



# STYLES OF POLITICAL THEORIZING: EXPLORING CONCEPTS AND RHETORICAL PRACTICES IN HISTORY

Symposium  
Finnish Institute  
Athens, 19-20.2.2009

Organised by:

**The Finnish Centre of Excellence in Political Thought and  
Conceptual Change, University of Jyväskylä**

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Hosted by:

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Conceptual history made a breakthrough in Finland in the 1990's. Today, many alumni are acquainted with the classics, including Reinhart Koselleck's work and the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* in general, Quentin Skinner's *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, more recently also Pierre Rosanvallon's trilogy on the history of suffrage, democracy and representation. Several Finnish scholars are writing some kind of history of concepts and not by accident does the country feature a specialised peer-reviewed journal called *Re-descriptions. Yearbook of Political Thought and Conceptual History*.

In Greece, however, the reception of conceptual history has not been as fervent. Like in many other cases, the search of concepts in the past has, if at all, mainly appealed to historians and left scholars of contemporary politics largely indifferent towards its goals. This

Symposium aims to reopen the methodological reflection on conceptual history in Greece. Therefore, one of its guiding axioms is to look at the historical context, in which ideas emerged, in order to break the myth that their meaning has remained unchanged, regardless of specific political, social and linguistic constellations. In other words, conceptual history 'historicizes' the meaning of ideas and vitiates the theory that they are eternal. Our second axiom is to stress that exploring the history of concepts offers a way to better understand and decode their contemporary usage. To clarify, the study of the rhetoric construction of concepts enriches our horizon of interpretation and ultimately helps us explore alternative possibilities of analysing contemporary problems. Indeed, the relevance of 'old' concepts for new debates lies at the core of this symposium, as does the focus on political language for doing political theory.

Rhetoric is, of course, a discipline with its roots in the ancient Greece and still lively practised among the contemporary Greek scholars in different disciplines. As a response to the scientific fashion of the post-war decades, a kind of rhetorical turn rose at the Finnish academia in the late 1980s, first in a rather narrow "methodological" sense of interpreting the work of Chaïm Perelman and others. Due to Quentin Skinner's *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* a more historical and political understanding has risen, for example in the sense of research projects on the parliamentary style of politics. With the work of Skinner also the divide between rhetoric and conceptual history has now become relativised and, correspondingly, new research practices, such as doing conceptual history with parliamentary sources, have been launched.

The Greek-Finnish collaboration has been established since almost a decade ago, when scholars from the two countries started forming a network of academic collaboration and mutual reflection on the history of concepts, rhetoric and political thought. The idea to cooperate rose at the ECPR Workshop in Copenhagen in 2000 and was followed by a four-day VAKAVA doctoral course at the Finnish Institute in Athens 2002. In the ensuing years, the exchange of researchers and lecturers between the two countries has intensified at all levels doctoral, post-doctoral, and Professor's. Yet, the great success of past meetings is to be complemented by seeking a more systematic sharing of ideas and a closer collaboration. We organised this Symposium to respond to this necessity and to provide an opportunity for reactivating old links and creating new ones.

### **Guidelines for doctoral and post-doctoral scholars**

Papers must be presented in English. We are able to take no more than 7 doctoral and postdoctoral students papers. Please send a short abstract of the paper to be presented no later than December 1, 2008

to Kari Palonen, [kpalonen@jyu.fi](mailto:kpalonen@jyu.fi) and Anthoula Malkopoulou, [anmalkop@jyu.fi](mailto:anmalkop@jyu.fi) . Each doctoral student should send the paper one week in advance (that is February 12, 2009) to the course participants and have a short oral presentation of max. 15 minutes in order to have enough time for the discussion. One of the senior scholars present will be chosen later to serve as the first commentator of each of the doctoral student's paper.

## **Programme:**

**Thursday, 19.2.2009, 9.30 – 18:00**

### **"Styles of rhetoric and trends in the history of concepts"**

9.30 Welcome of the Institute

Mr. Martti Leiwo, Director, Finnish Institute in Athens

Opening Remarks and Program

Prof. Kari Palonen & MA Anthoula Malkopoulou (Jyväskylä)

9.45 Lecture by Prof. Paschalis Kitromilides (National Hellenic Research Foundation) (*Title TBA*)

10.45 Coffee break

Chair: Prof. Kari Palonen (Jyväskylä)

11:00 Lecture by Prof. Pantelis Bassakos (Panteion)

*'Style and politics in Aristotle's Art of Rhetoric'*

12:00 Lecture by Dr. Vassilis Voutsakis, (Athens)

*'The specificity of legal argumentation'*

13:00 Lunch break

Chair: Prof. Pantelis Bassakos (Panteion)

14:30 Paper by MA Anna Kronlund (Jyväskylä)

*"State of exception" debates in the context of the United States'*

Commented by Prof. Grigoris Ananiadis (Panteion)

15.15 Paper by MA Anthoula Malkopoulou (Jyväskylä / Brussels)

*'Conflicting perspectives on the right to vote'*

Commented by Dr. Vassilis Voutsakis (Athens)

16.00 Coffee break

16:15 Paper by Dr. Georgios Karampelas (Panteion)

*'Modernity, or the Rhetorical Domain: Remarks on Fredric Jameson'*  
Commented by Prof. Kari Palonen (Jyväskylä)

17.00 Lecture by Prof. Kari Palonen (Jyväskylä)  
*'Making Sense of the Parliamentary Jargon'*

19:30 Dinner

**Friday, 20.2.2009, 9.00 – 18:00**

**"Concepts and Rhetoric in International Relations"**

Chair: Anthoula Malkopoulou (Jyväskylä)

9.15 Lecture by Prof. Sia Spiliopoulou-Åkermark (Åland Islands Peace Institute)  
*'Shifts in the multiple justifications of minority protection'*  
Commented by Prof. Dimitris Christopoulos (Panteion)

10.15 Coffee Break

10.30 Lecture by Prof. Dimitris Chrysochoou (Crete)  
*'The European Synarchy'*

11.30 Paper by Dr. Eira Juntti (Jyväskylä)  
*'Studying the concept 'man' in Finnish'*

12.15 Paper by Dr. Evgeny Roshchin (Jyväskylä)  
*"The Concept of Friendship in Jus Belli, Jus Gentium and Jus Naturae"*  
Commented by Prof. Kostas Lavdas (Crete / Tufts)

13.00 Lunch break

Chair: Christos Lyrintzis (Athens)

14.30 Lecture by Prof. Kostas Lavdas (Crete / Tufts)  
*"Norms and cooperation in international relations: Lessons from EU politics"*

15.30 Coffee break

15.45 Paper by Dr. Paul-Erik Korvela (Jyväskylä)  
*"Concepts as Ontological blinders in IR"*  
Commented by Prof. Dimitris Chrysochoou (Crete)

16:30 Lecture by Prof. Tuija Parvikko (Jyväskylä)  
*"Reading Totalitarianism Ironically with Arendt"*

17.30 Conclusions & Discussion of future plans