on one hand, Mill is outlining a theoretical position. Eschewing the label of a manufactured man under the guidance of Bentham and his father, Mill's post-crisis view on education tries to distance himself from Robert Owen's programmatic views on education, by promoting the importance of formal *and* self-education.[8] On the other hand, his argument is a historical one. Nowhere, he reckons, is the discussion over education more important than in Mill's own moment in time, where Britain is experiencing what he characterises as a 'period of transition' in need of new moral and intellectual guidance.[9] These passages in the *Autobiography* are consistent with references to this transition period in his early works. In 'Spirit of the Age' (1831), he expresses a belief that the 19th century, 'will be known to posterity as the era of one of the greatest revolutions of which history has preserved the remembrance, in the human mind, and in the whole constitution of human society'. These prose may read like unrefined juvenilia—Mill himself later called the essay 'lumbering in style'[10]—but certainly his early belief that 'mankind [in the West] have outgrown old institutions and old doctrines, and have not yet acquired new ones'[11] match the sentiments found in *On Liberty* and the *Autobiography*. But before change can happen, he continues in 'Spirit of the Age', 'worldly power must pass from the hands of the stationary part of mankind into those of the progressive part'.[12] Without this shift towards, 'active

[7] *Autobiography*, Early Draft, 6.
[8] See Mill's *Autobiography*, 134-135 and *Logic*, CW VIII, 839-842. Also see Alan Ryan, 'Mill on Education', in *Oxford Review of Education* 37:5 (2011), 653-667. Mill also separates education into two types in his 'Inaugural Address' at the University of St Andrews (1867), CW XXI, 220.
[9] Autobiography, CW I, 259.
[10] Ibid., 180.
[11] Spirit of the Age, CW XXII, 230.
[12] Ibid., 245.

characters', he worries in 'Civilization' (1836), Britons risk becoming too 'relaxed and enervated'.[13]

In the anxiety expressed in these early essays, Mill is, as are many of his contemporaries, aware of the changing circumstances of 19th century Britain. In this so-called 'critical time' Mill devotes his energy to two enterprises in response: developing new scientific methods for understanding social and individual change and promoting the cultivation of individual character.[14] As identified in the *Autobiography*, this represents a shift in Mill's thinking. This response to a newfound awareness of the characteristics of his historical context has little in common with what can be seen as Bentham's ahistorical view of politics,[15] and reflects the influence of thinkers who appreciate the connectivity between the past and the present and the designation of time periods that account for the rhythms and directions of historical change.[16] But in a shift away from Koselleck's conceptual history of *Geschichte*, Mill's awareness of historical time requires, he thought, new scientific methods to find out the laws behind how individuals and societies change over time, almost an inversion of Destutt de Tracey's project. In advocating for this, Mill is moving away from Bentham's ahistoricism and overreliance on universal principles of human nature and the utilitarian dismissal of the significance of time and space in relation to calculations of pleasure and pain.[17] In his 'Remarks on Bentham's Philosophy' (1833), Mill criticises him

[13] Civilization (1836), CW XVIII, 136.
[14] Discussed in J. B. Schneewind, ed. *Mill's Essays on Literature and Society* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 14-18.
[15] See Coleridge, CW X, 139.
[16] See Rosario López, 'John Stuart Mill's Idea of History: A Rhetoric of Progress', in *Res Publica: Revista de Filosofia Política* 27 (2012), 64-65.
[17] For this see, 'The Influence of Time and Place in Matters of Legislation', in Bentham's *Works* I, pp. 180-181; quoted in John M. Robson, *The Improvement of Mankind: The Social and Political Thought of John Stuart Mill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), 46.

for '[assuming] that mankind are alike in all times and all places that they have the same wants and are exposed to the same evils'.[18]

Central to this thinking is his notion of intellectual development over time. As he recalls in his *Autobiography*, from correspondence with Coleridge, Carlyle and numerous thinkers on the Continent, Mill comes to realise that, 'the human mind had a certain order of possible progress, in which some things must precede others, an order which government and public instructors can modify to some, but not to an unlimited extent'. 'Any general theory or philosophy of politics', he continues, 'supposes a previous theory of human progress, and that is the same thing with a philosophy of history'.[19] In Mill's eyes, the 'Germano-Coleridgian' school were the first to inquire with any depth, 'into the inductive laws of the existence and growth of human society',[20] and from Coleridge, whose historical view of periods of permanence and progression clearly resonated with Mill, he tempers progress with a new appreciation of 'historical value' in how the past leads to the institutions and dispositions of the present.[21] Following these interactions, we see Mill employing new temporal language that he never abandons, found in pairings like 'progress' and 'stasis' and 'permanence' and 'progression'.[22] Mill then tries to reconcile these new influences with the agenda inherited from utilitarianism. In his essays 'Bentham' (1838) and 'Coleridge' (1840), part of Mill's enterprise is to highlight the forces of progression found in Bentham and the simultaneous call for preservation espoused by Coleridge.[23] Meanwhile another prominent influence on this effort is the Saint-Simonian outlook of the 'natural order of human

[18] Remarks on Bentham's Philosophy, CW X, 16.
[19] See Autobiography, CW I, 168.
[20] See Coleridge, CW X, 128.
[21] On permanence and progression, see Coleridge, CW X,153-155, and see Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 71. For Coleridge-influenced discussion on tradition and progress, see *On Liberty*, CW XVIII, 250.
[22] See Coleridge, CW X, 139.
[23] N. N. Feltes, '"Bentham" and "Coleridge", Mill's Completing Counterparts', in *The Mill News Letter* II (1968), 3; and in Christopher Turk, *Coleridge and Mill: A Study of Influence* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1988), 234.

progress' and their historico-temporal division between 'critical' and 'organic' periods. In his *Autobiography* Mill refers to organic (natural) periods as a time when individuals accept 'with firm conviction some positive creed, contained more or less of truth and of adaptation to the needs of humanity'. During these time-periods, progress occurs under a certain creed until a point when society outgrows it, 'and a period follows of criticism and negation ['critical' or 'transitory'], in which mankind lose their old convictions without acquiring any new ones except the convictions that the old are false'.[24]

My claim here is that the *Logic* is Mill's answer to this predicament. It is a response to Bentham's alternative uses of scientific laws, and more generally speaking, to the 'philosophes' of the eighteenth century, as he calls them, whom he thought had a notorious disrespect for history.[25] In contrast to Bentham, Mill encourages one to study 'universal sequences' over time instead of timeless 'universal precepts'.[26] Mill's 'Inverse Deductive or Historical Method', outlined at the end of Book VI of the *Logic*, rejects progress as a simple matter of natural law, or something revealed through Bentham's geometrical method,[27] or Macaulay's inductive *a posteriori* approach.[28] Instead, progress comes from the endeavour of 'active characters' whose collective efforts can offer evidence of certain 'Empirical Laws of Society', a theory borrowed from Comte. 'The Empirical Laws of Society are of two kinds', Mill says. 'Some are uniformities of coexistence, some of succession'.[29] The former is given the title of 'Social Statics', the investigation of social stability, and the other 'Social Dynamics', the study of changing social conditions and means of progress. Applying these

[24] Autobiography, CW I, 170.
[25] Coleridge, CW X, 139.
[26] *Logic*, CW VIII, 877, discussed in Frederick Rosen, *Mill* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 169.
[27] *Logic,* CW VIII, 888-894.
[28] Autobiography, CW I, 125-126, and see J. H. Burns, 'The Light of Reason: Philosophical History in the Two Mills', in John M. Robson and Michael Lane. *James and John Stuart Mill: Papers of the Centenary Conference* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 7.
[29] This is explained in Schneewind, 'Introduction', *Mill's Essays on Literature and Society*, 14-15.

laws to scientific investigation allows one to look at and contrast conditions of equilibrium and conditions of movement through historical time.[30] Mill's account here is not a carbon copy of Comte, however. For Mill, laws are not the product of generalizations of history but are aspects of social life. 'Though influenced like the rest by all sociological agents', facts 'are under the *immediate* influence, principally at least, of a few only'.[31] Moving beyond Comte, and here the influence of Coleridge is clear, Mill adds to Statics a number of longstanding traditions, or 'invariable tendencies'.[32] These 'tendencies' include things like a system of education for establishing a 'restraining discipline'[33] and feelings of allegiance and loyalty to settled aspects of society (customs).[34] Social Dynamics does not account for total change, but only for those aspects of society that are 'changeable'.[35]

In this we thus see that Mill's conception of historical time is two-fold: he recognises the importance of development over time and also sees himself contributing to an intellectual space at a critical historical moment (at least for the 'civilised world').[36] In an early edition of the *Logic* Mill writes that,

> It is necessary to take into consideration the whole of past time, from the first recorded condition of the human race; and it is probability that all the terms of the series already past were indispensible to the operation; that the memorable phenomena of the last generation and even those of the present, were necessary to manifest the law, and that consequently the Science of History has only become possible in our own time.[37]

[30] *Logic,* CW XIII, Chapter X, 917-918.
[31] Ibid., p. 900, quoted in Burns, 'The Light of Reason: Philosophical History in the Two Mills', 8.
[32] Similar arguments are made in the earlier Coleridge essay.
[33] Ibid., p. 920.
[34] This is discussed in Rosen, *Mill*, 63.
[35] See *Logic*, CW XIII, 920-924. This influence on Mill is clear evidence against the assertion of many critics who consider Mill to be 'anti-custom'.
[36] Civilization, CW XVIII, 136.
[37] *System of Logic*, Bodleian Edition, 609.

It is from this historical viewpoint, as he works to develop scientific approaches to understanding how we progress over time, that Mill ends up constructing a view of how he sees time unfolding.

Mill's construction of time

In his *Autobiography*, Mill claims that his awakening out of depression led to a new 'theory of life'. Happiness still represented the ultimate end and test upon which we judge all rules of conduct; but he thought it can only be attained *indirectly* through the pursuit of alternate ends – the happiness of others, the improvement of mankind or seeing an art or pursuit as an ideal.[38] Mill also gave renewed prominence to what he called the 'prime necessities of human well-being, to the internal culture of the individual'. This was starkly different from Bentham's preference for external rules and reforms to bring about the greatest happiness. 'Man is never recognised by him as being capable of pursuing spiritual perfection as an end', Mill says of Bentham; 'of desiring, for its own sake, the conformity of his own character to his standard of excellence, without hope of good, or fear of evil, from other source than his own inward consciousness'.[39]

Mill's new thinking about the plurality of ends and the notion of individual cultivation form what I want to characterise as a three-part outline of human development over time – comprised of beginnings, pathways and ends.[40]

<u>Beginnings</u>

[38] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'Work Without Hope', in *Poetical Works*, vol. II (1828), 81; found in Autobiography, CW I, 44.
[39] Bentham, CW X, p. 95.
[40] This should make us recall the passage from Wilhelm von Humboldt he quotes at the start of *On Liberty*: 'The grand, leading principle, towards which every argument unfolded in these pages directly converges, is the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity'. Wilhelm von Humboldt and Joseph Coulthard trans., *Spheres and Duties of Government* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2008).

To understand the significance of a view of progress over time within Mill's overall thought I first want to consider his opinion of the starting points – the impact of nature and education on ethical and moral development. In his writings about nature there develops a distinction between 'the natural' or 'nature', representing the original order of things, and 'human nature', which represents the capacity for improvement.[41] Mill believes nature in the former sense to be the raw base or beginning from which we progress – something human nature allows us to revise. After the beginning, 'the natural' is forever lost and our instincts become out of place and deserve little credit for improving our conditions. The progress of civilization is thus closely tied with the move away from nature: only through the cultivation of greater human faculties can man improve his socio-political surroundings.

Yet Mill's references to nature reject the natural state as the basis for an ethical standard, separating him in significant ways from previous generations of liberal thinkers.[42] Scattered throughout his work, his most explicit exegesis on nature is found in his essay 'Nature' (1854), a sceptical treatment of the natural as an ethical norm.[43] 'Nature' does not reject a natural basis of morality, but rejects it as a fixed ethical model.[44] Throughout the essay, in opposition to Christian or Rousseauian views,[45] Mill personifies nature as barbaric, unrefined and violent.[46] The first of his Three *Essays on Religion*,[47] 'Nature' should be read as a criticism of conventional morality, which requires that nature participate in a human

[41] A similar argument is made by Isaiah Berlin, who writes that 'Mill's entire view of human nature turns out to rest not on the notion of the repetition of an identical pattern, but on his perception of human lives as subject to perpetual incompleteness, self-transformation, and novelty'. See Issiah Berlin, 'John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life', in Henry Hardy ed., *Isaiah Berlin, Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 234.
[42] See John Gray, 'Mills Liberalism and Liberalism's Posterity', in *The Journal of Ethics* 4 (2000), 137-165.
[43] Nature, CW X, 373-402.
[44] See James Eli Adams, 'Philosophical Forgetfulness: John Stuart Mill's "Nature"', in *Journal of the History of Ideas*. 53 (1992); and in G.W. Smith ed. *John Stuart Mill's Social and Political Thought: Critical Assessments Vol. IV*. (London: Routledge, 1998), 111-118.
[45] Nature, CW X, 383.
[46] Ibid., 384.
[47] Ibid., 369-450.

moral order, and is thus, as one commentator notes, 'used not as a logical abstraction but as a vehicle of the wish-fulfilment characteristic of animistic habits of thought'.[48] Mill writes that 'all human action whatsoever, consists in altering, and all useful action in improving, the spontaneous course of nature'.[49]

Against intuitionists like William Whewell, Mill considers a reliance on instinct and the universal laws of nature as a bulwark of radical conservatism and a hindrance to progress.[50] Its only saving grace is that it bestows on us the necessary capacities to create a better world for ourselves. 'It remains true', writes Mill, 'that nearly every respectable attribute of humanity is the result not of instinct, but of a victory over instinct; and that there is hardly anything valuable in the natural man except capacities – a whole world of possibilities, all of them dependant upon eminently artificial discipline for being realized'.[51] Human growth does not return to nature, but improves upon it[52] – the natural is 'an admission of imperfection, which it is man's business, and merit, to be always endeavouring to correct or mitigate'.[53] Consequently, the first aspects of progress are the steps away from the natural, where man begins to create a world all his own,[54] and from this point onward, what man inherits and subsequently amends from the past is not nature in the old sense of the word, but the product of *human* nature where human beings are repeatedly revising within the environs of their own cultural and social milieu.[55]

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[48] Adams, 'John Stuart Mill's "Nature", 112.
[49] Nature, CW X, 402.
[50] See Adams, 'John Stuart Mill's "Nature", 118. Also see Mill's criticism of Whewell's intuitionism, 'Whewell on Moral Philosophy' (1852), CW X, 165-201.
[51] Nature, CW X, 393.
[52] Don A. Habibi, *John Stuart Mill and the Ethic of Human Growth*. (Dordrecht: Kulwer Academic Publishers, 2001), 28.
[53] Nature, CW X, 381.
[54] See Ibid., 397.
[55] A similar argument is made in John Gray, 'Mill's Conception of Happiness', in John Gray and G.W. Smith eds., *J.S. Mill On Liberty: in focus* (London: Routledge, 1991), 205.

Initially this process is not one of self-discovery. The first step away from nature and intuition is through exposure to an education that relies on outside sources of knowledge in the form of parents, teachers and social customs. As Mill outlines in his 'Inaugural Address' (1867), we should see education in a broad sense: 'whatever helps to shape the human being – to make the individual what he is or hinder him from being what he is not – is part of his education'. This includes both formal and self-education, and in both senses it is a step away from the barbarity of nature, where self-preservation can either take up the 'whole energies of the human being in the mere preservation of life', or in places of over-bounty, support a kind of 'brutish subsistence on too easy terms, with hardly any exertion of the human faculties'.[56] The test of a good education is whether it can, and here he is talking specifically about formal education, 'conduce to the improvement of the individual mind and the benefit of the race…and the fitting out of mankind with the necessary mental implements for the work they have to perform through life'.[57]

But Mill is adamant that knowledge from external sources does not suffice. While education can provide the 'truths' of previous generations, what Mill calls 'the accumulated treasure of the thoughts of mankind', it must also give the individual the will to pursue further self-education.[58] His remarks on this score are personal of course given his own pedagogical experience, making it unsurprising that he found Owen's determinist theory of character particularly stifling.[59] Mill criticises Owen's submersion of individuality, writing

[56] Inaugural Address, CW XXI, p. 217.
[57] Ibid., 220.
[58] Ibid., 247-248.
[59] *Logic*, CW VIII, 840. On this Mill has a point. In his *A new View of Society: or Essays on the Principle of the Formation of the Human Character* (1813), Owen suggests that human nature—from the rich to the working class—is one and the same and that the perceived differences among men is what leads to social disunion. His intentions are laudable, perhaps – to elevate the working class he advocates for a national system for the formation of character to teach children habits and sentiments that are uniform and nondenominational. See

that ‘the greatest of all errors [is] the notion that individuals form their own characters’.[60] Well intentioned or not, he sees this as a danger to human improvement. In a famous passage in *On Liberty* aimed squarely at the Owenites, he suggests that, ‘human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing’.[61]

The tree metaphor should not be interpreted to mean that Mill gives up on external education completely. Instead, his intention is a reappraisal of the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity, which during his mental crisis, ‘weighed on [his] existence like an incubus’, as it was, if believed, scientific proof of cause and effect that character was a matter of antecedent circumstances. References to Philosophical Necessity also appear in the *Logic*, where Mill outlines the doctrine as follows: it ‘is simply this: that, given the motives which are present to an individual's mind, and given likewise the character and disposition of the individual, the manner in which he will act might be unerringly inferred; that if we knew the person thoroughly, and knew all the inducements which are acting upon him, we could foretell his conduct with as much certainty as we can predict any physical event’.[62] A Necessarian, then, would believe that our character should follow our circumstances and that ‘his nature is such…that nothing can now prevent him from feeling and acting in a particular way’. But

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Robert Owen, V. A. C. Gatrell ed. *A New View of Society: and, Report to the County of Lanark* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), p. 172.

[60] Robert Owen, *New View*, 4th Essay, 106, quoted in Terrance Ball, ‘The Formation of Character: Mill’s “Ethology” Reconsidered’, in *Polity* 33:1 (2000), 31.

[61] CW XVIII, 263. Gertrude Himmelfarb argues that this passage suggests a positive outlook on nature and hence an inconsistency in Mill’s thought. But this is to ignore the distinction between ‘the natural’ and ‘human nature’. By comparing human growth to a tree, Mill is not idolising ‘the natural’ but referring to man’s natural capacities for individual improvement. See Gertrude Himmelfarb, *On Liberty and Liberalism: The Case of John Stuart Mill* (New York: Knopf, 1984), 85-87. On these inconsistencies, also see Adams, ‘John Stuart Mill’s “Nature”, 115; and Robert C. Schweik, ‘Mill’s Analogies in *On Liberty*: The Uses of Inconsistency’, in *The Mill News Letter* 23:2 (1988: Summer), 5.

[62] *Logic*, CW VIII, 837-838.

this fatalism is mistaken, argues Mill: we have 'to a certain extent, a power to alter [our] character'. Man's 'character is formed by his circumstances (including among these his particular organization); but [also] his own desire to mould it in a particular way is one of these circumstances'.[63]

Education based on necessity misses half the project. Blaming necessity as the root cause of his depression, in the *Autobiography* he writes that 'though our character is formed by circumstances, our own desires can do much to shape those circumstances; and that what is really inspiring and ennobling in the doctrine of freewill, is the conviction that we have real power over the formation of our own character; that our will, by influencing some of our circumstances, can modify our future habits or capabilities of willing'.[64] Mankind, then, should according to Mill not be determined by necessity, but what he would call the laws of character formation, the concern of his 'science of Ethology' – and it is this new science, explained at the end of the *Logic*, along with his discussion of social change, which are I believe the best articulations of the Millian concept of development.[65]

Pathways

As mentioned earlier, Mill's discussion on how we develop over time is spread throughout numerous works: but the roots lie in the *Logic*. In this section, I want to identify two main pathways found in Book VI: via the method of Ethology, the science of the formation of individual and national character, and the aforementioned Historical Method, the 'science' of how societies change over time. In both Ethology and Historical Method, the former a deductive science and the latter a set of empirical laws, Mill sees progress over time as a result of the improvement of mankind. And while Ethology and the Historical Method are

[63] Ibid., p. 840.
[64] *Autobiography*, CW I, p. 177.
[65] Logic, CW VIII, pp. 861-874.

different types of science, they have one major point in common: both the formation of character and social change over time ultimately rest on individual activity.[66] In other words, they are dynamically interacting layers. Thus, the progressive pathways revealed by the historical method are reliant on the ethological and psychological laws that dictate individual behaviour.

Ethology has been called Mill's forgotten science,[67] but over the years it has been the subject of a few scholarly investigations that reach strikingly different conclusions.[68] Nicholas Capaldi asserts that Mill abandons ethology after realising that its employment might compromise the space for free thought and discussion espoused in *On Liberty*.[69] Terrance Ball disagrees, arguing that while Mill never wrote a book on ethology, a number of later works have 'common ethological concerns'.[70] And more recently, Alan Ryan claims that Mill hopes ethology can provide the theory behind socialisation, enabling some control over the process.[71] Either way, I believe we should understand Ethology within the context Mill's lifelong interest in how circumstances mould men and how individual character fits in with the movement of humanity towards happiness.[72] In other words, Ethology is a reflection of Mill's belief that intellectual and moral development is the 'central chain' of progress.[73] Unlike social development, it is not an empirics-based science, but an 'exact science of human nature' rooted in the causal laws of character formation in accordance with

[66] Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 125.
[67] See Nicolas Capaldi, 'Mill's Forgotten Science of Ethology', in *Social Theory and Practice* 2:4 (1973), 409.
[68] The best assessment is in Rosen, *Mill*, 72-94.
[69] Nicolas Capaldi, *John Stuart Mill: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 175, 177-178.
[70] Ball, 'The Formation of Character: Mill's "Ethology" Reconsidered', 27; cited and discussed in Rosen, *Mill*, 86.
[71] Ryan, 'Mill on Education', 658.
[72] See Capaldi, 'Mill's Forgotten Science of Ethology', 416-417.
[73] Logic, CW VIII, 925. The centrality of individual progress is discussed in Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 152.

Philosophical Necessity *properly applied*.[74] The core premise of Ethology is that there is not one universal character, but rather universal laws of the formation of character, putting Ethology in stark contrast with Bentham's geometric reliance on the universal laws of psychology for forming a social science.[75] This is not to say that Ethology ignores psychology: he sees Ethology as a middle science (*via media*) between psychology (micro laws of the mind) and sociology (macro laws of society). But unlike an experimental science like psychology, Ethology is deductive, representing a 'system of corollaries from psychology'[76] that sets out from general laws and verifies their consequences through the study of experience.[77] Ethology is, 'the ulterior science which determines the kind of character produced in conformity to [psychology's] general laws by any set of circumstances, physical and moral'.[78]

The relationship between psychology and Ethology is in many ways the key to understanding Mill's position in comparison to Bentham, whose psychological approach regarding the weighing of pleasure and pain Mill finds incomplete.[79] To Mill, laws of character formation are, as Frederick Rosen says, 'resulting from the general laws of the mind; and they are to be obtained by deducing them from those general laws; by supposing any given set of circumstance, and then considering what, according to the laws of the mind, will be the influence of those circumstances on the formation of character'.[80] In other words, Philosophical Necessity properly understood must include an account for individual's wishes

[74] *Logic*, CW VIII, 870.
[75] See Rosen, *Mill*, 85.
[76] *Logic*, CW VIII, p. 872, quoted in Rosen, *Mill*, 74.
[77] Ibid., 865.
[78] Ibid., 869.
[79] Rosen, *Mill*, 78-82.
[80] *Logic*, CW VIII., 869.

and desires.[81]

Meanwhile, under the laws of psychology and Ethology lies the second pathway, the Historical Method, which charts *social* development over time.[82] I have touched on this in discussing Mill's historical viewpoint, but it is worthwhile to revisit some of the key points within the context of pathways. First, Mill believes the Historical Method cannot be based on a law, the attempts to identify a law of progress that Koselleck found so unpalatable, because only psychological and ethological laws govern 'the action of circumstances on men and of men on circumstances'.[83] Indeed, this represents a major break from the modern thinkers discussed by Koselleck. Rather, Mill offers a different narrative of progress – one that is multi-layered and plural. To investigate the changes in the state of a society and the circumstances in which different forms of government are most appropriate, the Historical Method is based on experience, broken down between organic and transitional periods. It intends to show a certain, though not scientific, degree of consistency:

> The really scientific truths, then, are not these empirical laws, but the causal laws which explain them. The empirical laws of those phenomena which depend on known causes, and of which a general theory can therefore be constructed, have, whatever may be their value in practice, no other function in science than that of verifying the conclusions of theory. Still more must this be the case when most of the empirical laws amount, even within the limits of observation, only to approximate generalizations.[84]

What links these progressive and developmental two pathways? As with Ethology, what he

[81] Mill also states that Ethology, 'corresponds to the art of education; in the widest sense of the term, including the formation of national or collective character as well as individual' *Logic*, CW VIII, 869. The connection with education is interesting if somewhat unexplained in the section on Ethology. Rosen suggests that in connecting character formation with the art of education, Mill, like Bentham and his father, believes education standards can help prevent problems of 'the vacant mind' caused by frivolity and indolence, especially in the upper echelons of society. But I think it also stresses the important distinction between mere calculations of happiness and a longer view on the importance of education for the enterprise of human improvement. Only through this process can the laws of development be proven correct.
[82] *Logic*, CW VIII, 911-930.
[83] Ibid., 913-914.
[84] Ibid., 862.

calls the 'central chain', or what I termed in the movement chapter as a 'mechanism of propulsion', behind the movement of society is the intellectual progression of mankind, driven by the speculative faculties of the most cultivated minds:

> There really is one social element which is thus predominant, and almost paramount, among the agents of the social progression…the state of the speculative faculties of mankind. Its influence is the main determining cause of the social progress; all the other dispositions of our nature which contribute to that progress, being dependent on it for the means of accomplishing their share of the work…Every considerable advance in material civilization has been preceded by an advance in knowledge: and when any great social change has come to pass, either in the way of gradual development or of sudden conflict, it has had for its precursor a great change in the opinions and modes of thinking of society.[85]

In terms of the dual nature of advancement—that of improvement and progress—both can be analysed through science. What *motivates* this process, however, is not science, but Art.

Ends

Almost thirty years after the publication of the *Logic*, when he is finishing *Utilitarianism*, Mill revised a section of the *Logic* on 'Teleology and the Doctrine of Ends', reiterating that utility is the ultimate standard by which human activity must be judged.[86] As is well known, in *Utilitarianism* Chapter Two, Mill writes that 'pleasure and freedom from pain, are the only two things desirable as ends'. But Mill's expectative utilitarian ends are in fact reliant on his more sophisticated 'theory of value', based on an expansive conception of the good.[87] 'Some *kinds* of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others', he continues.[88] Furthermore, while utilitarianism remains, 'the theory of life on which this morality is grounded',[89] it is not a theory for action.[90] Even after revising the *Logic*, Mill maintains that it

[85] Ibid., 926-927.
[86] Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 118.
[87] See Wendy Donner, 'Mill's Theory of Value', in Henry West ed., *The Blackwell Guide to Mill's Utilitarianism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 118-124.
[88] *Utilitarianism*, CW X, 220.
[89] Ibid., 210.
[90] Influenced by Humboltian concept of happiness, Mill's utilitarianism is in this way tied up with his

is the horizon of Art, not utility, which 'enunciates the object aimed at, and affirms it to be a desirable object'.[91] As Mill describes in the *Autobiography*, greatest happiness cannot be a direct end to personal choice-making, which is instead reserved for the individual conception and subsequent pursuit of the good and the beautiful. In doing so Mill moves away from giving 'almost exclusive importance to the ordering of outward circumstances, and the training of the human being for speculation and for action',[92] and instead, encourages the individual to look inward. He writes in *Utilitarianism* that,

> A cultivated mind – I do not mean that of a philosopher, but any mind to which the fountains of knowledge have been opened, and which has been taught, in any tolerable degree, to exercise its faculties – finds sources of inexhaustible interest in all that surrounds it; in the objects of nature, the achievements of the arts, the imaginations of poetry, the incidents of history, the ways of mankind, past and present, and their prospects in the future.[93]

Thus, happiness cannot be considered a direct, horizonal, end; or put another way, it is not itself the criterion for what John Gray refers to as 'right action'.[94] It is Art that supplies the 'first principles of conduct', or what he calls the, 'original major premise, which asserts that the attainment of the given end is desirable'. Art does not define 'what is' but a horizonal 'what ought to be'. To attain ends, it is up to science to find out a feasible pathway, 'through studying the causes and conditions' and which then, 'sends it back to the Art with a theorem of the combinations of circumstances by which it could be produced'.[95] If art chooses health to be the object of medicine, then it is up to science to determine the extent of, and methods

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underlying commitment to Aristotelian virtue ethics. See Gray, *'Mill in Focus'*, 190-211; and Gray, *Mill on Liberty: A Defence*, 81; also discussed in Wendy Donner, *The Liberal Self: John Stuart Mill's Moral and Political Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 121.

[91] *Logic*, CW VIII, 949.
[92] CW I, 146.
[93] CW X, p. 216, also discussed in Oskar Kuner, *John Stuart Mill: The Politics of Progress* (London: Garland Publishing, 1991), 13.
[94] John Gray, *John Stuart Mill: On Liberty and Other Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), ix.
[95] *Logic,* CW VIII, p. 944.

upon which, a certain degree of health is attainable. In terms of ethics, then, arts set out a general principle, premise, or end—such as beauty or truth—and science determines the conditions and practicable actions that can bring about and maximise these goals.[96] Art's capabilities are limited but irreplaceable: 'every art has one first principle, or general major premise, not borrowed from science; that which enunciates the object aimed at, and affirms it to be a desirable object'.[97]

But are all 'action endpoints' created equal? Despite his remarks on poetry and its conception of ends, it seems that Mill places them, and others gleaned from history and ethics, under the umbrella of the end as truth. This is to say that the general motivation or 'action end' behind intellectual cultivation, the causal chain of progress, is the search for truth set within a range of artistic disciplines. In all of these enterprises, truth emerges through sedulous investigation and reflection. As Robson notes, the influence of truth as an end begins with is correspondence with Carlyle, who promotes it as something absolute and transcendental.[98] Yet Mill does not seem to agree with this for long. Writing to Carlyle, he says that truth is *internal* to us: it is 'sown and germinates in the mind' and improved upon through listening, teaching and contemplation.[99] In his 'Inaugural Address' Mill says that, 'the most incessant occupation of the human intellect throughout life is the ascertainment of truth…we all require the ability to judge between the conflicting opinions which are offered to us as vital truths'.[100]

Truth as an artistic end is different from scientific truths, however. The latter are

[96] These themes are discussed in Section VII, of Chapter XI of the first edition, but after subsequent additions, shown in CW, this was moved to Section II, of Chapter XII in the 1862 edition. See CW VIII, Appendix H.
[97] *Logic*, CW VIII, p. 949.
[98] See Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 153.
[99] Letter to Carlyle, 18th May 1833, in CW VII, 153.
[100] Inaugural Address, CW XXI, 234.

superior because they provide the only credible pathways to attaining truth in the artistic sense.[101] Truth in Ethology is not a matter of generalization, but real laws,[102] while general 'truths' about politics and society, such as imagined general precepts about the right form of government are, when compared to science, 'subject to ridicule'.[103]

From all this it would seem that truth as an artistic end has limitations. Mill admits this about utilitarianism too. In *Utilitarianism* he writes that 'questions of ultimate ends are not amenable to direct proof'.[104] Utility and other action-oriented arts seem to rely on some sort of 'conviction' in order to allow for human advancement. In his discussion of ends at the end of the *Logic* he states that,

> Without attempting in this place to justify my opinion, or even to define the kind of justification which it admits of, I merely declare my conviction, that the general principle to which all rules of practice ought to conform, and the test by which they should be tried, is that of conduciveness to the happiness of mankind, or rather, of all sentient beings: in other words, that the promotion of happiness is the ultimate principle of Teleology.[105]

Therefore, we may ask, if truth is not attainable as an Art, then can it still exist as an artistic end? It seems that Mill believes so, as long as one turns to science to prove the feasibility of trying to reach it. What is clearer is that held truths, at least in a particular time and space, must for Mill be grounded in experience as much as possible. In his 'Inaugural Address', he says that 'improvement consists in bringing our opinions into nearer agreement with facts; and we shall not be likely to do this while we look at facts only through glasses coloured by those very opinions'.[106] The reason for this, as he is trying to get over to the student audience at St Andrews, is that the advancement of knowledge is vital for progress, even if it does not

[101] Logic, CW VIII, 952.
[102] Ibid., 870.
[103] Ibid., 887.
[104] *Utilitarianism*, CW X, 207, and in Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 155.
[105] *Logic*, CW VIII, 951.
[106] Inaugural Address, CW XXI, 226.

ultimately result in the convergence of truth. As John Robson says, Mill's 'attitude towards truth is not paralysing, although it abandons all hope of certainty'.[107]

Mill's liberalism and the progress of ideas over time

This is also apposite to his political theory. Mill's liberalism is of course synonymous with the concept of liberty, but the reasons behind his defence of liberty are less well recognised. My aim here is not to claim that time reveals the secret behind his thinking in *On Liberty*, but that the works on politics reflects his longstanding thinking on time. To justify this claim I want to focus on a central theme that runs through his political thought, which is the importance of critical thought and discussion, to expose the temporal elements discussed in the previous sections. My argument here goes as follows: first, that the socio-political space for critical thought and discussion requires for Mill a necessary level of historical development to which Britain and few others can claim; and second, that the space for critical thought and discussion afforded by a liberal society constitutes the truth-seeking mechanism of propulsion by which Mill hinges his hope for progress over time.

As is well known, in *Representative Government* Mill claims that the best means to avoid social deterioration is to balance 'order' and 'progress'. What makes a government a good one depends on the 'degree in which it tends to increase the sum of good qualities in the governed' and also on the operation of its 'machinery'—its institutional structure—that is available at any given time.[108] But good government also depends on the historical circumstances in which it operates. While government must promote progress and stability through its institutional arrangements and provisions, it is also true that 'institutions need to

[107] Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 153.
[108] *Representative* Government, CW XIX, 390-391. For more on role of government and progress in Mill's thought; and see Oskar Kurer, *John Stuart Mill: The Politics of Progress* (London: Routledge, 1991), 10-30.

be radically different, according to the state of advancement already reached'. Although it flourished in Britain and France, representative democracy is of no use, as of yet, to 'Bedouins or Malays'. The type of government depends on the particular 'stage of advancement'.[109] In his *Autobiography* he clearly sets historical development as a prerequisite to a liberal society: 'I cease to consider representative democracy as an absolute principle, and I regard it as a question of time, place, and circumstance…it ought to be decided mainly by the consideration [over] what great improvement in life and culture stands next in order for the people concerned, as a condition of their future progress'.[110]

The appropriate form of government, then, must reflect each stage of development until reaching a state when liberal government is possible. Liberty requires the government-afforded space in which intellectual exchange can take place. In *On Liberty* Mill suggests that liberty is both the result of historical progress and also, once attained to a sufficient level, the main driver behind further progress.[111] 'Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion'. In 'Civilization' he stresses the importance of liberty in the modern age, arguing that 'the triumph of democracy, or, in other words, of the government of public opinion, does not depend upon the opinion of any individual or set of individuals that it ought to triumph, but. . .[upon] the increase of the facilities of human intercourse'.[112] In Mill's eyes, few places have already experienced ages of discussion, where the conventions and customs are open to questioning and dispute. In this exclusive group is Europe after the Reformation,

[109] *Representative* Government, CW XIX, 393-394.
[110] *Autobiography*, CW I, 177. Quoted in John Robson, 'Civilization and culture as moral concepts', in John Skorupski, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Mill*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 346.
[111] Clark Bouton says that for Mill liberty is 'the cause as well as the effect of moral and intellectual improvement' See, Clark W. Bouton, 'John Stuart Mill: On Liberty and History', in *The Western Political Quarterly* 18:3 (September: 1965), 576.
[112] Civilization, CW XVIII, 127.

the ‘speculative movement’ among elite intellects in the latter half of the 18th century and the ‘intellectual fermentation of Germany during the Goethian and Fichtean period’.[113]

Mill’s hope in *On Liberty* is that these circumstances can thrive in Britain. While other cultures might have some rudimentary elements of liberty, it is only a few that can benefit from his ‘different and more fundamental treatment’ of the subject.[114] What I want to suggest here is that in his attempt to mould history into a story about the development of liberty, Mill takes a Eurocentric version of political development and turns it into a carefully tailored philosophy of historical time, complete with horizons, movement and dynamic layers.

Mill insists that civilizations must progress through a set of historical stages before they can benefit from the considerations in *On Liberty*. ‘Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion’, writes Mill in a famous passage. ‘Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne if they are so fortunate as to find one’.[115]

But reaching a state of liberty is not for Mill an artistic end. Contrary to some libertarian readings of Mill we should not see liberty as an end at all. Instead, liberty is a means to further advancement. ‘The only unfailing and permanent source of improvement is liberty, since by it there are as many possible independent centres of improvement as there are individuals’.[116] Upon reaching a historical position where the principle of liberty can influence the ordering of society, it is the dialectical properties of critical thought and

[113] Ibid., 243.
[114] Ibid., 272.
[115] Ibid., 224.
[116] *On Liberty*, CW XVIII, 272.

discussion that become the engine towards further improvement and the refinement of knowledge towards truth. Discourse constitutes the fulfilment of Mill's epistemic beliefs on knowledge.[117] Mill believes that it is during discussion that the things we learn by individual experience and teaching either become a part of what we believe or are discarded. Thought in this way, experience and learning is simply the collection of raw data that is to be fully understood and imprinted on the mind only afterwards, when one has the opportunity to collaborate with others and amend their initial impressions. 'The whole strength and value, then, of human judgment, depending on the one property, that it can be set right when it is wrong, reliance can be placed on it only when the means of setting it right are kept constantly at hand'.[118] Indeed, the mode of deliberation and discussion is Mill's attempt to also foster the improvement of *ideas* over time:

> [Man] is capable of rectifying his mistakes, by discussion and experience. Not by experience alone. There must be discussion, to show how experience is to be interpreted. Wrong opinions and practices gradually yield to fact and argument: but facts and arguments, to produce any effect on the mind, must be brought before it. Very few facts are able to tell their own story, without comments to bring out their meaning.[119]

Much of this is derived from Coleridge and Comte: for instance in Mill's recognition of the use for 'antagonist modes of thought'[120] and the possibility of finding 'partial truths' in imperfect beliefs reflects the influence of the Coleridgian notion of 'many-sidedness', where the exchange of ideas allows those engaged in discussion to glean from contestation of different shades of truth. Meanwhile Comte's notion of progress in three successive stages—belief in the supernatural, metaphysical abstraction, and finally the positive stage of scientific

[117] Timothy Fuller makes a similar argument: 'We have in *On Liberty* the vision of a society of collaborative, mature individuals, governed directly or indirectly by a scientific attitude in a procedure of continual dialogue and constructive criticism'. See Timothy Fuller, 'The Tension of the Perennial, Traditional and Historical in John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty'*, in *Expositions* 1:1 (London: Equinox Publishing, 2007), 7.
[118] *On Liberty*, CW XVIII, 131-132.
[119] Ibid., 231-232.
[120] Coleridge, CW X, 122.

explanation—is also influential,[121] even if Mill's separation between science and art is not present in Comte's positivism.[122] Here again, it is truth not liberty or the scientific method, that is the 'active end' sought by discussion and deliberation in Mill's teleology. In another well known passage in *On Liberty* Mill writes that, 'we can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavouring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still. . . [for it] may possibly be true'. The liberty to challenge existing opinions and norms allows for the greater refinement of truth. 'Complete liberty of contradicting and disproving our opinion is the very condition which justifies us in assuming its truth for purposes of action' says Mill. 'On no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right'.[123]

Mill admits that we may reject truth in certain situations, but always believes that it will emerge in time. 'When an opinion is true, it may be extinguished once, twice, or many times, but in the course of ages there will generally be persons to rediscover it, until some one of its reappearances falls on a time when from favourable circumstances it escapes persecution until it has made such head as to withstand all subsequent attempts to suppress it'.[124] With this view, Mill can be read to anticipate a continued *convergence of truths*. In 'Coleridge', for example, he reckons that improvement of ideas occurs through 'oscillation' between ideas which will eventually settle on final agreement.[125] On one hand it may seem unclear whether Mill believes it ever possible to reach an end of ultimate truth. But this is certainly something Mill wishes to avoid; for it would sap humanity of its energy to improve

[121] See *Logic*, CW VIII, 927.
[122] For more in this see F. L van Holthoon, *The Road to Utopia: a study of John Stuart Mill's Social Thought*. (Assen: Van Gorcum and Company, 1971), 56-57.
[123] *On* Liberty, CW XVIII, 231.
[124] Ibid., 239.
[125] Coleridge, CW X, 125.

and destabilise his argument for a liberal state. Or to choose a middle ground: truth is an end that we cannot reach and should not anticipate reaching, but this realization does not rule out the possibility for further improvement. Mill writes in *On Liberty* that,

> As mankind improve, the number of doctrines which are no longer disputed or doubted will be constantly on the increase; and the well-being of mankind may almost be measured by the number and gravity of the truths which have reached the point of being uncontested . . .But though this gradual narrowing of the bounds of diversity of opinion is necessary…the loss of so important an aid to the intelligent and living apprehension of a truth as it is afforded by the necessity of explaining it to, or defending it against, opponents, though not sufficient to outweigh, is no trifling drawback from the benefit of its universal recognition. Where this advantage can no longer be had, I confess I should like to see the teachers of mankind endeavouring to provide a substitute for it – some contrivance for making the difficulties of the question as present to the learner's consciousness as if they were pressed upon him by a dissentient champion, eager for his conversion.[126]

Still, Mill's anticipation of the convergence of truth raises some doubt. What if active individuals stick to their personal beliefs and principles? Or as Isaiah Berlin put it, how can Mill adhere to a theory that all knowledge is cumulative when there exist 'demagogues and liars, scoundrels and blind fanatics',[127] who would be hard pressed to give up their dogmas and tendentious sentiments simply in the face of superior argument? For these reasons Berlin criticises Mill's faith in deliberation as a mechanism for the improvement or refinement of ideas over time. 'It may well be that without full freedom of discussion the truth cannot emerge. But this may be only a necessary, not a sufficient, condition of its discovery; the truth may, for all our efforts, remain at the bottom of a well, and in the meantime the worse cause may win, and do enormous damage to mankind'.[128] In Berlin's view, either Mill must abandon his unwavering faith in deliberation and as a consequence accept a philosophy closer to value pluralism, or Mill must offer a definite criterion to solve irreconcilable moral

[126] *On Liberty*, CW XVIII, 247.
[127] Berlin, 'John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life', 233.
[128] Ibid.

conflicts. 'Whether he knew it or not', writes Berlin, the only plausible way for his argument to work is if he accepts that 'human knowledge was in principle never complete, and always fallible; that there was no single, universally visible truth'.[129] Berlin contends that Mill's 'passionate belief that men are made human by their capacity for choice – choice of evil and good equally',[130] does not rule out progress, but cannot endorse a single notion of progress.

Indeed Mill's commitment to the mechanisms of individuality and the plurality of ends struggles to square with an end of ultimate truth. In a situation of multiple, even competing ends, his faith in deliberation is problematic. Mill's get out clause is perhaps that we do not need to worry about convergence for the time being. In *On Liberty* he says that we will continue to deliberate, 'until mankind shall have entered a stage of intellectual advancement which at present seems at an incalculable distance'.[131] Perhaps notions of reaching the truth are a mirage used only to motivate us for the continued exchange of ideas. That end remains a distant horizon.

Conclusion

As I mentioned at the beginning, the influence of time in Mill's thinking, noticeable in his work during the period between mental crisis and the publication of the *Logic*, has a clear impact on his later works – namely *Utilitarianism*, *Representative Government* and especially *On Liberty*. To return to Koselleck's concept of historical time, Mill's historic outlook is not to separate or ignore the past, but to stitch together the story of human progress through the development of individual character. Mill's attempt to find the underlying laws of character

[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid., 237.
[131] *On Liberty*, CW XVIII, p. 252.

formation and social progress—the mechanisms of movement—stem from the recognition of Britain's own transitional period.

To pick up on another theme from our typology, what remains unclear is the degree to which the laws of character formation could justify efforts to *accelerate* improvement. On this, in his chapter on Ethology Mill hints that it is possible to shape individual character formation in order to reach certain outcomes:

> There may be great power of influencing phenomena, with a very imperfect knowledge of the causes by which they are in any given instance determined. It is enough that we know that certain means have a tendency to produce a given effect, and that others have a tendency to frustrate it. When the circumstances of an individual or of a nation are in any considerable degree under our control, we may, by our knowledge of tendencies, be enabled to shape those circumstances in a manner much more favourable to the ends we desire, than the shape which they would of themselves assume. This is the limit of our power; but within this limit the power is a most important one.[132]

Sceptical of revolutionary idea, scholars like Maurice Cowling have taken issue with Mill's supposed 'liberal intentions' by suggesting that he prefers a certain type of elevated personality to others.[133] According to Cowling he leaves, 'no room for the belief that there could be more than one road to human happiness';[134] and Cowling continues on to claim that, '*On Liberty*, contrary to common opinion was not so much a plea for individual freedom, as a means of ensuring that Christianity would be superseded by the form of liberal, rationalistic, utilitarianism which went by the name of the Religion of Humanity…Mill's object was not to free men, but to convert them to a peculiarly exclusive, peculiarly insinuating moral doctrine'.[135] Others are more sympathetic to Mill. In response to Cowling, C. L. Ten, rightly in my view, accuses him of ignoring 'the many passages in the essay *On Liberty* where Mill

[132] *Logic*, CW VIII, pp. 869-870.
[133] See Maurice Cowling, *Mill and Liberalism*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), especially 25-26.
[134] C. L. Ten, 'Mill and Liberty', in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 30:1. (January-March 1969), 49.
[135] Cowling, *Mill and Liberalism*, xiii.

defends different "experiments in living" and explicitly denies that liberty is desired for the "elevated" alone'.[136] Ten also adds that one does not cease to believe in liberty simply because he holds certain opinions.[137] John Gray also rushes to Mill's aid,[138] claiming that Cowling exaggerates Mill's affiliation with the work of August Comte, from which Mill distanced himself. There is much truth to this. In *On Liberty*, Mill directly criticises Comte's project which he calls the 'despotism of society over the individual'.[139] Both of these defences are perfectly valid. But these defences only apply to a state in which the principle is already in full force. If Mill's discursive means to improvement is to succeed, a diversity of opinion is vital. He sees the tyranny of the majority or collective opinion as the greatest threat to continuous individual and social advancement, as it threatens individual freedom and the free exchange of knowledge that he sees as so vital.[140] Tampering with one's beliefs even to the slightest degree would compromise the entire project.

In light of Berlin's critique, the problem with Mill's faith in deliberation is that it is certainly possible that given the openness of liberal society that different individuals and groups will form divergent beliefs and values wholly irreconcilable with alternative beliefs. One's experiments in living may mould their internal opinions into a hardened faith or entrenched ethical position to the point where open-minded discussion becomes impossible. Yet Mill is unwilling to imagine a situation when truth is rejected outright. Nor does he want to entertain the thought that two 'truths' may oppose each other irreconcilably. For Mill, our faith in deliberation must be greater than our personal faiths.

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[136] Ten, 'Mill and Liberty', 49.
[137] Ibid., 50.
[138] Gray, Mill *On Liberty: a Defense*, 118.
[139] *On Liberty*, CW XVIII, p. 227.
[140] This is discussed in Fuller, 'The Tension of the Perennial, Traditional and Historical inJohn Stuart Mill's *On* Liberty', 9.

The advantage that Berlin has over Mill is in the different time period in which each is writing. The difference between a mid-19th century world and a 20th century world is clear in their respective outlooks. Berlin learned through personal experience what Mill perhaps could not – that a value pluralist world may be as far as we can progress. Trying to overcome this pluralist world and trying to remake it under the banner of a certain set of values, either through the power of persuasive argument, or military coercion, will ultimately be unsuccessful, even disastrous. There will arise innumerable conflicts between values where it is impossible to adjudicate between them without compromising one or both values. What Berlin and Koselleck witness in 20th century Europe is something that Mill could never image – that philosophy may utilise history for its benefit, yet so may history prove philosophy wrong. The implications of this argument shake the very foundations of Mill's argument. As the experiences of the 20th century demonstrate, what man has gained or lost through history is still a valid question.

Chapter Six
Historical Time in the Philosophy of Michael Oakeshott

> A moral ideology is established and maintained because [it] appears the only means of winning the necessary moral stability for the society. But in fact it is no remedy.
> – Michael Oakeshott, The Tower of Babel[1]

My aim in this chapter is to link aspects of Oakeshott's understanding of time and history—how we narrate historical events and navigate the tense dimensions of past, present and future—with Reinhart Koselleck's methodological theory of historical time. In suggesting that Oakeshott, like Koselleck, develops a theory of historical time for ordering historical experience, I narrow my focus to two intersections. Given the limited discussion of 'time' in Oakeshott's writings on politics, my intention is to, first, take this chapter as an opportunity to compare their respective approaches to historical epistemology, and then second, building on this, to look at similarities in their views on the practical use of historical time. This is admittedly to fashion a hypothetical space for conversation between the two men. Even though they were contemporaries, neither referenced the other's work, and it is unclear, even unlikely, that either read the other. Koselleck was heavily influenced by Schmitt and Conze,[2] both familiar to Oakeshott, and is a product of a hermeneutical tradition of Heidegger and Gadamer of which Oakeshott was certainly aware (the former Oakeshott read closely; though the latter perhaps not at all).[3] Still, as a historian, Koselleck remained, and in many ways

[1] Michael Oakeshott, 'Tower of Babel', in *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*, Timothy Fuller ed., revised and expanded edition (Indianapolis, Liberty Fund), 481.
[2] On Schmitt's influence on Koselleck, see Niklas Olsen, 'Carl Schmitt, Reinhart Koselleck and the foundations of history and politics', in *History of European Ideas* 37:2 (2011), 197-208.
[3] For the influences of Gadamer and Heidegger on Koselleck, see Niklas Olsen, *History in the Plural: An Introduction to the Work of Reinhart Koselleck* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013), 26-29. Luke O'Sullivan discusses the influence of Heidegger on Oakeshott in *Oakeshott on History* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2003), 229-231; and Oakeshott writes that he has Heidegger in mind when he discusses the different interpretations of history in 'Present, Past and Future', in *On History and Other Essays* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1991), 22-23. For a comparison of the thinking of Oakeshott and Gadamer, see Edmund Neill, 'Michael Oakeshott and Hans-Georg Gadamer on Practices, Social Science, and Modernity', in *History of European Ideas* 33:1 (2013), 1-31, and Kenneth B. McIntyre, 'Prejudice, Tradition, and the Critique of Ideology: Gadamer

remains, obscure to political theorists, and he belatedly emerges on the radar of the Anglo-American academic world in the mid-1980s, soon before Oakeshott's death.[4]

Beginning with theories of history may seem a curious move. Unlike Koselleck, Oakeshott never sets out to write a theory of historical time. His approach to temporality more generally, such as we may interpret it, is on one hand open to varied and on the other hand more selective conceptions of time.[5] He is selective in the sense that in various places he rejects positivistic notions of a scientific or natural time in preference for an understanding of time as something internal to us. For example, in *Experience and its Modes* he tells us that 'nature is a timeless world, it neither changes nor evolves…it is static and self-contained and the conception of past and future are inapplicable to it'.[6] Time is for him something qualitative and human, conceptualised in the present within the distinct modes of human experience. '*What then is time?*' depends on its coherence and uses within different systems of thinking—in history, but also in philosophy, science and poetry—where time can give structure and meaning to human existence. In each mode we may conceptualise time differently (or perhaps not be able to at all), emphasising particular tense dimensions more

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and Oakeshott on Practical Reason', *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies,* 16 (2010), 136-166. More broadly, there are clear connections, yet also important differences, between Oakeshott and the hermeneutical tradition's discussions on the subjectivity and contextual nature of knowledge. For a wider look on this relationship, see Terry Nardin, *The Philosophy of Michael Oakeshott* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 5-10, 100-110.

[4] The two main proponents for connecting Koselleck to a so-called 'Anglo-American tradition' are Melvin Richter and Kari Palonen. See Melvin Richter, *The History of Political and Social Concepts: A Critical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 124-142; Kari Palonen, 'The History of Concepts as a Style of Political Theorizing: Quentin Skinner's and Reinhart Koselleck's Subversion of Normative Political Theory', in *European Journal of Political Theory* 1:1 (2002), 91-106; and Palonen 'Rhetorical and Temporal Perspectives on Conceptual Change', in *Finnish Yearbook of Political Thought* 3 (1999), 41-59.

[5] See Geoffrey Thomas's argument that Oakeshott's tacit acknowledgement of the reality of time already separates him from F. H. Bradley's dismissal of time as incoherent. See Thomas, 'Michael Oakeshott's Philosophy of History' in Leslie Marsh and Paul Franco *A Companion to Michael Oakeshott* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), 97.

[6]Michael Oakeshott, *Experience and its Modes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 200. For more discussion on Oakeshott, time and nature, see Roy Tseng, *The Sceptical Idealist: Michael Oakeshott as the Critic of the Enlightenment* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2003), 221.

than others, all of which differ from the future-focused orientation of practical life.[7]

As one of many conceptions of time, then, a past time or 'historical time' may be seen as both dimensional and sequential. For Oakeshott, it is how we might come to order and comprehend the study of the historical past from the present and also how to explain the sequencing of historical events. By piecing together a possible theory of historical time, I suggest he is in fact making an argument in ways similar to Koselleck, which is a plea for narrating the past, not as one singularized historical time, but as constructions of plural simultaneous and multidimensional historical times. Even if history remains for Oakeshott an ideal whole, a whole world, his theory for studying the past still encourages us to return to what may be called the contingent-bound rhythms of particular, localised historical times. As historians, then, we must eschew positivism or philosophies of history and endeavour to construct a past based on evidence of the contingent relationship between historical events within a particular, not universal, historical identity. Crucially for our purposes, this idea of contingent historical times spills over to the political practice and the practical use of historical time. Oakeshott wants us to avoid political change based on timeless principles or artificial views of time in preference for a politics of 'intimation', attuned to the innumerable and localised realities, and the plural histories, related to our present practical existence. Let us now look at how he gets here.

Constructing temporal structures of the past

Turning to Oakeshott and Koselleck's respective views on historical epistemology – which holds the keys to understanding the role of time in their respective views on politics – it is

[7] For example, Oakeshott writes that 'the world of scientific generalization is a world ignorant alike of past and future as such, it knows nothing of historical time, and recognizes time only within its world, as a means of relating its own concepts'. *Experience and its Modes*, 113.

important to keep in mind that their approaches to history do not explicitly advocate for a particular method of writing it. Rather, they are interested in the theory of history in a time when the field is struggling against charges of radical historicism and is squeezed by positivism on one side and the structures of language on the other. For Koselleck, the interrogation of the temporal structures of history is an effort to open up a theoretical discussion on how historians can maintain a space for the discipline and overcome the tension between an *in actu* event and its *ex-post* representation.[8] Oakeshott's various writings on history,[9] from his early writing in *Experience and its Modes* to his much later collected essays in *On History*, are similarly concerned with the characteristics that define 'the activity of being a historian',[10] positioning his thinking as a philosophical inquiry into what constitutes a unique and worthwhile understanding of the past. For him, history is 'not mere recording…[but] a particular kind of thinking, unlike both science and philosophy, but resting upon the common presupposition of all kinds of finite knowledge'.[11] As a way of thinking, for Oakeshott, history is not something to be philosophised or politicised, the latter a form of 'practical past', but exists for itself as an escape from the practical life. It lacks a purpose other than developing an understanding of past time.[12] History is to study the past for

[8] See in particular Koselleck, 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', 649-666.
[9] Oakeshott's thinking on history and the practice of the historian is scattered throughout his writing and lectures. For a selection of writings on the practice of history, see 'The activity of being an historian', in Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*, 151-183; his description of 'historical experience' in *Experience and its Modes*, 86-168; history as 'goings-on' in *On Human Conduct* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 101-104; the first three essays in *On History*, 1-128; 'History and the Social Sciences', Institute of Sociology, The Social Sciences, London (1936), 71-81. For an introduction to Oakeshott's approach, see, W. H. Dray, 'Michael Oakeshott's Theory of History' in *Political and Experience: Essays Presented to Michael Oakeshott on the Occasion of his Retirement*, ed. P. King and B. C. Parekh (Cambridge, 1968), and David Boucher, 'The Creation of the Past: British Idealism and Michael Oakeshott's Philosophy of History', *History and Theory* 23:2 (1984), 193-214.
[10] *Rationalism and Politics*, 151-183.
[11] 'Philosophy of History?', in *What is History? and other essays*, Luke O'Sullivan ed. (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2004), 132.
[12] See 'The Whig Interpretation of History', in *What is History?*, 221.

its own sake,[13] the study of the historical past *from* the present and not carried out *for* the present.[14] It is a 'dead past, a past unlike the present'.[15] As such, historical understanding is no more than a constructed explanation or organisation of what from the present is the known world of historical experience. To explain the historical past, the historian must avoid attempts to employ philosophy or methods of science to understand the temporal ordering of events. There are no historical processes or laws of historical change.[16] Instead, the historian must rely only on the collected artefacts and recollected experiences of the past to organise it into something coherent for present understanding.[17] Thought in this way, the past itself does not exist: history is not a re-enactment of the past as Collingwood claims, but only what we know about the past from the present.[18] It is simply, 'what the evidence obliges us to believe'.[19] Thus, dimensionally speaking, and in-line with F. H. Bradley, Oakeshott's temporal approach to history can be seen as a form of rigid presentism:[20] as a world of ideas, there are only present constructions of the past based on the historian's evidence-based judgement.[21] He tells us that 'the distinction between history as it happened (the course of

[13] *Experience and its Modes*, 106.
[14] Oakeshott writes that from the present, '"the past", is a construction we make for ourselves out of the events which take place before our eyes…what we call "the past" appears when we understand current happenings as evidence for what has already happened', *Rationalism and Politics*, 161. This is similar to *Experience and its Modes* where writes that 'history, because it is experience, is present…but because it is history, the formulation of experience as a whole *sub specie praeteritorum*, it is the continuous assertion of a past which is not past and of a present which is not present'. *Experience and its Modes*, 111.
[15] *Experience and its Modes*, 102, 106. Oakeshott writes earlier that 'whereever the past is merely that which preceded the present, that from which the present has grown, wherever the significance of the past lies in the fact that it has been influential in deciding the present and future fortunes of man, wherever the present is sought in the past, and wherever the past is regarded as merely a refuge from the present – the past involved in a practical, and not an historical past'. *Experience and its Modes*, 103.
[16] *On History*, 78-90, 110-115.
[17] *Experience and its Modes*, 111.
[18] See R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford University Press, 1994), 282-302.
[19] *Experience and its Modes*, 107-108.
[20] On Oakeshott's presentism see Geoffrey Thomas, 'Michael Oakeshott's Philosophy of History', 104-110, and David Boucher, *Texts in Context: Revisionist Methods for Studying the History of Ideas* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nihhoff Publishers, 1985), 61-63.
[21] *Experience and its Modes*, 112-118.

events) and history as it is thought, the distinction between history itself and merely experienced history, must go; it is not merely false, it is meaningless'.[22]

As we have seen, Koselleck does not think of the temporal dimensions of historicity on these terms. From present historical understanding, he thinks we experience past and future, and in studying the past we encounter others' experienced pasts and futures. In 'Wozu noch Historie?' Koselleck writes that 'the past has passed, irrevocably—and it has not: the past is present and contains future. It restrains and opens up future possibilities, it is present in our language, it influences our consciousness as well as the unconscious, our attitudes, our institutions, the way we criticize them'.[23] The past is neither entirely 'historical' nor 'practical', to use Oakeshott's distinctions.[24] Nevertheless, he agrees with Oakeshott's views on the difficultly of present-bound interpretation. In constructing history, he claims it 'becomes temporalized in the sense that, by virtue of the passing of time it changes at each given present, and with growing distance, it also changes in the past, or better said: history unveils itself in the truth of its day'.[25] For both, the problem of linguistic comprehension is especially salient. Reading a past discourse, or to use Oakeshott's terminology, the various 'voices' of or 'conversations' between actors, is the predominant form of evidence for understanding historical experience and change.[26] Here there is broad agreement between the two. For Koselleck, the 'past social and political conflicts must be interpreted and decoded in

[22] *Experience and its Modes*, 93. Quoted in Collingwood's *The Idea of History*, where he characterizes Oakeshott's conception of the historian as someone who is merely 'organizing his present consciousness', 153.
[23] Quoted in Olsen *History in the Plural*, 230-231.
[24] In *Begriffsgeschichtliche Probleme der Verfassungsgeschichts*, Koselleck speaks to history's 'double translation', where, 'an historian is obliged to abstract himself from the present in order to avoid making anachronistic judgements of the past but also to connect the judgements of the past back to present controversies'. Quoted in Kari Palonen, 'Contingency, Political Theory and Conceptual History', in Javier Fernandez Sebastian (2011) *Political Concepts and Time* (Barcelona: Cantabria University Press), 179.
[25] *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 167.
[26] For example, see Oakeshott's 'The Voice of poetry in the conversation of mankind', *Rationalism and Politics*, 488-541, or *The Voice of Liberal Learning*, edited by Timothy Fuller (New Haven, CT, 1989), esp. 'Learning and Teaching', 35-61.

terms of their contemporary conceptual boundaries, and the self-understanding on the part of past speakers and writers of their own language-use'.[27] In a review of the first volume of E. H. Carr's *The Bolshevik Revolution*, Oakeshott also makes a clear distinction between the language of historical actors and the historian, something he felt it important to preserve, and a distinction he accuses Carr of forgetting. To remain critical, the historian must differentiate his own language from that of his historical subjects, who 'speak an extraordinary private language…[and] have an idiom in which they make their thoughts known to one another'.[28] The historian is not there to question the truth of a historical statement or to somehow reveal the intentions of the author, but to translate an anachronistic language into something intelligible to the reader.

This is to recognise the reality of a past that can never be understood other than through present perspective, and their respective sympathies for contextualising language suggest that it is a potential area for comparison. However, the limited extent to which Oakeshott engages with a sort of linguistic turn to writing history, or writes much history himself, restricts the space for conversation. A more propitious vein is to look at how 'idioms' or language reflect the 'historical experiences' or 'goings-on', or what Oakeshott also calls the 'individual' or 'events' that must make up a narrative history. For both, history is not simply a combination of utterances: it is the 'science of experience',[29] as Koselleck put it, and experiences (and therefore history) begin with events (*Einzelereignis*).[30] It is in

[27] *Futures Past*, 80.
[28] Oakeshott, 'Mr Carr's First Volume', in Luke O'Sullivan ed. *The Concept of a Philosophical Jurisprudence: Essays and Reviews 1926-51* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2007), 329.
[29] *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 47. Quoted in Zammito, 'Koselleck's Philosophy o Historical Time(s)', 129.
[30] *Zeitschichten*, 43. Likewise, Oakeshott writes that it is only experience that exists. See *Experience and its Modes*, 54-55, 110. For Oakeshott on experience see Thomas, 'Michael Oakeshott's Philosophy of History', 98-99.

narrating events where their epistemological arguments overlap – as for both, theories of historical time provide the toolkit for narrating events and historical change.

As I have shown elsewhere, Koselleck's temporal approach to historical epistemology endorses thinking of links between events in terms of the possibility of plural (and simultaneous) histories. He presents this by using the metaphor *Zeitschichten*, representing the synchronic layering of diachronic times,[31] analogous to his reoccurring use of the idea of 'the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous' (*die Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*). This layered view demonstrates the varied linking of events and also the simultaneity of the dimensions of past, present and future in synchronic points in time – 'any synchrony is *eo ipso* at the same time diachronic'.[32] We see this, for example, in his discussion of Albrecht Altdorfer's 1529 painting *Alexanderschlacht*, depicting Alexander the Great's victory over Darius at the battle of Issus in 333 B.C.E., and its simultaneous reference to the contemporary Turkish siege of Vienna.[33] Like Altdorfer's painting, historicity becomes inextricably linked with considerations of layered time, both in the use of temporal structures to account for different durations and speeds of historical change and in reference to the simultaneity of the tense dimensions in historical explanation.

Again, Koselleck theorises the layering of time from two different, yet interrelated, starting points, which he discusses in numerous places albeit with varying differentiations.[34]

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[31] *Zeitschichten*, 9.
[32] *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 30.
[33] *Futures Past*, 9-25. For an excellent analysis of Koselleck's discussion of *Alexanderschlacht*, see Jordheim, 'Against Periodization' in *History and Theory* 51 (May 2012), 158-160.
[34] In his review of the collected volume *Zeitschichten: Studien zur Historik*, John Zammito calls him a 'veritable literary "hedgehog"' who 'worries his big idea over and over again'. John Zammito, 'Koselleck's Philosophy of Historical Time(s) and the Practice of History', *History and* Theory 43 (February 2004), 126. As Jordhiem has forcefully argued, it would be a mistake to consider historical time as a separate enterprise from the study of historical concepts. See Helge Jordheim, 'Does Conceptual History Really Need a Theory of Historical Times?', *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6:2 (winter 2011), 21-41, and 'Thinking in convergences – Koselleck on language, history and time' in *Ideas in History* 2:3 (2007), 65-90. Also see Kari Palonen 'Rhetorical and Temporal Perspectives on Conceptual Change', 49-53. To summerise Jordheim, *Begriffsgeschichte* is a rare

On one hand, this theory is a product of his own conceptually-evidenced thesis of modernity that social conceptions and orderings of time newly historicised during the *Sattelzeit*. On the other hand, it is a broader theoretical proposal for twentieth century historical practice, as I discussed in chapter two.[35] But here let me look at this in more detail than I have done previously. On one hand he thinks that one theorises historical time based on structures of repetition; that is, how historians construct formal diachronic narratives linking one synchronic event to events before and after (*Synchronen und Ereignissen*). While the other we can call categorical, an approach to understanding moments of historical change from studying the shifting temporal perspectives of historical agents themselves (individuals, groups or institutions) by applying the categories of the 'space of experience' (*Erfahrungstaum*) and a 'horizon of expectation' (*Erwartungshorizont*).[36] These structures of

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approach to the study of language that in response to Saussure's focus on language as a synchronic system attempts to maintain a link between studying the structure of historical language and the diachronic structures of history (*Strukturgeschichte*). Koselleck argues that studying language synchronically is mistaken in ignoring the possible historical influences on language, on one hand, and the impact of language upon history, on the other. See Koselleck and Gadamer, *Hermeneutik und Historik, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenchaften*, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Jahrgang 1987, Hericht 1 (Heidelberg, 1987); Koselleck, 'Erfahrungswandel und Methodenwechsel: Eine historische-anthropologische Skizze', in *Historische Methode,* Christian Meier and Jörn Rüsen, Theorie der Geschichte, Beiträge zur Historik vol. 5 (1988), 13-61; 'Social History and Conceptual History', in *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 25; and 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', in *Journal of Modern History* vol. 61 (December 1989), 649-666.

[35] This is a period where concepts reveal a 'denaturalization' of time, a shift demonstrated by concepts like 'progress', 'revolution' and 'crisis'. Koselleck writes, 'The hypothesis of a denaturalization of the historical experience of time, which also affects the semantics of socio-political expressions, is supported by the emergence of the modern philosophy of history, which appropriates these terms'. *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 4-5. On modernity, see 'The Eighteenth Century as the Beginning of Modernity', *The Practice of Conceptual History*, esp. 160-165.

[36] This is an attempt to reconcile two different strands in Koselleck's theory of historical time. One pertains to the conditions of possible history based on the categories of 'experience' and 'expectation', which reveal historical time (see *Futures Past*, 262) and the other in terms of the temporal layers and repetitive structures of history (see *Futures Past*, 95). Others interpret this differently. Niklas Olsen notes that it is unclear as to how these two strands relate to each other. See Olsen, *Introduction to Koselleck*, 230-231. Alexandre Escudier argues that following the prelinguistic aspects of historical time (such as 'birth and death', 'in and out', 'master' and 'slave'), what Koselleck calls 'historical time proper' is deduced from the dichotomy of 'before' and 'after' leading to three levels of analysis. Historical time is constituted in terms of (1) the individuality and repeatability of historical events (identifying continuity and discontinuity); (2) the 'generativity' of history in terms of its relation to succession, socialization and politicization; (3) the history built through applying the categories of 'experience' and 'expectation'. See Alexandre Escudier, 'Temporalization and Political Modernity', in *Political Concepts and Time: New Approaches to Conceptual History*, Javier Fernández Sebastián ed. (Santander: Cantabria University Press), 131-163.

repetition relates to Koselleck's deeper categorisation of experience, which I have touched on throughout. For Koselleck, historical experiences can occur first as a 'surprise', that is, something differentiated from or unexpected based on antecedent experiences. Second, they can be part of a collection of experiences, the result of accumulation that confirms a pattern of events through, for example, institutions or traditions. Lastly, experiences may occur over the long term, 'beyond all spontaneous effects and unexpected turns', thereby greatly modifying the previous framework of new and repeatable experiences. This differentiation then helps us structure 'experience' into 'temporal experiences', where history is layered, multidimensional and multi-durational, consisting of innumerable temporal structures that are both 'internal to and demonstrable in related events'.[37] But in an essay 'History, Histories and Formal Time Structures' this changes, arguing that histories consist of single events (not just a surprise) where each has a designated before and after (*Vorher und Nachher*), repeated events, and thirdly, the temporal dimension of the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous (*Gleichzeitigkeit der Ungleichzeitigen*) where he comments on the 'diversity of temporal strata' found in history, including 'varying extensions of time' and the 'prognostic structure of historical time'.[38] The idea of the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous is to remind us that history always extends in innumerable strands—shorter durations and longue durée—containing 'numerous differentiable layers which each undergo change sometimes faster sometimes slower, but always with varying rates of change'.[39]

Koselleck's experiential approach to historical time has a different focus. While the layers of time can refer to the historian's discovery of short-, medium- and long-term

[37] See 'Transformations of Experience and Methodological Change', *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 45-83. For a fuller discussion on Koselleck's science of experience, see Luca Scuccimarra, 'Semantics of Time and Historical Experience: Remarks on Koselleck's *Historik*', in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 4 (2008), 162-163.
[38] History, Histories, and Formal Time Structures, in *Futures Past*, 95.
[39] *Zeitschichten*, 330. Quoted in Olsen, *Introduction to Koselleck*, 226.

structures, historical time also refers to narrating the past through investigating the temporal awareness of historical actors and societies themselves in order to help identify moments of historical change.[40] For this, as it were, more first-person understanding of time, Koselleck encourages us to see historical time through applying the anthropological or metahistorical categories of experience and expectation,[41] influenced by Gadamer's notion of one's historio-experiential 'situation' and 'horizon' that I discussed in chapter three.[42] Changes in conceptual meaning demonstrate that the relationship between the two categories is not static: in their shifting emphasis within first-person outlooks they reveal that the past and future split and redouble on each other, often in an unequal manner, showcasing historical time's capacity for alteration.[43]

Returning to Oakeshott, for him, the intelligibility of historical change in different 'passages of occurrences',[44] involves a theory of historical 'reasoning' in order to explain how a particular historical event came about within the world of historical events that comprise a single ideal whole. Doing so is a two-step process.[45] The historian must first individualise an event by identifying a before and an after for the purposes of

[40] 'There is no history which could be constituted independently of the experiences and expectations of active human agents' he writes, and later adds that the categories are 'suitable for detecting historical time in the domain of empirical research…they are indicative of the temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) of men', *Futures Past*, 256, 258. And he writes elsewhere that 'Historical time, if the term is to have a meaning, is tied to social and political unites of action, to particular acting and suffering human beings, and to their institutions and organizations'. *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 110.

[41] See Koselleck, *Futures Past*, Space of experience and horizon of expectation, 255-275.

[42] For instance, Gadamer says that 'Every finite present has its limitations. We define the concept of "situation" by saying that it represents a standpoint that limits the possibility of vision. Hence essential to the concept of situation is the concept of "horizon". The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point'. *Truth and Method*, Second and Revised Edition, Translation revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 301-303.

[43] *Futures Past*, 263.

[44] *On History*, 1.

[45] In *Experience and its Modes* he tells us that 'history accounts *for* change by offering an account *of* change', and is comprised of no more than events. *Experience and its Modes*, 143.

differentiation.[46] Describing change between these significantly related events, the second step, is the essence of historical explanation. History is 'an explanation of the world in terms of change, and an explanation of change in its world'.[47] It is there 'to mediate one circumstance to another';[48] or as he explains more fully, 'the historian's aim is to see as interconnected the details with which he is dealing. His business lies equally with discovery of details and the discovery of their interconnection, for these discoveries are in reality a single discovery'.[49] Like Koselleck, Oakeshott's theoretical challenge is to find a legitimate way to explain significant relationships between events to account for a historical time. His solution to this problem is a unique view of contingency, which is for him the natural relationship between events, or what he calls in *Experience and its Modes* 'the unity or continuity of history'.[50] For Oakeshott, unlike Koselleck's category of experience as a surprise or Bury's idea of historical facts as chance occurrences,[51] his idea of contingencies are goings on that 'are composed of related circumstantial occurrences'. The historian is simply 'composing an intelligible continuity of conditionally dependant occurrences'.[52] This is not because events just come after the other, or relate causally, but because they 'touch';

[46] Here, an individual event is an inferred or imagined past occurrence that is different from the antecedent happenings to which it is significantly related—a 'conflation of accessories' with 'no exclusive characters but [they] are the difference the made in a convergence of differences which compose a circumstantial historical identity'. *On History*, 103.
[47]*Experience and its Modes*, 125.
[48] *Rationalism and Politics*, 183.
[49]*Experience and its Modes*, 143. In 'The activity of being an historian', he says something similar: 'in the "historian's" understanding of events, just as none is "accidental", so none is "necessary" or "inevitable". What we can observe him doing in his characteristic inquiries and utterances is, not extricating general causes or necessary and sufficient conditions, but setting before us the events (in so far as they can be ascertained) which mediate one circumstance to another'. *Rationalism and Politics*, 172.
[50]*Experience and its Modes*, 141.
[51] See Bury's essay, 'Darwinism and History' (1909), in *Darwin and Modern Science*, A. C. Seward ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 529-542. For Oakeshott's rejection of Bury's idea of contingency as an accident, see *Experience and its Modes*, 140 and *On Human Conduct*, 102.
[52]*On Human Conduct*, 104. In *On History* he writes something similar, describing contingency as, 'the kind of relationship which, when in an historical enquiry it is found to subsist between antecedent events and a subsequent event, composes an identity which may be described alternatively, as an event properly understood as an outcome of antecedent events, or as an assemblage of events related in such a manner as itself to constitute an historically understood event. I shall call it a contingent relationship'. *On History*, 101.

that is to say, what came after is a response, not a chronological or causal link, to what came before.[53]

To help mediate this contingent relationship between individual events, Oakeshott proposes historians employ two formal (temporal) categories to identify events, that of 'continuity' and 'change'. In *Experience and its Modes*, Oakeshott describes these categories as,

> that by which historical events are determined. An historical event is never a mere point-instant; it is something with a meaning, and something which can maintain itself relatively intact and self-complete. Its capacity for establishing its individuality lies in the discontinuity, the relative breaks which seems to precede it; and its capacity for maintaining its individuality lies in the continuity or relative absence of break, which it can show.[54]

In the dynamism between the two categories, Oakeshott argues that to account for change there must be a degree of diachronic connectivity, a contingent relationship, between events before and after. 'An historical past may be said to be composed of passages of related events of various dimensions, durations and constitutions assembled in answer to an historical question: a past constituted not in terms of its situational immobility but of time and change'.[55] Here, as Luke O'Sullivan and Terry Nardin have also discussed, Oakeshott relies heavily on Aristotle's *Physics*, where he believes his notion of continuity to be similar to Aristotle's understanding of 'contiguity',[56] when 'a whole is composed of distinguishable

[53]History is the explanation of a 'sequential relationship of intelligent individual occurrences where what comes after is recognised to be conditional upon what went before'. *On Human Conduct*, 104.
[54] *Experience and its Modes*, 121-122. A similar theme is discussed in *On History*: 'I have argued that the relationship between antecedent historical events and a subsequent recognized as their outcome must be a contingent relationship. And I distinguished this from a relationship of "change", from a causal relationship and from a relationship in terms of something called in from the outside, the glue of normality or the cement of general causes. I shall now argue that the identity in terms of which an assembled passage of historical events, recognized as differences, may be understood as a passage of change is nothing other than its inherent continuity; this continuity to be distinguished from some changeless item in the situation, from and enduring purpose or end to be realized and from the normalities or the "law" of the process of change'. *On History*, 122.
[55] *On History*, 68.
[56] See *On History*, 122, where Oakeshott cites a passage from the *Physics* (V, 3, 277a): 'The continuous is a kind of contiguity…It is found in things whose nature is such as to make them one when they are in contact".

uniform parts which touch one another without interval and hold together in virtue of what they themselves are without extraneous mediation'.[57] Continuity in history, what are structures of historical time, is a 'function of the continuity of its parts'. Sequences of historical events can remain contiguous while also accounting for change over time. In this way, Oakeshott tells us he takes Aristotle's notion of change in the *Physics* in order to 'translate it into the language of time'.[58] It risks sounding as if Oakeshott wants to distil history as a whole down to a single account of the past in as minute detail as possible. What rescues him from this problem is the conception of 'identity', which in the *Physics* Aristotle pairs with contiguity, where according to Oakeshott, 'a succession of occurrences…may be recognised to be "change" if it is continuous and solely in virtue of its continuousness…That is "continuity" of change is itself a form of identity or sameness'. If history is done properly, then, the historian is said to have created within the world of history one of many possible accounts of a 'continuity of change'.[59]

Before moving to the political implications of their respective theorizations on history, it is worth point out several things that emerge from this comparison in historical approaches. For both Koselleck and Oakeshott, it is clear that pluralisation is preferable to singularization. For Oakeshott, the world of history as a whole need not consist of one

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The influence of Aristotle's 'contiguity' on Oakeshott is discussed in O'Sullivan, *Oakeshott on* History, 245-247 and Boucher, 'The Creation of the Past', 165.

[57] *On History*, 122. In his lectures on the history of political thought, Oakeshott also considers Aristotle's view of science as a systematic inquiry into what causes a thing to behave and the nature of things; and also an inquiry into the 'circumstantial or contingent relations between different things; the accidents that happen to them, or (in the case of men) the designs they may have and carry out'. The later is a historical, not philosophical enquiry, says Oakeshott. See 'Aristotle (1)' in Terry Nardin and Luke O'Sullivan eds. (2006). *Lectures in the History of Political Thought* (Exeter: Imprint Academic), p. 105.

[58] 'Change', 13. Quoted in O'Sullivan, 246. In *On Human Conduct* he claims that history can be best 'understood as the continuity or the continuousness of the passages of differences; continuity being recognized as a kind of contiguity. And an historical past may be identified, alternatively, as an assemblage of antecedent historical events contingently related to a subsequent historical event, or as an assembled passage of antecedent differences which, in virtue of its continuity, constitutes a passage of historical change the outcome of which is a subsequent difference'. *On Human Conduct*, 125.

[59] Quoted in O'Sullivan, *Oakeshott on History*, 245-246.

identity, but can be comprised of innumerable histories of different durations that make intelligible a series of contingent events. A more difficult issue to resolve, however, is whether identity within the experience of history as a whole might make intelligible a plurality of simultaneous and multi-durational historical times. Put in another way, if history is a whole, can a coherent history remain irreconcilable with the synchronicity of nonsynchronous structures of historical change? On one hand, Oakeshott hints that it can. In *On History* he tells us that an identity of continuity of change is not an exclusive or consequential relationship between antecedent and subsequent, but simply an 'assembled passage of historical differences (events)'.[60] And he goes on to say that, 'antecedents are not absorbed in this [the] subsequent but remain eligible to be significantly related to a variety of other subsequents'.[61] The assemblage of antecedents and subsequents may be ordered differently, as long as the contingent relationships in one series do not contradict a relationship in another. Still, we should not take this plurality of contingent identities as identical to Koselleck's much richer multidimensional and multidurational layering. First, in Oakeshott's thinking there is no prognostic structure to historical time because such prognostication is anathema to the historical enterprise. We cannot know about or anticipate events ahead of their antecedents.[62] Moreover, while contingent relationships can form identities of varying length, with events of varying magnitude, Oakeshott eschews history 'written upon a large scale' as it is 'likely to display change more abruptly'. Historical explanation, for him, is not to account for great or revolutionary changes, but to show the opposite: it is a search for explaining contingent change at its most incremental as an alternative to sweeping historical judgements. He tells us that so-called revolutionary events,

[60] *On History*, 122.
[61] Ibid., 102-103.
[62] Ibid., 124-125.

watersheds and great leaps forward are judgements of an expressly non-historical understanding of the past.[63]

This raises questions about history's assemblage. Contingency and touching suggests that history boasts what Oakeshott calls 'inherent continuity', where 'the identity, the oneness, of a length of chain composed of nothing but its links…is itself a function of the continuity of its parts'.[64] Put in another way, the historian builds what Oakeshott describes as a historical 'dry wall', where the stones (antecedent events) that compose the wall (the subsequent event) are held together not by mortar or any 'extraneous connexion', to use Bradley's phrase, but in terms of their shapes.[65] The stones' shapes limit what the craftsman can do with his wall, of course, but nor do they fit together exactly. Risking metaphorical muddling, he tells us elsewhere that,

> [the] product of historical enquiry and imagination is not like the resolution of a jigsaw puzzle, what is on the table being made to correspond to the picture on the lid of the box. There is no such picture and there are no such firm shapes to be picked up and put into their predestined places one at a time. What an historian has are shapes of his own manufacture, more like ambiguous echoes which wind in and out, touch and modify one another; and what he composes is something more like a tune (which may be carried away by the wind) than a neatly fitted together, solid structure.[66]

Historians, then, are craftsmen confined to some degree by the pathways of historical change. Inhabiting the present, their interest can only concern evidence of a past in its most incrementally contingent as possible, brought to us by artefacts of a certain configuration for which we piece together an identity as best we can.

Koselleck would find this unnecessarily restrictive. Moreover, absent in Oakeshott's account of studying the historical past compared to Koselleck is the use of other

[63] Ibid., *On History*, 125-126.
[64] Ibid., *On History*, 125.
[65] Ibid., 102. See F. H. Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914), 362. 'Extraneous connection' is also discussed in Boucher, 'The Creation of the Past', 212.
[66] *On History*, 126-127.

transcendental categories for historical explanation beyond the categories of continuity and change. Nor it seems does he see the relevance or even possibility of studying actors' own conceptions of historical time in order to narrate historical change. Still, there is one particular shift in temporal awareness that Oakeshott does take an interest (as a philosopher, not historian), which is the shifting importance of the future *vis-à-vis* the present and past in the modern mind-set. This aspect of his thought is highly relevant to his thoughts on the political and is strikingly similar to Koselleck's discussion of the increased separation of the categories of experience and expectation in modernity.

Modernity and the ideological politics of historical time

As discussed in chapter one, Koselleck's response to the politicisation of historical time is a call to pluralise history, for scholarly and practical purposes, and return to a more stable balance between experience and expectation.[67] This aversion to a philosophical historicism again brings Koselleck close to Oakeshott's thinking. Oakeshott agrees with Koselleck that ideologies are foremost a form of political discourse that attach particular meaning to abstract political concepts, and in doing so compare, contrast and compete with other ideologies in the meanings of concepts like liberty, equality and justice. Ideology is 'a vocabulary of beliefs in terms of which to conduct political discourse'.[68] They can be shorthand, or 'abridgements' to use his phrase, for describing our general dispositions and political cultures, or in the name of change, serve as handbooks for achieving a particular future goal.[69] Ideologies can be either descriptive or prescriptive and they can offer us greater understanding, lead to fruitful conversation or call for political change. What he calls 'ideological politics', then, is

[67] See *Futures Past*, 43-57, and *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 154-169.
[68] *Rationalism and Politics*, 75.
[69] See Oakeshott, 'Conduct and ideology in politics', in *What is History?*, 245-254.

something that 'is not simply politics of principle as against politics of expediency but is a style of politics which springs from attributing to principles a certain character'.[70] As handbooks for political application, ideologies serve the practical interests of change, the defining feature of the practical mode of experience, where the world is consumed with the relationship between the 'what is' and the 'not yet', the 'here and now' and the 'what ought to be'.[71] Practical change, as opposed to historical change, reflects a very different understanding of the logical counterparts of the past and present. In this case, the present is future oriented and what he calls a 'practical past' used for the present.[72] The use of the past in practical experience is thus dictated by the unending tension between the real and the ideal.[73]

Oakeshott believes this future-oriented practical mode of experience is a permanent condition from which we cannot escape. It is not a creation of modernity. Yet modernity, loosely set out as it is with Koselleck's *Sattelzeit*, has reoriented the relationship between the past, present and future, and placed a new set of pressures on the political arrangements of

[70]'Conduct and ideology in politics', *What is History?*, 248.
[71] Oakeshott says, 'In it the alteration of existence is undertaken. Practical life comprises the attempts we make to alter existence or to maintain it unaltered in the face of threatened change. It is both the production and the prevention of change, and in either case it is not merely a programme for action, but action itself'. *Experience and its Modes*, 256.
[72] Oakeshott describes the practical temporal outlook as such: 'The present-future of practical engagement composed of subjects of a certain (optative) character related to one another in terms of their desires, purposes and actions and related also to objects, some of which may be recognized to have survived from the past and understood in terms of their alleged worth in the conduct of practical undertakings, is not a shapeless, unspecified encounter with the confusion of all that may be going on, nor is it a mere attitude. It is a coherent, self-sustaining understanding of the world in which a single formal character is imposed upon everything that receives attention'. *On History*, 22. Oakeshott writes that the practical past exists: 'Wherever the past is merely that which preceded the present, that from which the present has grown, wherever the significance of the past lies in the fact that it has been influential in deciding the present and future fortunes of man…In practical experience, the past is designed to justify, to make valid practical beliefs about the present and the future, about the world in general…the language is that of history, while its thought is that of practice'. *Experience and its Modes*, 103, 105.
[73] This term is first used by O'Sullivan, *Oakeshott on History*, 18.

practical life.[74] Here the past is not used for the practical present, but too often abandoned entirely. In the *Politics of Faith and the Politics of Scepticism* Oakeshott argues that the appeal of a politics' grand plans is a symptom of modernity, coming about in the 'confident and adult language of the eighteenth century'.[75] During this period, as with Koselleck's *Neuzeit*, the practical past is no longer connected to and for the present but the present is divorced from it in the name of radical change, where expectation dominates at the expense of experience. 'The vice of contemporary political reflection is to take an excessively long view of the future and an excessively short view of the past…by abridging the pedigree of our political character we restrict our understanding of it'.[76]

The main culprit behind this shift is the modern rise of what he terms 'Rationalism', which promotes technical knowledge at the expense of accumulated practical knowledge in the interest of perfecting human conduct.[77] Rationalism attempts to ignore contingency and inhabit a timeless world, harbouring a 'deep distrust of time, and [an] impatient hunger for eternity and an irritable nervousness in the face of everything topical and transitory'.[78] Political ideologies become useful tools of the Rationalist, and as 'abridgements of tradition' that are 'independently premeditated'[79] they too are abstractions that are meant to transcend time in their applicability. As handbooks they are timeless. Contrary to Koselleck's 'concepts of movement', the value of ideological concepts for Oakeshott is precisely in their historical detachment. 'They compose an understanding of *what* is to be pursued independent of *how* it

[74] Politics is not itself a mode, but foremost a practical consideration. It is 'the activity of attending to the general arrangements of a set of people whom chance or choice have brought together'. *Rationalism and Politics*, 44.
[75] *Politics of Faith and Politics of Scepticism*, 24. Also see Timothy Fuller, 'Michael Oakeshott: the Philosophical skeptic in an impatient age', in Catherine Zuckert ed. *Political Philosophy in the Twentieth Century: Authors and Arguments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 145.
[76] *Futures Past*, 2.
[77] *Rationalism and Politics*, 22-23.
[78] *Rationalism and Politics*, 7.
[79] *Rationalism and Politics*, 48.

is to be pursued', he tells us. 'A political ideology purports to supply in advance knowledge of what Freedom or Democracy or Justice is, and in this manner sets empiricists to work'.[80] The implementation of ideological politics then brings the timeless into the time-bound world and reorders historical time with new beginnings and ends, revolutions and millenniums, set out in order to change the political.

In this ideological style of politics we see the rapid present-centred differentiation between the 'what ought to be', the 'here and now', and the 'what was', where thanks to ideological slogans, historical time is increasingly disconnected – the future divorced from the past, expectations from experience. Yet while it is cut loose from the past, the future is not open but already predicted. As a response to the plurality of individual ends, the variety of human desires are compromised in favour of communal temporal direction and coherence where goals are already set, the course of action laid out.[81] This type of historical time is what Oakeshott in *On Human Conduct* calls an 'enterprise association', where agents are related to each other in agreement upon a common purpose.[82] Unforeseen contingencies require 'managerial decisions' to do *this* rather than *that* in order to procure a wished-for outcome connected with an already agreed upon goal.[83] Communal enterprise is a symptom of the politics of expectation, where 'the activity of governing is understood to be in the service of the perfection of mankind. There is a doctrine of cosmic optimism which, not from observation but as an inference from the perfection of its creator, attributes an unavoidable

[80] *Rationalism and Politics*, 48.
[81] For Oakeshott's version of the singularization of time, or thought of as horizons, see, 'On Being Conservative', *Rationalism and Politics*, 425-426. This has clear ramifications for the role of government: 'Thus, governing is recognized as a specific and limited activity; not the management of an enterprise, but the rule of those engaged in a great diversity of self-chosen enterprises'. *Rationalism and Politics*, 429.
[82] See *On Human Conduct*, 114-121.
[83] *On Human Conduct*, 114-115, 130-131. Oakeshott elaborates that 'an enterprise is a "policy", and enterprise association is a 'managerial' engagement; it is agents related to one another in the substantive activity of choosing performances contingently connected with a common purpose or interest, or of their acknowledgement of such choices and performances as their own'. *On Human Conduct*, 115.

perfection to the universe…human perfection is sought precisely because it is not present'.[84] As an alternative to individual initiative, the politics of solidarity 'endows government with power and authority such as it has never before enjoyed', and often breeds a politics of impatience to accelerate the process by which the 'what is' becomes the 'what ought to be'. [85] In his account of an imagined ill-fated attempt to reach the heavens by building a 'Tower of Babel', Oakeshott says that the slogan 'time flies as the crow flies',[86] was a particular selling point, and for the Babelian people the catchphrase '"Take the Waiting out of Wanting" had bitten deep into their consciousness'.[87]

The impatience of those with a preference for the politics of faith worries Oakeshott. 'We forget that, in order to make the fire burn a little more briskly, we have pulled out all the dampers', he says, 'and in our enjoyment of the warmth we fail to remark that the scuttle is empty and the chimney near to being on fire'.[88] Like Koselleck, his response to the radical temporality [89] of modern historical time is to close the gap between experience and expectation, by reflecting on the importance of the past-present, what he calls 'traditions of behaviour', a concept that itself has a specific temporal dimension:

> [It] is not a fixed and inflexible manner of doing things; it is a flow of sympathy. It may be temporarily disrupted by the incursion of a foreign influence, it may be diverted, restricted, arrested, or become dried-up, and it may reveal so deep-seated an incoherence that (even without foreign assistance) a crisis appears. And if, in order to meet these crises, these were some steady, unchanging, independent guide to which a society might resort, it would no doubt be well advised to do so. But no such guide

[84] *Futures Past*, 23
[85] *Rationalism and Politics*, 381.
[86] *Rationalism and Politics*, 466.
[87] *On History*, 208.
[88] *Politics of Faith and Politics of Scepticism*, 11.
[89] I take this phrase from Tim Fuller's 'Radical Temporality and the Modern Moral Imagination: Two Themes in the Thought of Michael Oakeshott', in Leslie Marsh and Paul Franco (2012) *A Companion to Michael Oakeshott*, 120–133.

> exists; we have no resources outside the fragments, the vestiges, the relics of its own tradition of behaviour which the crisis has left untouched.[90]

To follow this is to accept the limitations of our practical existence. The division between the 'what is' and the 'what ought to be' is always to be remade: 'nowhere in practice is there uninterrupted progress or final achievement'.[91] A more appropriate role of government is found in a 'civil association', which in contrast to its enterprising counterpart is not managerial but is an arrangement based upon the rule of law.[92] Faced with unforeseeable contingent challenges, we must employ a procedure to adjudicate disputes based on the accumulative meaning of the law; that is, based on past-present experience and 'general conditions of conduct' in response to contingent challenges.[93] Thus, the emphasis is on legal reasoning based on antecedent situations. 'The essential character of law lies in its being a product of time'.[94]

In response to the ideological separation of the past-future, he urges us to re-incorporate a past-present tradition into the modern disposition; and on the other hand he is promoting localised traditions, the 'vernacular language of civil understanding and intercourse'[95] as an alternative to the temptation to govern on the basis of timeless abstract principles. Put in another way, in both instances he wants to reintegrate an awareness of the continuity of historical time. 'When we acquire a tradition', says Oakeshott, 'we are aware of a past and future as soon as we are aware of a present'.[96] A tradition of behaviour is not static

[90]Rationalism and Politics, 59. J.G.A. Pocock discusses Oakeshott and his concept of tradition in his essay 'Time Institutions and Action' in *Politics, Language, and Time* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 233-272.
[91] *Experience and its Modes*, 291.
[92] Oakeshott also discusses this in 'The Rule of Law', in *On History*, 129-178.
[93]*On Human Conduct*, 137, 133.
[94] Oakeshott, 'The Concept of Philosophical Jurisprudence' in Luke O'Sullivan ed. *The Concept of Philosophical Jurisprudence: Essays and Reviews 1926-51* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2007), 158.
[95]*On Human Conduct*, 122.
[96]*Rationalism and Politics*, 62.

or anachronistic: like the historian's judgement of the past, we should see this view of time as levels of alternations of change and continuity, the continuity of change, where 'all parts of a tradition do not change at once and are potential within it'. This is to follow what Oakeshott calls a 'principle of continuity', whereby the temporal dimensions of historical time are recalibrated in an elusive present. In upholding this principle of continuity, 'authority is diffused between past, present and future; between the old, the new, and what is to come. It is steady because, though it moves, it is never wholly in motion; and though it is tranquil, it is never wholly at rest'.[97] In contrast to the accelerated world of radical ideology, the principle of continuity shows a 'preference for slow, small changes…it is more important for a society to move together than for it to move either fast or far'.[98] Politics, therefore, is not the pursuit of dreams, but the following of 'intimations' in the here and now.[99] As offshoot of our rituals, traditions and general practices,[100] intimations are an inheritance from which we should not abandon. To pursue them is the moniker of moderation in an impatient age.[101]

Conclusion

To sum up, my intention here is to outline a politics of time in Oakeshott, but to try and put Koselleck and Oakeshott in conversation with each other. From this we can take away several conclusions. For both, temporality offers a way of understanding the world. Time is to recognise our 'presentness' in attempting to construct the past.[102] From here, they encourage us to follow formal ways of explaining the past, and how from the present we are to

[97] *Rationalism and Politics*, 61.
[98] *Rationalism and Politics*, 396–397.
[99] *Rationalism and Politics*, 66. For a discussion of this phrase, also see W. H. Greenleaf *Oakeshott's Philosophical Politics* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1966), 54.
[100] Intimation as ritual is discussed in *Rationalism and Politics*, 429.
[101] For more on 'intimations', see Fuller, Editor's Introduction, *The Politics of Faith and the Politics of* Scepticism, xviii; and William Coates, 'Michael Oakeshott as a Liberal Theorist', *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 17:4 (1985), 781.
[102] The idea of 'presentness' is discussed at length in Elizabeth Corey, *Michael Oakeshott on Religion Ascetics and Politics* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press), 65-72.

comprehend the past (or not) in relation to the future. Oakeshott discourages us from this temptation to read the past for the future. The historical past is a reflection from the present that has no bearing on it, while, as in Altdorfer's *Alexanderschlacht*, Koselleck claims that the past simultaneously contains the present and future. In the political, though, the present is to look towards the future, but it is not to forget the past for practical use. Both thinkers eschew efforts to restart time. As 'experience' or 'traditions of behaviour', the past should not be divorced from present-future expectations. This separation is the danger posed by modern temporalised concepts of movement or those employed in the timeless blueprints provided by the Rationalist use of ideology. As an alternative, we must choose a middle ground between the politics of faith and scepticism: not to hope for a future identical to the past, but one connected to it in its localised diversity. History runs across time and times intersect contingency in innumerable ways. A second theme is how we are to comprehend the relationships between past events or experience. Both encourage temporal pluralism, set out in different ways. Koselleck's approach presents a system of multiple and simultaneous layers of time, each of differing duration and movement that are understood using either repetitive structures or the transcendental categories of experience and expectation. These layers extend 'Janus-faced' towards the past and future. Oakeshott's preference is to see the past in different continuities of change. It is a whole world explained in myriad ways, told by identifying contingent relationships between events at their most incremental and local. Finally, the idea that Oakeshott's brand of contingency, thought of either historically as the continuity of historical change or politically as the pursuit of intimations based on contingent goings on, might permeate the political present as much as the historical past is the main take-away. In both the historical and practical modes, each with different temporal

orientations, the idea of contingency is Oakeshott's request for the recognition of time as continuous and uninfluenced by transcendental laws. Contingency does not denote luck, surprise or radical change. Nor does it invite it. It is a difference or new happening that folds in with the antecedent historical or traditional structures that precede it. His endorsement of the contingencies of the continuity of change may be taken as a forceful plea to maintain the continuity of historical time. To break wholesale with our past is folly bound to fail. By pushing back against this temptation, what Koselleck sees as the heart of the modern disposition, Oakeshott is engaging in discourse about the proper nature and meaning of time to our daily lives, and in doing so, he is asking several important questions for our own time: how are we to view our own existence within time and to what degree should temporality influence our political conduct.

Conclusion

> Time present and time past
> are both perhaps present in time future,
> and time future contained in time past.
> – T. S. Eliot[1]

In the autumn of 2001 Giovanna Borradori, a professor of philosophy at Vassar College in New York, held two separate dialogues between her and two eminent European philosophers. One was Jacques Derrida, the other Jürgen Habermas. By the time these exchanges took place—with Derrida in October and Habermas in December of that year—the topic of each conversation became 9/11, an event that they all felt philosophy could not ignore. The dialogues appeared in book form in 2003, alongside essays by Borradori spelling out how philosophy might engage in the political discourse about terrorism. 9/11 also spoke to philosophy given 'the unique position in which philosophy finds itself in the face of a single historical event of worldwide significance'.[2] The conversations are rich in their reflections on the origins of terrorism, how we might come to understand the events of 9/11 and how to respond intellectually and politically.

Brought to another level, though, aside from the topic of terrorism and 9/11, these discussions are about philosophy and history, and to what extent philosophy has or should have something to say about it. Both philosophers approached the events of 9/11 as a historical event, a collective singular, though each in a different philosophical way: Habermas from the perspective of critical theory, Derrida by way of deconstruction. Given his emphasis on language, Derrida's remarks are the closer of the two to this project. He rightly queries how we identify 'the event' or an event as a 'major event'. But how do we employ language to describe them as such? He relates this to the idea of event (*Ereignis*) in Heidegger, but even more so to the issue of the expropriation of the event, for which

[1] TS Eliot, 'Burnt Norton', in *Four Quartets* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001).
[2] Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 2.

Heidegger has his own term – *Enteignis*. It suggests that meaning most often comes from political and cultural injunctions, even if someone is still in the process of coming to terms with it themselves.[3] Labels are often forced upon us, explicitly or implicitly.

The role of ideology lenses is clear here, even if Derrida does not use the term. If he did, it would likely have been unkind to ideology. But as analysts of ideology, we must always keep in mind that these lenses are often beneficial. Or at least they are necessary. How can we see politically without them?

In the dialogues, Derrida and Habermas both go on to consider the meaning of 9/11 by way of temporalising the event and the subsequent 'present situation' it created in philosophy. They relate it to the broader history of globalisation and even more so to Enlightenment thought and to other events in history that have challenged it before.[4] What does 9/11 mean in the company of World War I, colonialism and the Cold War? Does it belong there? Does it belong there still? Ideologies help us answer these questions, but philosophy too can reassess its foundations in light of history – whether its foundations are in history or considered to float above it.

Derrida and Habermas are both careful not to draw firm conclusions, especially given the proximity to the event. But nonetheless both frame the terrorist attacks as a rejection of the Enlightenment, and its embrace of toleration, rights, secularism and democracy. Derrida also worried about the permanency of the 'terror alert' that had beset America – and still does. He also worried that the reoccurring media footage of the attacks was altering our expectations for the future. Within weeks of the event he felt that there was already a sense that terrorism was now part of life.[5]

[3] Derrida, in Borradori, *Dialogues*, 94.
[4] See Tom Rockmore ed., *Before and After 9/11: A Philosophical Examination of Globalization, Terror, and History* (London: Continuum Books, 2011).
[5] Borradori, *Dialogues*, 21.

For the West it also served as a reminder of the vulnerability of civilization, and in Derrida's case especially, of its misdeeds.[6] True to his longstanding intellectual project, Habermas suggests we can still attempt to ameliorate the divisions that underlie terrorism and extremism through better communication and exchange. Meanwhile Derrida went ahead to fold the event into a broader narrative of crisis in the West that predates 9/11 by decades.

Reading these exchanges from the perspective of years later, it is striking how quickly intellectuals thought of 9/11 in relation to modernity.[7] Is fundamentalism an exclusively modern problem? Habermas suggests it is.[8] Did the 'twin towers' and the Pentagon represent modernity? Given their symbolisation of technology, liberal capitalism and liberal democracy, many said yes.[9] America was and remains a common symbolisation of it.[10] Is 9/11 modernity's fault? America's fault? Many were quick to make these arguments as well, usually consistent with their pre-existing ideological lenses which remained firmly in place.[11]

But for many, associating 9/11 with modernity did not result directly from an analysis of the 21st century event; rather it flowed from the Cold War language (and mentality) that it resurrected. This is a further corroboration of Koselleck's thesis on the layered times internal to concepts; for Cold War concepts were the language most readily available.

Koselleck's own views on modernity were of course a consequence of this Cold War milieu. He likely recognised much of the language around 9/11.[12] He too explained a conflict that he thought was waged on the level of ideology—a view also expropriated to help comprehend the meaning of 9/11—by gazing back at the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment

[6] Habermas, in Borradori, *Dialogues*, 27.
[7] On the contested meaning of modernity see Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 1983); and Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, Frederick Lawrence trans. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987).
[8] Habermas, in Borradori, 30-33.
[9] For instance, see Michael Kimaid, *Modernity, Metatheory, and the Temporal-Spatial Divide: From Mythos to Techne* (London: Routledge, 2015), 123-168.
[10] Derrida, in Borradori, *Dialogues*, 92.
[11] The most popular, and predictable example of this is Noam Chomsky, *Power and Terror: Conversations with Noam Chomsky on the Post 9/11 World* (London: Penguin Books, 2006).
[12] Koselleck died in 2006.

marked a temporalisation of history (*Verzeitlichung*) that ran up to his present historical situation. By contrast, though, many considered 9/11 a reopening of history; or what Robert Kagan called in a book title, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams*.[13]

Indeed 9/11 quickly became a bookend for periodisation. It was fed into concepts in the mould of *Neue Zeut*, *Neuziet*, modernity, postmodernity, pre-modern and post-modern, the end or return of history. All are categories of the temporalisation of history. But this is not classification for its own sake: it assigns meaning to historical time for practical purposes.

In his book *The Politics of Time* Peter Osborne notes that while Aristotle strove to comprehend time through change, it is also plausible to try and explain change through conceptions of time. In his book, concerned solely with continental philosophy, he notes that each of the common historical categorisations employed in philosophical debates, categorisations in which the above are common iterations, offer different ways of temporalising history—not simply periodising it—in order to form at 'totalising view' that he thinks is unavoidably political. What makes them political, for Osborne, is that they take 'the temporal structures of social practices as the specific object of [their] transformative or (preservative) intent'.[14] Osborne's argument, and one not far from Koselleck's, is that within contemporary philosophy there is a struggle between different totalisations of history.[15] In the face of totalisation tendencies, Osborne extolls plurality, as does Koselleck.

While Osborne does not discuss Koselleck's work to a great extent, it would be easy to situate Koselleck within this politics of time.[16] Koselleck, after all, had much to say about philosophies of history. Interestingly, given that he cites Koselleck numerous times, Osborne declines to engage with him on this, especially in terms of Koselleck's efforts to formulise a *Historik* that would have added valuable ammunition to Osborne's pluralist conclusions. Still,

[13] Robert Kagan, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams* (New York: Atlantic Books, 2009).
[14] Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and the Avant-Garde* (London: Verso: 1995), xii.
[15] Osborne, *Politics of Time*, 116.
[16] On his discussion of Koselleck, see Osborne, *Politics of Time*, 9-12, 132-133.

omitting Koselleck is perhaps understandable given Osborne's more philosophical bent. Nevertheless, similar to the thinkers Osborne does engage with—Heidegger, Marx, Benjamin, Lefebvre, among others—Koselleck's own theory on the temporalisation of history, represented in the transitional concept of *Sattelzeit*, is also tied to a theory of modernity as a *Neuzeit*. In *Kritik und Krise*, *Begriffsgeschichte*, and his *Historik* he is engaging with the politics of time in opposition to the modern proclivity to offer singularised philosophies of history, though he is not rejecting modernity itself. Thus, the inclusion of his ideas, in his case from the discipline of history not continental philosophy, would be fruitful.

But although the titles are similar, this thesis took a different direction to Osborne's, and also respective to Koselleck's work. My argument is that Koselleck's own engagement with the politics of time, in Osborne's sense, is secondary to the contribution he makes to political theory via his broad theorising on the semantics of historical time. The sub-field of theorising political activity, in which the field of ideology studies is firmly established, has far more to gain from his insights on contingency, horizons and movement than it does from a theory of modernity, even though we cannot understand Koselleck's work without it. His historical theory has wide purchase beyond the politics surrounding the modernity debate. The main reason for Koselleck's lasting relevance to studying politics is thanks to his effort to theorise how we come to understand the experience of past futures (*Vergangene Zukunft*); that is, the historicity, 'bound up with social and political actions, with concretely acting and suffering human beings and their institutions and organisations', to repeat a quote used in the introduction.[17] The answer lies in language. And as I explain at various points in the thesis, Koselleck is always looking at the semantics of historical time from these two levels – one on the level of historiography, the other on the level of historical experience. But in reality Koselleck's findings and observations permeate both the historiographical and ontological

[17] Reinhart Koselleck, Vergangene Zukunft: *Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1979), 9.

levels, given the connections between history, language and experience – both *in actu* and *ex post*.

The tendency in the field of ideology studies is still to focus on examining political thought 'in time'. At a minimum, by looking at Koselleck's work typologically and comparatively, it is my hope that the thesis sparks a wider effort to look more closely at the politics 'of time', whilst maintaining a focus on doing so at the level of concepts. It is my belief that through studying the range of temporal and temporalised concepts within the semantic field of ideologies, along with the wider set of temporal indicators attached to political concepts, we can begin to categorise the language behind different modes of politicking time. This is a future undertaking. But in the meantime, it is my hope that identifying a set of temporal *topoi*—and a set easily expanded—can bring this about, enriching the study of temporality beyond simply looking at indicators of past and future, memory and utopias. To help us look deeper, Koselleck left us with a much larger set of conceptual dualities rich in their potential for further elaboration – in the dynamics between language and structure, the synchronic and diachronic; the linguistic and extra-linguistic; linguistic indicators and factors; experience and expectation; things internal and external; the synchronous and nonsynchronous. To these Koselleck also provides us with his notions of the layering of times (*Zeitschichten*) and the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous (*die Gleichzeitigkeit der Ungleichzeitigen*), both of which theorists can rework to thematise the contestations and surpluses of temporal meanings that add diachronic emphasis to the semantics of politics in time and space.

Time as *Chronos* always contains Kairotic potential.

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