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Edited by Ruth Wodak and Bernhard Forchtner

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*Edited by
Ruth Wodak and Bernhard Forchtner*

First published 2018
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Wodak, Ruth, 1950–editor. | Forchtner, Bernhard.
Title: The Routledge handbook of language and politics/edited by Ruth Wodak and Bernhard Forchtner.
Description: Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, [2017] |
Series: Routledge Handbooks in Linguistics | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2016056494 | ISBN 9781138779167 (hardback) | ISBN 9781315183718 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Language and languages—Political aspects.
Classification: LCC P119.3 .R68 2017 | DDC 306.44—dc23
LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2016056494>

ISBN: 978-1-138-77916-7 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-18371-8 (ebk)

Typeset in Times
by Saxon Graphics Ltd, Derby

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Fascism in Talk and Text (Routledge, 2013, co-edited with Ruth Wodak) and *Cultures of Post-War British Fascism* (Routledge, 2015, co-edited with Nigel Copsey); and academic articles on Critical Discourse Studies, newspaper representations of Muslims, balance and impartiality in BBC reporting of Israel/Palestine, argumentation in readers' letters, political communications and party political leaflets. He is currently writing a book offering a Discourse Historical Analysis of British fascist discourse (2017, ibidem-Verlag) and researching the commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day in Britain. He is Editor of the international peer-reviewed journal *Critical Discourse Studies* and is on the editorial boards of various journals.

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Introducing the language–politics nexus

Ruth Wodak and Bernhard Forchtner

Sketching out a long history

Given the significance of actual language use, and meaning-making more generally, in politics since at least the rise of rhetoric in Ancient Greece, and the ever more discursive nature of late modern politics in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Politics* contributes a single-volume reference work to this field. More specifically, this handbook adds to existing scholarship by providing a comprehensive overview of influential theoretical approaches, as well as common methodologies, classic genres and contributions on salient, socio-cultural challenges.¹

In this introduction, we situate the 45 contributions to this volume both historically, that is, in a wider context of how language use has been viewed in relation to politics, and theoretically, that is, pointing to perspectives when approaching the language–politics nexus. We close with an overview of the various contributions to this volume.

Research in the field of language and politics has expanded enormously in recent years (for example, Cap & Okulska 2013; Fairclough & Fairclough 2012; Wodak 2011; Wodak & de Cillia 2006; Chilton 2004). From a Western point of view, the significance of skilful, persuasive language use is, of course, connected to rhetoric in Ancient Greece. Starting with councils as advisory bodies and, ultimately, the emergence of democracy in Athens, the art of persuasion (rhetoric) became an increasingly necessary prerequisite for successful participation in public life (Murphy et al. 2013; Fuhrmann 2011). This significance of actual language use for politics is visible, for example, in Aristotle's *Politics* (for an overview of thoughts on the co-evolution of language and politics, see Chilton 2004, pp. 16–19; for the following, see also Chilton, 2004, p. 5). The treatise is concerned with the polis, the political community and its best constitution; in a well-known passage, Aristotle addresses man as a 'political animal', stating that it is clear why:

man is a political animal in a greater measure than any bee or any gregarious animal [...]. For nature, as we declare, does nothing without purpose; and man alone of the animals possesses speech. The mere voice, it is true, can indicate pain and pleasure,

and therefore is possessed by the other animals as well [...], but speech is designed to indicate the advantageous and the harmful, and therefore also the right and the wrong [...]

(Aristotle 1944, 1253a)

This quote captures our attention due to its emphasis on ‘speech’ in the process of sharing viewpoints. And even though today’s understanding of politics is not limited to Aristotle’s concern for households and city states, the importance of speech, and here, we include other modes of meaning-making, such as writing, visuals, music etc., in politics has hardly diminished. Indeed, rhetoric has evolved in manifold ways throughout subsequent centuries until today.

With the development of mass communication in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, interest in language use, in communication and its effects, entered a new stage. Seminal texts were stimulated by the (perceived) effectiveness of mass media and propaganda at the beginning of the twentieth century in ‘the manufacture of consent’ (Lippmann 1998 [1922], p. 248) and include, besides Walter Lippmann’s and John Dewey’s (1927) work, for example, Harold Lasswell’s *Propaganda techniques in the World War* (1927). Important research was, furthermore, conducted by Jewish refugees in the United States, such as Paul Lazarsfeld in the context of the *Office of Radio Research* and later the *Bureau of Applied Social Research*. After the Second World War, Lasswell and Nathan Leites (1949) published one of the most important studies on quantitative semantics in the field of language and politics, developing approaches from communication and mass media research. Another tradition characterised by a more qualitative orientation is that proposed by members of the Frankfurt School, such as Theodor W. Adorno (Adorno et al. 1950) and Leo Löwenthal (Löwenthal & Guterman 1949).

Influenced by the use of propagandistic language during the Second World War and in the emerging Cold War era, research on the intricate links between language and politics (re-)emerged throughout Europe. Here, the dystopian novel *1984* by George Orwell (2008 [1949]) was a significant point of departure for the development of an entire new field. In Germany, critical linguistic research into the interdependence of language and politics during National Socialism was primarily conducted by Victor Klemperer (1947) and by Rolf Sternberger, Gerhard Storz and Wilhelm Emanuel Süskind (1957). Klemperer as well as Sternberger, Storz and Süskind sampled, categorised and described the words used during the Nazi regime: many words had acquired new meanings, other words were forbidden (words borrowed from other languages, such as *cigarette*), and neologisms (new words) were created; similar language policies were adopted by former communist totalitarian regimes (Wodak & Kirsch 1995). Controlling language in this way implies an attempt to control (the thinking and practices of) people.

A similar focus characterised the development of French discourse analysis in the 1960s and 1970s, that is, the work carried out by Michel Pêcheux on automated discourse analysis (for example, Pêcheux 1995). Here, language use was analysed in order to uncover deeper, ideological meanings. This interest in language was part of a wider shift towards recognising its significance in the 1960s (albeit with its roots in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries). Among others, language plays an important role in Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann’s *The social construction of reality* (1991 [1966]), as well as, although in a different manner, by focusing on discourse in post-structural approaches most prominently represented by Michel Foucault.

From 1990 onwards, research on *political discourse* expanded further (for example, Wilson 1990). Studies were conducted on communication within political organisations (for

example, European Union committees and decision-making processes, Krzyżanowski & Oberhuber 2007; Muntigl, Weiss & Wodak 2000; the United Nations, Holzschleiter 2010; the European Parliament, Wodak 2011), as well as on the unique (charismatic) style of politicians (for example, Tony Blair, Fairclough 2000; Jörg Haider, Wodak & Pelinka 2002; US senators, Duranti 2006), on political speeches and the politics of the past (for example, Austerlühl 2014; Heer et al. 2008; Charteris-Black 2004; Ensink & Sauer 2003; Martin & Wodak 2003), on right-wing political and fascist rhetoric (Richardson 2017; Wodak 2016, 2015; Wodak et al. 2013), on legitimation and persuasion (for example, Cap 2010; Chouliaraki 2006; van Dijk 2006; van Leeuwen 1996), and on interviews with politicians in the media (for example, Tolson & Ekström 2013).

Against the background of this diverse research, Armin Burkhardt, among others, proposed a typology by emphasising the use of:

“political communication” as a generic term comprising all types of public, institutional and private talks on political issues, that is, all types of texts and genres typical of politics and political action, as well as the use of lexical and stylistic linguistic instruments characterizing text and talk about political contexts.

(Burkhardt 1996, p. 5)

While attempting to transcend purely hermeneutic or philological approaches to text and talk, he lists four different procedures as particularly promising methods and techniques to be used for ‘ideological reconstruction’: *lexical-semantic techniques* (analysis of catchwords and value words, of euphemisms, and of ideological polysemy); *sentence and text-semantic procedures* (analysis of tropes, of semantic isotopes, and of inclusion and exclusion strategies); *pragmatic text-linguistic techniques* (analysis of forms of address, speech acts, allusions, presuppositions, argumentation, rhetoric, quotations, genres and intertextuality); and finally, *semiotic techniques* (icon, symbol and semiotic analysis). These distinctions have recently been taken up and further elaborated by German-speaking scholars (for example, Reisigl 2008, 2007) – but however these categories are defined, language use is intrinsically linked to them, and to what we label ‘doing politics’ (Wodak 2011).

Understanding politics

Mentioning Burkhardt furthermore raises the question of what constitutes ‘political issues’? For Burkhardt, political communication is concerned with all types of public, institutional and private talk about political issues; thus, the topics are clearly marked as dealing with official political agendas. But as feminists have long argued, the boundaries between the private and the public, what is traditionally viewed as the sphere of the political, are shifting. Subsequently, and in light of both the plurality of theories in general and the wide range of perspectives held by contributors to this volume in particular, this handbook abstains from offering one stable, single definition or understanding of ‘politics’ and ‘political issues’.

One such understanding could refer to individuals coming together in order to take decisions, and this is famously illustrated by Hannah Arendt’s work in which political power is perceived as the result of acting in concert, that is, of actors coming together in order to achieve a certain purpose. Political power is thus based on consent and rational exchange, and not on coercion. As Arendt (1972, p. 151) notes, ‘[p]ower springs up

whenever people get together and act in concert’ – and it is in such a realisation of potential, coming together and deliberating, that power (that is, political power) can be considered to be legitimate; it is reproduced as such through constant deliberation.

Although within a different framework, Jürgen Habermas’ (1979, p. 9) model of communicative action and discourse ethics radicalises this approach to the extent that understanding and co-operation are rooted in ‘*the intuitive knowledge of competent subjects*’. Consequently, procedures should warrant a deliberative exchange of arguments and the ability to discuss one’s interests in light of norms that are acceptable to all those involved and affected (Habermas 2002, 1997). The deliberative model is thus one in which legitimate power is exercised collectively – and decisions that affect a group must be based on more or less free and equal exchange between individuals.

Such a conception does not deny conflict and disagreement – indeed, it is based on the very fact that disagreements exist, although framed by an orientation towards understanding and agreement. A sharp foregrounding of the conflictual dimension of politics (and beyond) is highlighted in Marxist-inspired approaches that stress class antagonism as the driving force of political developments. Here, politics is not – at least not in a classic understanding – viewed as an autonomous field, but ultimately tied to economic relations. Expanding and going beyond this view, Pierre Bourdieu argues that:

[...] politics is a struggle to impose the legitimate principle of vision and division, in other words, the one that is dominated and recognized as deserving to dominate, that is to say, charged with symbolic violence.

(Bourdieu 2005, p. 39)

Such a focus on conflict and struggle, on attaining hegemony, is most strongly associated with post-foundational approaches such as those from Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (Mouffe 1999; Laclau 1994; Laclau & Mouffe 1985), who view politics as a matter of exclusion and decision, as that type of action which aims, ultimately, to implement one single perspective as hegemonic. Here, politics concerns the fixing of meaning, of social relations, in a context of radical contingency. Mouffe (1999) links such an understanding to the distinction between *politics* and *the political*. The latter refers to the ontological level, where antagonism is viewed as a principle characterising human relations. *Politics*, in contrast, concerns actual party programmes, institutions, and so on – the ontic level – and ‘indicates the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions which seek to establish a certain order’ (ibid., p. 754). In Mouffe’s (ibid.) agonistic model of democracy, politics ‘consists in domesticating hostility and [...] trying to defuse the potential antagonism that exists in human relations’ by turning enemies into adversaries on the basis of shared principles of liberal democracy, liberty and equality, in turn, on the basis of a basic consensus.

Vis-à-vis the aforementioned, we have not adopted an understanding of politics being either restricted to the sphere of government and policy, elections and so forth, or a specific theoretical tradition. As such, politics here is broadly viewed as being ubiquitous, as being about the ordering of social relations in both public and private life. Making something ‘political’ (or aiming to do so) thus concerns changing social relations, that is, negotiation and struggle over the distribution and use of power and resources. Indeed, where there is power, there is politics, as Colin Hay (2002, p. 3) maintains.

David Held and Andrew Leftwich offer a similarly broad working definition of politics, defining the latter as:

a phenomenon found in and between all groups, institutions (formal and informal) and societies, cutting across public and private life. It is involved in all the relations, institutions and structures which are implicated in the activities of production and reproduction in the life of societies. It is expressed in all the activities of co-operation, negotiation and struggle over the use, production and distribution of resources which this entails. [...] Thus politics is about power; about the forces which influence and reflect its distribution and use; and about the effect of this on resource use and distribution; it is about the 'transformative capacity' of social agents, agencies and institutions: it is not about Government or government alone.

(Held & Leftwich 1988, p. 144)

By thus going beyond a focus on government, orienting instead towards scarcity and diversity, towards the negotiation of interests, we view politics as being concerned with conflict and co-operation, as being the kind of human activity that revolves around dealing with diverging interests (differences in opinion, over scarce resources, etc.). This can result in either *imposing* a particular perspective, which is subsequently recognised as 'legitimate' by others, or reaching a collectively binding understanding of what to do through means of *deliberation*. Both perspectives, however, concern formal and informal practices that address a demarcation between the public and the private, a debate about the definition of what is (or might be) a legitimate (public) topic, the use and distribution of resources, and an attempt to affect the balance of forces within political institutions, such as the state, but also beyond them, and within different groups involved in these activities.

Language and politics – an interdisciplinary endeavour

Currently, language and politics are being studied from the perspectives of a number of disciplines, including political science, journalism and communication studies, sociology, law, economics and management studies, linguistics, psychology, philosophy and education. Each of these fields and approaches tends to presuppose certain sets of theoretical and methodological points of departure, which may not always be compatible with or easily comparable to others. However, there seems to be a consensus among most scholars that research on political communication generally requires some kind of inter- or transdisciplinary approach.

Clearly, this follows from the aforementioned: if every social process is potentially political – one concerned with the distribution of power, with power relations – then economic and social processes, for example, are part of this scope of understanding, to the extent that they affect these relations (Hay 2002, p. 4). A perspective that is thus able to capture the economic, the bodily, natural life, and so on, is therefore needed – be it called inter-, post- or transdisciplinary.

When analysing political communication and, more specifically, political 'spin', Brian McNair (2004) points to *source-centred approaches* to political communication (if they focus on politicians' strategic actions as information sources). Moreover, we can also distinguish *message/discourse-centred* approaches (if the focus is on the linguistic analysis of language use in the manifold genres of political text, talk and images), the mediatisation of politics (if mainly interested in the practices of media professionals as transmitters of political information), or *reception-centred* approaches (focusing on how citizens participate in political communication).

Scholars who adopt a source-centred approach focus on the communicative behaviour of powerful groups and individuals in society: rulers, political elites. For example, McNair (2003, p. xv) emphasises how the actions of politicians and journalists influence media content and focuses ‘on the nature of the interface between politicians and the media, the extent of their interaction, and the dialectic of their relationship’. Many studies, moreover, illustrate how politicians use numerous strategies and techniques to *attract public attention*, present themselves in a positive light and their adversaries in a negative one, convince audiences to support certain policy programmes, and so forth. These activities are labelled in manifold ways, such as political public relations, strategic communication, political propaganda, political media management, political marketing (Henneberg et al. 2009), political (or party) branding, ‘spin’ or ‘spin-doctoring’ (Hood 2011), image-making and mass self-communication (Castells 2009), and so forth.

Furthermore, we can observe an increase in the ‘*mediatisation of politics*’ – a process by which politics (and society in general) becomes more and more dependent on the media (Strömbäck 2008); this contributes to the increasing professionalisation of political communication. Importantly, public office-holders’ communication seems to be influenced by their preoccupation with individual blame avoidance (Hansson 2015), a perceived risk of mediated scandal (Allern & Pollak 2012) and constant concern with their organisational reputation (Carpenter & Krause 2012). More specifically, scholars working within *Discourse Studies* (Angermüller et al. 2014) and *Critical Discourse Studies* (Flowerdew & Richardson 2017; Hart & Cap 2014; Wodak & Meyer 2015) have developed innovative tools for systematic and detailed analyses of political text and talk. This *discourse-centred* research includes, among other topics:

- Studies of political metaphor and discursive framing in persuasive political text and talk.
- Cognitive and evolutionary linguistic analyses of political discourse, with a focus on expressions of spatial, temporal and modal dimensions.
- Corpus-assisted and qualitative research on political parties and/or politicians.
- Studies of rhetoric and argumentation in parliamentary debates, speeches, committees, and government reports.

In sum, we would like to emphasise that understanding politics, the procedures of decision-making, conflict and conflict resolution are not only of theoretical interest as an interdisciplinary endeavour; analysing, understanding and explaining the dynamics of everyday politics on the frontstage and backstage are also of eminent relevance in practice. As politics is increasingly perceived as an elitist endeavour, with participation by citizens often seen as lacking, this volume also hopes to contribute to making politics more transparent.

Outline of *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Politics*

This volume is divided into five sections: *Theoretical approaches to language and politics*, *Methodological approaches to language and politics*, *Genres of political action* and two final sections containing studies on salient debates that utilise various theories and methods, thus offering a series of analyses of ‘language in/and politics’.

The first section on *Theoretical approaches to language and politics* outlines perspectives on how, on a fundamental, conceptual level, this nexus has been understood. This is not to suggest that approaches and theorists not presented in this section are not relevant, but developments sometimes beyond the editors’ remit have prevented the inclusion of further

chapters. In the first chapter, Sara Rubinelli reconstructs the development of rhetoric, the classic area in which language and politics have first met, by examining relevant authors from classical Greece to the beginning of modernity. This is followed by Bob Jessop's chapter on Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser, in which he introduces and compares their thoughts on language, ideology and politics, emphasising continuities as well as discontinuities, and assessing their contemporary relevance.

The third chapter by Simon Susen deals with Jürgen Habermas' attempt to locate the normative grounds of deliberative democracy in the rational foundations of language. Indeed, Susen maintains that Habermas's conception of democracy is inseparably linked to his conception of language. Although sceptical of the extent to which aspects of this deliberative model of democracy can be applied to large-scale societies, the chapter concludes by addressing a number of issues that arise when confronted with the task of assessing both the validity and the usefulness of Habermas's communication-theoretic account of democracy.

Reiner Keller's discussion of Michel Foucault's work introduces the latter's focus on the modern subject as being established through 'games of truth' and power/knowledge regimes, including discussions of key concepts, such as archaeology, genealogy, discursive formations, *dispositif*, bio-politics, governmentality, and analytics of power. In his chapter on Jacques Lacan, Yannis Stavrakakis reflects on the role of language in psychoanalytic theory, especially Lacan's original reworking of Saussurean linguistics, and thus Lacan's psychosocial conceptualisation of the *symbolic*, before examining how Lacan shifted his attention from language to *jouissance*. Christoffer Kølvråa discusses Ernesto Laclau's discourse theory and the emergence and dynamics of political hegemonies therein. After elaborating on a post-structuralist understanding of discourses and their dislocation, Kølvråa points to how affect and emotion function as core elements in political discourses struggling for hegemony.

Andrew Sayer introduces Pierre Bourdieu's tension-laden relationship with actual language use and discourse by discussing the main concepts through which Bourdieu interprets social practices (such as habitus, field, capital and symbolic power), and reconstructs the relevance of Bourdieu's work for understanding the interdependence of language and politics.

In Chapter 8, Jan Ifversen turns to conceptual history and its analysis of basic social concepts in their range of semantic relations. The history of concepts, he maintains, is interested in the emergence, stability and changes to concepts in different historical contexts. Indeed, concepts are viewed as indicators of specific historical changes. The final chapter in this section, by Bernhard Forchtner and Ruth Wodak, introduces Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), a heterogeneous framework that facilitates the analysis of meaning-making in relation to wider societal (power) structures. As CDS recontextualises various concepts from a range of social theories, which subsequently influence empirical analysis, this chapter is characterised by a certain overlap of theoretical and methodological foci and thus serves as a transition towards Section 2.

Methodological approaches to language and politics introduces a range of methods for analysing 'language and politics'. Instead of attempting to offer an overview of the greatest possible number of methods of data analysis, we have attempted to provide a useful overview of tools for the analysis of *semiosis*. The opening chapter of this second section is provided by Roberto Franzosi, who discusses content analysis. He traces the development of this quantitative method of text analysis and illustrates a novel approach – Quantitative Narrative Analysis – by investigating newspaper articles reporting lynchings in Georgia (1875–1930).

Chapter 11, by Amelie Kutter, reviews corpus analysis, that is, computer-aided statistical analysis of large samples of digitised texts. Kutter provides an overview of the tool-kit of corpus linguistics and illustrates this method by drawing on an analysis of crisis discourse in financial commentary.

Christopher Hart subsequently turns to cognitive linguistics and the significance of conceptual structures that are invoked by language, and the ideological potential of those conceptual structures, in communication contexts. He argues for a connection between cognitive linguistics and multimodal approaches, and illustrates his claims by analysing discourses on political protests. Chapter 13, by Jonathan Charteris-Black, is also concerned with cognition and introduces the reader to conceptual metaphor, looking at the use of the ‘competitive race’ metaphor in debates of the British parliament.

The next chapter, by Theo van Leeuwen, offers an overview of ways to analyse multimodal legitimation in discourse and highlights three types of legitimation – legitimation through authority, moral evaluation legitimation and rationalisation legitimation – which are exemplified by a plethora of examples. Anna De Fina introduces narrative analysis in much detail and emphasises its significance for the study of politics in Chapter 15. Among other things, De Fina discusses ‘master narratives’ and the narratives as an everyday, context-sensitive practice. She concludes her chapter with a brief discussion of video narratives posted by members of the ‘Dreamers’ as part of their campaign to push for migration reforms in the United States.

The subsequent chapter by Claudia Posch discusses rhetorical analysis by first looking at the interdependence of rhetoric and politics. She then presents a number of rhetorical devices and their functions for the interpretation of persuasive strategies in political language. Ruth Amossy subsequently elaborates the meaning of political argumentation in Chapter 17 before approaching argumentation in relation to discourse analysis. Amossy illustrates the ‘argumentation in discourse’ approach to political discourse via an analysis of a speech delivered by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the United Nations. Steven E. Clayman and Laura Loeb introduce the method of conversation analysis as an adequate approach to the detailed study of interaction in language and politics, including the characteristic forms of data that are employed and methods of analysis. This is illustrated by reference to exemplary work in the analysis of radio phone-in shows, political speeches and interviews.

In Chapter 19, Endre Dányi considers ethnography as an entry point to understand the connection between meaning-making and politics. The author illustrates a way of analysing a ‘politics beyond words’ by using the Hungarian parliament as a case in point and demonstrates how ethnography sheds light on the complex relationship between bodies, texts, symbolic objects, communication technologies and many other entities.

Section 3, *Genres of political action*, moves on to the description of a range of ways in which politics is performed. Cornelia Ilie’s opening chapter reconstructs the particular ratified practices underlying parliamentary debates, drawing on a series of examples. Here, Ilie illustrates the mechanisms of deliberation, adversariality and polarisation that underpin political negotiation and power struggles. Focusing on government communication, Sten Hansson provides suggestions as to how communication practices of executive government institutions can be conceptualised. Hansson supports his analysis with examples taken from an extract from a UK Cabinet Office news release, a controversial campaign by the UK Home Office and public policy consultation papers on education. Next, Mats Ekström and Göran Eriksson examine another relevant genre in and through which politics are publicly performed and negotiated: press conferences. More specifically, they introduce a

range of relevant aspects, from the history of the genre to press conferences as resources in news production and related practices of quoting and recontextualising political actions. Chapter 23, by Kristof Savski, describes the particularities of policy documents and laws. His analysis focuses on: first, the language of politics and laws; second, the analysis of policy genres in institutional contexts; third, the genesis of policy texts; and, fourth, the trajectory of policy meanings.

This is followed by Martin Reisigl's account of the genre of political commemoration. He argues that commemoration needs to be viewed as a multimodal process and event which serve the (trans)formation of political identities. Chapter 25, by Michael Higgins, examines the relationship between media and political language by deploying the concept of 'mediatisation', that is, of political discourse being ever more entwined with the logics and imperatives of the media. Higgins claims that the political use of language continues to evolve in parallel with ongoing developments in media technology and practice, and provides a range of examples.

Jennifer Sclafani, in Chapter 26, focuses on genres of political speeches, from town hall to inauguration, as *identity performances*. Drawing on interactional sociolinguistics, she illustrates how United States Senator Joni Ernst and Hillary Clinton use particular discourse strategies in various roles (as first lady, senator, secretary of state and presidential candidate) and in different contexts (town hall meetings, debates, campaign advertisements and speeches).

Helmut Gruber introduces genres of political communication in Web 2.0, presenting an activity-oriented genre conception that is adequate for describing and analysing dynamic multimodal interactions on social-media platforms. More specifically, he reviews the vast literature on: first, politician to citizen communication and, second, on citizen to citizen communication. David Machin investigates the particularities of the use of music in politics by looking at national anthems as a genre. He points to the affordances of sound and music in general, and how anthems in particular play an important part in legitimising and naturalising political ideologies.

Chapter 29, by Lina Klymenko, summarises research on the characteristics of billboards and party programmes as genres of political communication. She illustrates how these genres enabled political parties in the 2014 parliamentary election campaign in the Ukraine to approach voters concerning solutions to security and national unity issues. In Chapter 30, Randy Duncan similarly focuses on the visual by introducing caricatures and comics. He points to modes of simplification, techniques of exaggeration and sequencing in order to engage in political rhetoric, facilitating, for example, the undermining of authority. Jo Angouri and Lorenza Mondada close this section by approaching the genre of meetings in terms of social gatherings of small – as well as larger – groups of people for institutional and professional purposes. They discuss examples from political, business and multilingual meetings, while highlighting similarities and differences. The authors argue that this form of institutional talk promotes several important issues, the politics of meetings, such as the right to speak and to be listened to, of choices which lead to varying degrees of participation.

The final two sections illustrate applications of the aforementioned theories, methodologies and genres, pointing to particular links between language and politics. The first of these sections, entitled *Applications and cases I: language, politics and contemporary socio-cultural challenges*, includes eight chapters. Chapter 32, by Anabela Carvalho, addresses the perhaps most urgent challenge of our time: climate change. Here, Carvalho argues that responses to the issue have been increasingly privatised as techno-managerial approaches

have gained currency – though alternative voices do exist. Chapter 33, by Bernhard Weicht, deals with another topic often presented in apocalyptic terms: the construction of ‘the old and dependent’. His analysis stresses that becoming old is not to be understood as a continuous process; associations and symbols create a dichotomy of the young on one side, and an ageing population on the other. While drawing on an analysis of newspapers and focus groups from the UK and Austria, Weicht illustrates how the elderly are represented and how, consequently, the discursive constructions of ‘being old’ define and shape the possibilities of political action and struggle.

The next chapter, by Tanya Romaniuk and Susan Ehrlich, addresses language and gendered politics, that is, the distinctively masculine culture that continues to characterise politics. Following a review of the literature dealing with women in politics – and their representation – the authors analyse the different reception of laughter during the presidential primaries by Hillary Clinton in 2007, and close by arguing that women’s performances as politicians are still evaluated according to a dominant, cultural script steeped in masculine hegemony.

In Chapter 35, Tommaso M. Milani and Erez Levon argue for the queering of multilingualism and politics by focusing on the relationships between mobility, sexuality and citizenship, and the role played by multilingualism and multi-semioticity in mediating such relationships. They illustrate their approach via a detailed analysis of multilingual practices in Israel/Palestine.

The next chapter in this section is provided by Melissa L. Curtin who emphasises refined conceptualisations of globalisation, language and linguistic practices by discussing: first, the ‘language of globalisation’; second, ‘the globalisation of language’; and third, particular linguistic practices and ideologies situated in specific contexts. She concludes with an appeal for a ‘language and globalisation social-justice movement’, which should support positions of alter-globalisation. Chapter 37, by Ngai-Ling Sum, investigates the discourses and practices of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the context of global, neo-liberal capitalism. She first introduces cultural political economy as an approach to understand the interdependencies of language and politics, and then focuses on the rise of global production-retail chains, such as Wal-Mart and, third, on criticism of the latter’s practices. Sum, finally, argues that CSR operates in terms of a ‘new ethicalism’ which seeks to stabilize and enhance neo-liberalism.

Chapter 38, by Ruth Wodak and Bernhard Forchtner, investigates increasingly popular television programmes about backstage politics, such as the UK’s *Yes Minister*, Denmark’s *Borgen* and the US’ *The West Wing*. Here, information about politics is provided in an accessible, often simplified way, which appeals to viewers dissatisfied with conventional media-reporting. The authors discuss this development by focusing on two episodes of *Borgen* and *The West Wing* – pointing to differences and similarities between the two.

The final chapter in this section, by Teemu Taira, explores how the modern distinction between religion and the secular has become a contested discursive tool in modern societies. Taira presents two approaches to the study of religion and the secular, one which views the two as analytical concepts, the other one being interested in their actual use.

The final section on *Applications and cases II: language, politics and (de)mobilisation* also deals with challenges. Here, however, we focus on mobilisation and demobilisation – even though the boundaries between the contributions in this and the previous section remain blurred. The first chapter in this section, Chapter 40 by Matthew Flinders and Matt Wood, is arguably the most general in its concern for discursive depoliticisation and political disengagement. The authors propose a typology of three ‘logics of denial’ –

denial in relation to the past, present and future – and illustrate these logics by drawing on speeches from then leading Conservative politicians in the UK.

The next chapter, by Anton Pelinka, deals with identity politics, populism and the far right. The article offers a historical overview of far-right parties and their development since the nineteenth century, followed by a discussion of populism as a concept and its particular understanding of democracy. Pelinka, then, turns to inclusion and exclusion in far-right politics before reflecting, finally, on recent developments. The focus on mobilisation through exclusion is further specified in Chapter 42. Here, Dávid Kaposi and John E. Richardson examine race and racism, and the relations between social ideas, social stratification based on these ideas, and discourse. The chapter analyses, first, a rather clear-cut case of racism, before moving on to less conspicuous and more ambivalent examples, thereby also illustrating the value of close analysis when examining discourse on this topic.

David Block examines the materiality and *semiosis* of inequality, class struggle and warfare by discussing the case of home evictions in contemporary Spain. Exploring this case in closer detail, Block focuses on the struggle between two crucial actors, the conservative *Partido Popular* and the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (the latter being a grass-roots organisation which works on behalf of individuals and families who are threatened with eviction).

Chapter 44, by Andreas Musolff, discusses language use in totalitarian regimes and, in particular, the example of political discourse in Nazi Germany. Musolff arrives at a general characterisation of totalitarian language use as the construction of a strict demarcation between *us* and *them* in the context of latent state-terrorism, with the consequence of stigmatizing, isolating and possibly destroying the latter.

The final chapter in this section, and the Handbook, returns to the present and considers contemporary, discursive underpinnings of war and terrorism. Adam Hodges elaborates how forms of organised group violence are made acceptable or unacceptable, legitimate or illegitimate. More specifically, he analyses terrorism as a form of political communication and focuses the narrative construction of war and the properties of characters which populate these stories, while drawing, *inter alia*, on President George W. Bush's 'war on terror' narrative.

We hope that the focus of all these contributions on the role of language use – and meaning-making more generally – in political activities, offers innovative perspectives to readers who take the power of actual language use seriously for negotiation of the common good.

Note

- 1 For related volumes, see, for example, Semetko & Scammell 2012; Wodak & Koller 2008; Hellinger & Pauwels 2007; Gee & Handford 2012; Kaid 2004; Schiffrin et al. 2003; Shapiro 1984; O'Barr & O'Barr 1976.

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Part I

**Theoretical approaches to
language and politics**



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Rhetoric as a civic art from antiquity to the beginning of modernity

Sara Rubinelli

Introduction

Language is essential to politics as politics exercises its power of making decisions and influencing citizens through language. The ancient Greeks started a tradition of the study of language focused on this power of influencing civic life under the field of ‘rhetoric’.

When thinking about ‘rhetoric’ currently, we are often confronted with negative connotations. As the ‘intellectual art or study of persuasion’, intimately connected with oratory as ‘verbal communication with the intent to persuade’ (Worthington 1994, p. viii), rhetoric is often perceived as a field of study leading to the acquisition of skills to unethically deceive people. Within this connotation, rhetoric is also considered to be the study of how to support both sides of an argument and, thus, how to give credit to whatever is in the best interests of the speaker, regardless of its truth (Parker 1972).

If mastering the art of rhetoric can lead to the power to greatly harm people by unjustly using the strategies of language, Aristotle was keen to underline that, without knowledge of persuasion, it is not easy to convince an audience of good, constructive, or true ideas. Audiences will not be able to evaluate claims and standpoints in the correct way if such points are not presented and supported persuasively (Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* A 1, 1355a, pp. 20–23, Bodéüs 1992). This is why, despite the ‘dark side’ of rhetoric, the study of persuasion is a key source of empowerment for those citizens who have vital interests and core values to defend (Vickers 1989, preface and pp. 1–80). Rhetoric is a discipline of study that leads to personal growth and, in politics, it is a laboratory for developing democratic processes (Ober 1994; Lunsford et al. 2009, p. 290). Thus, since Greek antiquity, rhetoric has focused on what counts as an argument of quality, on how to recognise fallacious arguments and, overall, on how to use language in order to persuade people to act upon beneficial ideas (see, for instance, Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* B 23). To use concepts from the modern theory of argumentation, there was a tradition beginning in classical Greece concerned with the study of the relationship between reasonableness and effectiveness in argumentation (i.e. on the use of appropriate reasons to support a point of view while, at the same time, aiming for effectiveness) (van Eemeren 2010). Rhetoric developed as a discipline that deals with the

requirements and characteristics of persuasive discourse and, as such, flourished as a key discipline in the education system (Milanese 1989).

The objective of this chapter is to examine the development of rhetoric as the study of language in the context of politics from antiquity to the beginning of modernity. More specifically, it examines the way in which the principal classical authors dealt with rhetoric in light of its power ‘to cultivate citizens’ (Glenn & Carcasson 2010) in both thinking and speaking and, from there, to impact civic life.

Rhetoric in Ancient Greece

The Sophists and Isocrates

The rise of rhetoric as a discipline of study in Ancient Greece can be seen as a recognition of the importance of language in political society. Historically, the origin of the art of speaking is said to be found in the second quarter of the fifth century BC in the newly established democracy of Syracuse. Citizens’ effective participation in political debate required that there be an exchange of opinions to enable them to make good and wise decisions on issues of social interest (Kennedy 1963; Cole 1991). Skillful oratory played an instrumental role for power in Athenian society (Ober 1994); it was a precondition for political success as well as a form of self-defence.

With this in mind, it is not surprising that, in the second half of the fifth century BC, the teaching of persuasion became a key business, especially for the itinerant professional teachers known as the Sophists. The most famous of these teachers were Protagoras (490–420 BC), Gorgias (485–380 BC) and Prodicus (465–395 BC). The Sophists made rhetoric the core of their education programme as, in their view, the acquisition of rhetorical skills and of competence in using rhetorical devices was the best equipment for fulfilling any political ambition (Guthrie 1971; Kerferd 1981).

Protagoras stressed that every argument has two contradictory sides, both of which could well be argued. In his teaching, Gorgias specifically focused on how to lead souls (*psychagogia*) by using figures of speech and working on stylistic elements. He also focused on the so-called art of the propitious moment (*kairos*) as the ability to say the right thing at the right time. For this purpose, students were taught to memorise specific speeches that they could use at any time so they were always ready with an appropriate response (Rubinelli 2009, pp. 43–72).

The Sophists elevated rhetoric to an autonomous discipline, the study of which was essential for personal empowerment. However, rhetoric was taught as being detached from personal qualities such as justice, respect and honesty, and this evident limitation did not go unnoticed from an ethical point of view.

In the treatise *Against the Sophists*, Isocrates (436–338 BC) condemned the main principles behind the educational programme of the Sophists. He portrayed rhetoric as ‘that endowment of our human nature which raises us above mere animality and enables us to live the civilised life’ (Norlin 1928, p. ix). There is no absolute truth on which human beings can base their judgement; nevertheless, human beings can be reliable judges and so not entirely susceptible to manipulation through speech (Balla 2004). Through pioneering ideas that were most successful in the Roman rhetorical tradition, Isocrates conceived the ideal orator as a person not only skilful in the art of speaking, but also gifted in history, culture, science and, ultimately, morality. It was this notion that led to Isocrates being known today as the father of ‘liberal education’ (Corbett 1989; Benoit 1991).

Plato

Isocrates looked at rhetoric as a practical skill to be coupled with education. But, in the same period as Isocrates, this constructive idea of rhetoric was strongly rejected by Plato (436–338 BC) who, at an early stage in his career, condemned rhetoric as simply being the expression of a decline of values in society (Wardy 1996; Ryan 1979; Cole 1991). For Plato, a competence in rhetoric was all about appearing to know things and flattering the audience through skilful usage of the language. In *Gorgias* (464b–465d), Plato presented a remarkable analogy when comparing rhetoric and justice with cookery and medicine: medicine and justice aim towards the good, cookery and rhetoric aim towards pleasure. Thus, within the educational model presented in the *Republic*, rhetoric does not hold a position. For Plato, what is important to those individuals who will guide the city are disciplines including music, gymnastics, mathematics and dialectic (*Republic* 521d–541b).

Yet, Plato could not avoid admitting that oratory is an important component of human communication. Thus, later in his career, he reflected on whether there could be a way to think about rhetoric more constructively. In the second half of the *Phaedrus*, Plato re-evaluated the possibility that rhetoric could be a real art by pointing out that it is not speaking or writing that are shameful *per se*, but that what is bad is when people engage in them shamefully (*Phaedrus* 258d, pp. 4–5). Indeed, Plato recognises that rhetoric is the primary way ‘of leading the soul by means of speech’ (*Phaedrus* 261a, 8). As such, it can be used to enhance society for the good, provided that it is assisted by a rigorous study of nature, of psychology and of argumentation techniques (*Phaedrus*, pp. 269e–272b).

Overall, it is clear that for Plato, rhetoric should be subordinated to philosophy, as it is philosophy that offers the knowledge and moral virtues necessary to use rhetoric for the benefit of the city.

Aristotle

Plato never wrote a handbook of rhetoric. It was only his pupil Aristotle (384–322 BC) who, in the *Rhetoric*, pioneered that which Plato had left unexamined.

For Aristotle, rhetoric, as the counterpart of dialectic, can enable speakers to strengthen their ability to construct sound arguments (*Rhetoric* A 1, 1355a, pp. 20–33) (Rubinelli 2009, pp. 50–58).

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle gave clear indications of what students had to learn. They had to be trained in the discovery of ‘artistic’ arguments (*Rhetoric* A 2, 1355b, pp. 35–39) that result from a reflection on the speaker, the audience and the topic. Orators can design their arguments by playing on the character of the speaker (the *ethos*), by disposing the listener in some way (with attention to *pathos*) and by playing on the rational appeal (the *logos*) with induction and deduction (*Rhetoric* A 2, 1356a, pp. 1–4).

Aristotle considered the rational appeal to be particularly important in shaping persuasive speeches. To teach students this task, he introduced in the *Rhetoric* the method of argumentation presented in his *Topics*, which instructs students how to build arguments by reflecting on the formal aspects of argumentation (Rubinelli 2009, pp. 59–90).

To increase students’ knowledge of emotions is one target of rhetorical education, and that is why, in the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle presented the first systematic discussion of human psychology. In Book 2 of the *Rhetoric* he analysed 15 emotions, including anger/mildness, love/friendship, pity and envy (Wisse 1989). As for the other role of the speaker, Aristotle

emphasised the value of ethical appeal. When speakers gain trust and admiration, they increase their credibility (*Rhetoric* 2, pp. 12–17).

In Book 3 of the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle addressed the issue of style as another topic in which students must be trained and enquired what a good prose style comprises. Aristotle recognised the importance of the actual delivery of a speech in terms of its linguistic format. (*Rhetoric* 3, pp. 1–19).

Overall, Aristotle is recognised as having made the greatest contribution to rhetorical theory in the sense that he offered a theory of persuasive speech communication that could train and reinforce the skills of students. He developed this theory by reflecting on the fact that rhetoric was indeed used to influence events in the city and also on the evidence that there was a lack of theoretical insight in the current teaching of rhetoric (*Rhetoric* 1–3) (Grimaldi 1972, pp. 60–66). He was aware that rhetoric is morally free and that, as such, it can be used or abused. Nevertheless, he was optimistic enough to believe that empowering citizens in terms of their persuasion skills would have offered a valuable tool with which to transmit the best ideas for human progress.

Rhetoric in Ancient Rome

The ability to design and deliver persuasive speeches was perceived as a precondition for success in the popular assemblies and the Roman senate (Kennedy 1972, pp. 23–37; Bonner 1998). Rome was, at the time, based on a form of democratic oligarchy where several hundred men in the senate would each need the skill to present their points of view to gain the approval of the audience, as well as to influence the passing or vetoing of various laws and legislation (Crook 1967). One priority in rhetorical training in the Roman context focused on teaching students how to successfully plead a case.

The two Roman thinkers who most influenced the development of rhetoric as an educational discipline, namely Cicero (106–43 BC) and Quintilian (35–96 AD), were themselves highly competent lawyers.

Cicero

Thanks to the status of his father, an equestrian knight, Cicero received the best education in philosophy, history and rhetoric through classes with famous Greek teachers. At the age of 15, he wrote *De inventione*, which, together with the contemporary anonymous work known as *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, represent the first extant treatises of Roman rhetoric. Cicero's early interest in rhetoric was influenced by the idea that eloquence is one of the most important traits for a man who contends on behalf of his country (Powell & Paterson 2004). Indeed, as he explained at the beginning of *De inventione*, the ability to deliver persuasive speeches facilitated the use of wisdom in settling many important issues for cities. Rhetoric was, thus, for the young Cicero, an element of political science.

As the title *De inventione* underlines, the rhetorical training to empower citizens focused on the elaboration of a speech known as *inventio*, concerned with the 'discovery of valid or seemingly valid arguments to render one's cause plausible' (*De inventio* I, 9). Within the context of *inventio*, Cicero, by following ideas already discussed in the Greek tradition, proposed an extended version of the distinction of the parts of a speech, namely: the introduction [*exordium*], the beginning of the discourse; the narration [*narratio*] of the events that occurred, or that might have occurred; the division [*divisio* or *partitio*], about what is agreed upon and what is a matter of controversy; the proof [*confirmatio*], as the

presentation of arguments; the refutation [*refutatio*] of the adversaries' arguments; and the conclusion [*conclusio*] of the discourse (*De inventione* I, 9). According to the above categories, speakers were taught how to create a successful oration by reflecting on the construction of a speech according to certain specific tasks.

In his later work, Cicero himself further refined his conceptualisation of the art of rhetoric. During his studies, he reflected upon what the ideal role and education of an orator should have been. In 55 BC, he composed a dialogue entitled *De Oratore* where he presented the idea that rhetoric has to be joined by philosophy (I, 3, 9) and by an overall knowledge of humanity, culture and society (Narducci 1994, pp. 5–82).

Orators must possess the acumen of dialecticians, the mind of philosophers, an almost poetical expression, the memory of lawyers, the voice of tragic actors and the gestures of the most advanced actor (*De Oratore* I, 28, 128). All of these characteristics must be mastered to the highest degree (*De Oratore* III, 20, 76). These principles were further explained and supported in the *Brutus*, Cicero's treatise on the history of Roman oratory, and in the *Orator*, his last work on rhetoric.

On a more operational level, in *De Oratore*, Cicero echoed the Aristotelian motto of *ethos, logos* and *pathos* as representing in practice the main qualities of a skilful orator. As he expressed through the character of the orator Antonius, there are three main functions of the orator: to gain the sympathy of the audience, to demonstrate what is true and to stir emotions (*De Oratore* II, pp. 114–115). These functions of the orator's mission have been transmitted through the ages as the *officia oratoris*.

Overall, Cicero attempted to rebase the discipline of rhetoric in its more fundamental theoretical foundation in response to a practical orientation codified in the post-Aristotelian schools of rhetoric. In so doing, he attempted to develop a model of the perfect orator in the format of an almost ideal one.

Quintilian

The battle of Actium (31 BC) signalled the end of the Roman republic and the beginning of the Empire under Octavian. In this period, the teaching of a special form of exercise called *declamation* became the real passion of rhetorical schools. In the basic form of declamation, the student was given a set of hypothetical circumstances and had to support one of these hypotheses as in a genuine judicial or deliberative context (Heath 1995; Kennedy 1994).

The practice of declamation spread widely among the private schools of rhetoric. Yet, this spread gave rise to a rather arid and artificial declamatory style, resulting in the increasing use of short sentences, forced metaphors and ready-made arguments. These changes, seen as a corruption of the Ciceronian standards, provoked the reaction of rhetoricians, among whom Quintilian was considered to be the greatest teacher of rhetoric in Rome (Gwynn 1926). Asked by his friends to write a treatise to re-evaluate rhetoric as a discipline, in 93 AD Quintilian began writing the first of the 12 books of *Institutio oratoria*, which is usually translated as *The Education of the Orator*.

The title reflects Quintilian's desire to explain the ideal course of study through which to become a perfect orator 'who will be not only an eloquent speaker but a political leader and moral spokesman for Roman society' (Kennedy 1972, p. 509). For Quintilian, the orator should be *vir bonus dicendi peritus* (a good man skilled in speaking) (*Institutio oratoria*, XII, 1).

The first book of the *Institutio oratoria* is devoted to those things that take place prior to the work of rhetoricians, namely the earliest training at home and study in a grammar school.

The core of the *Institutio* is a discussion of rhetoric. Quintilian explained all the traditional phases of elaboration and parts of a speech by adding some elements not found in other Latin treatises. For example, he included a book devoted to how an orator can obtain ideas and expressions by reading and writing. For this purpose, he explained what a student should read in Greek and Latin. In another section, the focus is on the theory of 'imitation' (*mimesis* in Greek). As defined by the historian and rhetorician Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first century AD), imitation is 'an activity of the soul moved toward admiration of what seems fine' (Kennedy 1994, p. 78). In Quintilian's book, speakers are invited to imitate the techniques of a classical writer in order to understand the special qualities of writers and learn how to acquire their skills.

Within his educational programme, all forms of knowledge were important, although speaking, writing and reading were the best skills to obtain. Quintilian perceived education as the tool to create an upstanding citizen; within the field of education, oratory was considered majestic as it was the best gift from the gods to man (Book XII), and it is precisely because of their reasoning and speaking skills that human beings achieve superiority over animals (Book II).

The Roman Empire

The influence of Quintilian's enterprise was significant at an educational level. Because of it, rhetoric became a key component in the general curricula in all public professions. Under the Roman Empire, however, despite Quintilian's enterprise, the general understanding of rhetoric changed significantly. The Empire started to impose constraints of freedom of thought and expression. Juridical rhetoric started to lose its power because of the professionalisation of the procedures in the law courts. Knowledge of the law became more important as judges became less tolerant of rhetorical style (Kennedy 1972, pp. 100–150).

Rhetoric as a whole became increasingly identified with what classical rhetoricians, such as Aristotle and Cicero, had regarded as but one of its parts (indeed, one of its less important parts), namely *elocutio* (or stylistic expression).

Historical changes also affected the social considerations of rhetoric. Beginning in the last third of the second century, the East and West of the Roman Empire started to have distinct governments with the consequence that, by the fourth century, there were two empires with different languages (Greek and Latin). The Eastern schools of rhetoric were still active until the reign of Justinian (527–65 AD). The basic rhetorical textbook was the *Hermogenic corpus*, a series of handbooks of exercises under the name of the Greek rhetorician Hermogenes (late second century AD) (Heath 1995). But teachers of rhetoric were no longer paid for public services. Some schools of rhetoric continued to exist, but even they were eventually replaced by the study of rhetoric in some monasteries. In the West, schools of rhetoric continued their activity through the fourth century. Then, Rome was sacked and devastated by the Visigoths in 410, and the year 476 marked the political end of the Western Empire.

Rhetoric in the Middle Ages

The medieval take on classical rhetoric began in the fourth century BC. There, amid a climate of historical turbulence, there were some remarkable attempts to revive an interest in the art of rhetoric. Yet, rhetoric was not directly linked to the politics of cities, it did not have a civic function, and so its status somehow declined. Rhetoric no longer played a central role

in education and was instead in competition with grammar (the study of style and language composition) and dialectic (the study of argumentation) (McKeon 1941).

Augustine of Hippo

It is with Augustine of Hippo, also known as St Augustine (354–430 BC), that the art of persuasion nevertheless receives some importance as a powerful tool to support the spread of Christianity (Murphy 1981, pp. 43–89).

At the time of Augustine, the Church was challenged by heresies, such as those of the Manichaeans and Pelagians. Although the sophistic abuses of rhetoric were condemned, the discipline was valued for its prominent role in empowering future apologists. Thus, in *De doctrina Christiana* (I, 1.1) Augustine claimed that the two things necessary for appropriately dealing with the Scriptures are ‘a way of discovering’ (*modus inveniendi*) what people should understand, and ‘a way of expressing to others’ (*modus proferendi*).

Later in the treatise, he echoed ideas from the classical tradition when claiming that an empty flow of eloquence is dangerous, as fluency can give the impression that someone ‘speaks with truth’ (*De doctrina Christiana* IV, 5.8). Thus, defenders of authentic truth cannot stay unarmed if they want to have an effect (*De doctrina Christiana* IV, 2.3). The man who possesses the truth is not necessarily able to communicate it; rhetorical knowledge and knowledge of the Scriptures have to go together, and a training in rhetoric is thus important to strengthen the individual’s own expression and counteract potential negative influences.

Martianus Capella

About the same time that Augustine was completing *De doctrina Christiana*, Martianus Capella framed the role of rhetoric in his masterpiece, *On the wedding of philology and Mercury and of the seven liberal arts*, considered as fundamental in the history of education. Martianus Capella proposed to write an encyclopaedia of the liberal culture of the time. There, rhetoric was mentioned in the theory of education called *trivium* (the three roads) after logic and grammar. These disciplines were considered preparatory for the *quadrivium*, comprising arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy. The quadrivium was the educational entry point for the serious study of philosophy and theology (Stahl 1965).

The definition and order of the disciplines of the *trivium* testify to the different approach to rhetoric, compared to the breadth assigned to it in the classical Greek and Roman ages. In a context where logic was presented as the art of thinking, and grammar as the art of combining symbols to express thoughts, rhetoric was related to the application of language to persuade an audience. Within such a framework, the discipline was progressively reduced to a body of rules mainly derived from those found in Cicero’s *De inventione*, as the other main classical works on the subject were unknown in this period of the Middle Ages (Murphy 1981).

Boethius

It was Boethius (480–524 AD), the leading statesman-orator at the Ostrogothic Court, who further reinforced the idea of rhetoric having a different status from the classical discipline and its educational canons.

Boethius was among the major characters responsible for the transmission of Aristotle’s logical works to the medieval West (Stump 1988).

Although Boethius was not particularly interested in rhetoric, in his treatise on logic known as *De Differentiis Topicis* he framed a conceptualisation of rhetoric where he subordinated it to dialectic. Rhetoric was no longer perceived as a civil science; it cannot generate knowledge and it is not interrelated with philosophy. Aristotle saw the educational value of rhetoric in the fact that he conceived it as being parallel to dialectic. Cicero theorised that dialectic is even subordinate to rhetoric. In *De Differentiis Topicis* Book IV, Boethius made rhetoric an appendage of dialectic: dialectic has a philosophical breadth as it deals with theses, that is, general discussion about universal issues (for instance, should man marry?); rhetoric deals with hypothesis, that is, questions that involve individual circumstances (for instance, should Cato marry?) (Stump 1989).

Thomas Aquinas

This treatment of rhetoric as being separate from dialectics and, moreover, from a civil output was further supported by Thomas Aquinas, also known as St Thomas (1225–1274), who made a clear statement that rhetoric essentially deals with conjectural probability; it has nothing to do with demonstrative proof. It has an inferior epistemological status to dialectic and so might only be of value for dealing with the business affairs of human beings through its persuasive power (Smith 2012, pp. 172–175; Barilli 1989, pp. 46–48).

Towards modernity

Sixteenth century

Renaissance rhetoric was characterised by the discovery of important manuscripts of classical rhetoric, such as Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the entire Ciceronian corpus and the work of Quintilian. The availability of texts from the classical traditions favoured a revival and reorientation of rhetoric that, after an epistemological decline in the Middle Ages, regained popularity as a field of study. Indeed, in the early Renaissance, rhetoric was again perceived in light of Cicero's ideal that the discipline was the force of human society. From this, rhetoric again held a privileged position in education (Mack 2011a).

Desiderius Erasmus (1467–1536) was a prominent protagonist in the rediscovery of the power of rhetoric in education. In his work, *De ratione studii*, he expressed his innovative views on students' education by claiming that the knowledge of words (learned as grammar, rhetoric and logic) is a precondition for the knowledge of things. This is because, ultimately, ideas are intelligible only by means of the words that describe them. The educational role of rhetoric in Erasmus' framework was further reinforced by the epistemological status he accredited to the discipline. Informed by Aristotle's ideas as found in the *Rhetoric*, for Erasmus, rhetoric had a value as an instrument for probable argumentation. While the medieval authors attributed key importance to dialectic as the science for the discovery of truth, for Erasmus and other Renaissance authors, rhetoric was the best approach to determine the probabilities of outcomes for certain issues under discussion (Nauert 2006, pp. 102–172).

Erasmus was himself the author of rhetorical tracts that aimed to disseminate his ideas. In the *Colloquies*, he used the technique of dialogical investigation where the protagonists engage in discussion to reach an agreement over the most probable solution to a certain issue (Mack 2011a, pp. 76–103).

With Petrus Ramus (1515–1572), the separation between rhetoric and dialectic became even sharper, with rhetoric favoured as a fully autonomous discipline, but rather far away

from the breadth of the classical tradition (Jasinski 2001, pp. xvii–xviii). By accusing Aristotle and Cicero of having brought confusion to the fields of dialectic and rhetoric, Ramus subdivided the two domains. He shifted to the domain of dialectic what were – in the classical tradition – the parts of rhetoric dealing with the discovery of arguments (the *inventio*) and argumentation itself (the *confirmatio* and *refutatio* in Cicero’s *De inventione*). As a consequence, he conceptualised rhetoric as the domain of style (*elocutio*) and its delivery, including the effective use of language and pronunciation (Mack 2011b). Within this framework, rhetoric became a discipline to empower students in the art of speaking well, ornately and correctly. From there, rhetoric entered into the field of literature and its stylistic parameters (Vickers 1989, p. 206).

Seventeenth century

Ramus’ approach to rhetoric was questioned at an early stage by Francis Bacon (1561–1626) who, although he was not a rhetorician, developed a rhetorical theory as a means of communicating scientific knowledge. Bacon perceived empowerment in rhetoric as being central to active civic life. For him, the focus of the art of rhetoric went back to the discovery and use of arguments, and he explicitly praised Aristotle for placing rhetoric between logic and moral knowledge. Bacon attributed considerable importance to argumentation, but not to dialectic *per se*, as the preferred method for the discovery of things (Vickers 1996). For Bacon, there had to be a strong connection between the knowledge derived from empirical investigation and its transfer through words. This is why he merged together what – in previous years – was distinguished under dialectic and rhetoric; he wrote about the four ‘arts intellectuall’, referring to the discovery of argument, argumentation, memory and style. Style alone is not condemnable *per se*, although Bacon recognised its value in disseminating knowledge convincingly. Yet, human knowledge may be hindered by the ‘aesthetic satisfaction’ produced by style, as it can prevent people from deepening their knowledge (Smith 2012, pp. 239–241).

However, a more sceptical account of the value of rhetoric was given by Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) who was educated in the humanistic tradition (Skinner 1996). Hobbes wrote *A briefe of the art of rhetorique: Containing in substance all that Aristotle hath written in his three bookes of that subject*, and he knew the classical tradition remarkably well. Nevertheless, he was Platonic in his conviction that eloquence can destroy civil life. For Hobbes, while logic is connected to thought and wisdom, rhetoric favours a competition to win (*De cive*, pp. 154–155). When politicians are empowered with eloquence, they somewhat prevent the reaching of truth through reason, as personal interests are supported by playing on passions and emotions (*Leviathan*, p. 119, II. xvii).

In some ways, Hobbes was acutely hostile to persuasion, but in others, especially in the *Leviathan*, he showed his mastery of eloquence. Indeed, from his perspective, if science were to be promoted by people equipped with morality, and were to be based on certain and not probabilistic reasoning, eloquence could be an aid for science. In an overt disagreement with the rhetorical style praised by the Renaissance humanists, Hobbes made use of the rhetorical precepts to argue with irony against philosophical claims that he did not support.

Eighteenth century

While the seventeenth-century tradition had focused more on the epistemological characteristics of rhetoric, in the eighteenth century, rhetoric received significant attention

in European formal education, from elementary to university levels. Here, the study of rhetoric was pursued with the aim of equipping students for the rhetorical analysis of literary texts and in what is nowadays known as public speaking. Students were trained in composition, in writing through the principles of imitation and of the comparison of classical authors, as well as in refining texts with elegant prose (Kennedy 1997, pp. 330–346).

In France, the masterpiece of Charles Rollin (1661–1741), *Traité des études de la manière d'enseigner et d'étudier les Belles-Lettres*, proposed an innovative system of education with entire sections on the teaching of rhetoric and the practice of eloquence. For Rollin, education was mainly aimed at forming the tastes of students; this aim was achieved by emulating those considered to be models in the field of eloquence (Warnick 1993, pp. 1–14). A study of the best examples of eloquence would, in fact, allow students to reflect on the principles of composition behind these examples.

The Rollin book was also among those works that emphasised the importance of an approach to rhetoric known as the belletristic (from the French *Belles-Lettres*) movement. In the eighteenth century, neoclassical trends in the study of rhetoric, such as those promoted by John Lawson (1709–1759) and John Ward (1679–1758), were still anchored by the Greek-Roman approach to the art of persuasion. Yet, the belletristic scholars promoted an idea of rhetoric joined to related fields, including art, poetry and history. This trend of thought was introduced into the study of rhetoric elements found in a tradition starting with Aristotle's *Poetic* and those treatises that centred on the quality of style in prose, writing and artistic products generally (Kennedy 1999, pp. 259–289).

The other most successful contributions to the content of rhetoric as an educational discipline in the eighteenth century were made by Hugh Blair (1718–1800) and George Campbell (1719–1796). They were both Protestant ministers and theologians who saw in rhetoric an instrument to preach the Christian mission and to help human beings be redeemed from degeneration. In the *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres*, Blair explained how knowledge of rhetoric and literature is an asset for social success as it can promote virtue and moral ideals.

Campbell's main development of rhetoric derived from overcoming what he saw as the main limitations of the classical tradition. In Book 1 of the *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, he introduced a psychological and behavioural flavour into the domain of rhetoric. To be skilful in persuasion, orators must adapt their discourses to the needs of the audience. These needs are four in number: understanding, imagination, passions and will. The orator has to help the audience to understand and, through imagination and passion, to convince them. In Campbell's view, rhetoric is not only related to civic affairs, but has to be conceived as a universal theory of human communication.

The breadth of Campbell's reflection on rhetoric was somehow narrowed down and reshaped by Richard Whately (1787–1863). In his treatise, *Elements of Rhetoric*, which also falls under the genre of ecclesiastical rhetoric, Whately did not intend to make a theoretical inquiry into the nature of communication. By recalling the Aristotelian design of rhetoric as an 'off-shoot from Logic', he renewed the understanding of rhetoric as the art of reasoned discourse, and focused on argumentation as the essence of the discipline (Whately 1828).

Conclusion

This chapter, far from being an exhaustive history of rhetoric, highlights the main arguments on the link between rhetoric, as the study and use of language, and its value as an educational discipline for political life, from the classical world to the beginning of modernity.

It is apparent from observing the conceptual developments of rhetoric through the centuries that they are rather circular; similar claims about the high or low status of the discipline, according to its relation to the rigorousness of dialectic and morality, have been discussed by different authors in different contexts. Rhetoric was hardly to be relegated to being a question of language and style, even if a captivating style was considered to be important in attracting the audience. Rhetoric advanced as a discipline by reflecting on the educational equipment of the orator, where vast knowledge, moral values and communication skills must come together to the point where the ethically good orator is almost an ideal one. When it was clear that rhetoric could be powerfully used without the capacity and the wish to think philosophically for the good of the city, then it was criticised for the nature of the empowerment it endowed upon people.

Civic life was never, and will never be, without rhetoric because the language of politics is essentially rhetorical. Thus, the issue is whether to banish rhetoric from a conceptual point of view, knowing, however, that people will still use it, or to elevate it to the rank of a key educational discipline to empower those who have constructive ideas to successfully dismantle and contrast manipulation. Overall, the authors discussed in this chapter decided to take the second route and, in one way or another, operationalised the philosophical discussions on rhetoric into usable precepts that are nowadays vital to any training in persuasion for – and beyond – politics.

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From Karl Marx to Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser

Bob Jessop

Introduction

This chapter explores the work on language, ideology, and politics of Karl Marx (1818–1883), Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), and Louis Althusser (1918–1990). While only the first two explicitly considered language, all three adopted a totalising approach, forcefully critiqued ideologies and domination, and stressed the unity of social theory and political practice. I first address Marx’s ideas on language and consciousness, ideology and its critique, and political struggle and domination. Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) is included both for his work with Marx and his own contributions. Second, I review Gramsci’s pre-prison writings and prison notes on language, economic base-superstructure relations, the state and intellectuals and link them to his university studies in philology. Third, I examine Althusser’s views on ideology, the state and politics. In all cases, I relate these topics to their broader theoretical and strategic views.

Karl Marx

Five remarks will help to situate Marx’s analyses of language and politics. First, a critical understanding of philology was central to university education in Marx’s youth – thanks in part to Hegel’s effort to get ‘philosophy to speak German’, not Latin, to help build a German nation; second, Marx and Engels aimed to demystify not only religion, as did other Young Hegelians, but also, unlike them, the secular language of the ruling class, including bourgeois morality, bourgeois ‘theory’, and the ideas of leading German intellectuals (Cook 1982; Williams 1977, pp. 21–26); third, Marx wanted to help the masses to develop their own language, their own ‘poetry’ or political imaginary to better express their own needs and demands; consequently, fourth, he engaged in ‘translational’ work to turn mystifying speculation into more prosaic language suited for articulating a scientific socialist programme; and, fifth, Marx himself used language skilfully for political as well as scientific effect (Marx 1979, pp. 14–16).

I begin with a disparate set of manuscripts drafted by Marx and Engels in 1845–1846. Although consigned to ‘the gnawing criticism of the mice’ (Marx 1987b, p. 264), these

drafts were later compiled into one text, *Die deutsche Ideologie (The German ideology)*, first published in Russian in 1924 and then in various versions in other languages (on this history, see Carver 2010). Part one introduces, *inter alia*, the authors' views on language, political economy, and ideology. Later parts illustrate how they critique specific intellectuals and ideological currents. Marx and Engels argue that a materialist conception of history must begin with living human individuals, not abstract man, analysing how they organise material life to satisfy their changing needs and to propagate the species. These activities form humankind's material mode of production and underpin a definite mode of life. The need to co-ordinate interaction with nature and/or other people gives rise to language, which, in its plain, ordinary or everyday form, they write, can be understood as practical consciousness. This consciousness exists for other people as well as the speaker. The unity of hand, larynx and brain as the biological foundation of language is matched on the social level by the unity of labour/production, language and consciousness (Höppe 1982, p. 28; Marx & Engels 1976, pp. 36, 44; cf. Engels 1987). Thus, Marx and Engels treat language both as an *intellectual* force of production that arises from and enables social co-operation and as a necessary, constitutive part of any mode of life (Marx & Engels 1976, pp. 51–60; cf. Marx 1975, pp. 298–299, 304; Marx 1987a, pp. 538–540, 548–549; Höppe 1982, p. 55).

The pair add that social development involves a growing division between mental and manual labour. Moreover, the more autonomous mental labour becomes, the more do people tend to treat ideas as lacking foundations in material life, almost as if ideas descend from heaven. This generates the 'pure', even esoteric, language of ideologists in fields such as theology, metaphysics and ethics, which are far removed from material production, and, they note, it also inclines intellectuals to explain events and practices in terms of free-floating ideas, cut loose from reality (Marx & Engels 1976, pp. 44–45, 55–56, 92; Engels 1990, pp. 392–394; on intellectuals, see also pp. 35–37). This view also appears implicitly in Marx's critiques of Hegel on the state and of Feuerbach on religion. An analogous division of manual–mental labour occurs within the ruling class itself – it contains not only practical 'men of affairs', but also specialists in ideas (*ibidem*, p. 60).

Building on such arguments, Marx and Engels suggest that the state is an independent social form standing above and outside society and acting in the name of its (necessarily illusory!) collective interests (*ibidem*, p. 90). They also interpret political struggles as the illusory forms in which the real struggles of different classes are fought out. They posit that every class struggling for domination must first gain political power in order to represent its interest as the general interest (*ibidem*, p. 90). Language is the medium in and through which interests are articulated and, hence, a crucial medium of political struggle too (see below). Furthermore, 'the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class that is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force' (*ibidem*, p. 59, italics in original). This is grounded, in part, on the ruling class' control over the means of mental as well as material production. This invites, one might add, reflection on changing modes of mental production, such as writing, print media, radio, television and social media. These comments were intended for self-clarification rather than publication (Marx 1987b, p. 262) and, in more elaborate forms, can be discerned in the later work of both Marx and Engels.

Part I of *The German ideology*, together with the 1859 preface to the *Contribution to the critique of political economy* (Marx 1987b) are often invoked to justify the claim that Marx had a reductionist model in which an economic base generates a matching juridico-political superstructure, forms of life, and social consciousness. In early work, this base-superstructure model had a diacritical role. In some ways, it shifted attention from an *idealist critique of*

religion and theology to a materialist critique of law and politics, and, in others, in treating language as practical consciousness, *its materialism excluded any claim that the social world can exist prior to thought*. Viewed substantively, however, this metaphor does injustice to the richness of Marx's critique of political economy as well as his and Engels' historical analyses.

Further remarks on Marx's work on language and ideology are hindered by its disparate, unfinished nature. But it is possible to contrast his approach positively with the usual linguistics approach to the social character of language. For, as Norman Fairclough and Phil Graham note, the usual approach involves a double movement:

[...] *first* abstracting language from its material interconnectedness with the rest of social life, treating language as an 'ideal' and non-material entity, and *then* construing the sociality of language as relations 'between' language [...] and society, as if these were two separately constituted realities which subsequently, or even accidentally, come into contact with each other.

(Fairclough & Graham 2002, p. 187, italics added)

In contrast, Fairclough and Graham continue, Marx emphasised:

the dialectical interconnectivity of language and other elements of the social and can therefore do full justice to [the] social power of language in [...] capitalism without reducing social life to language, removing language from material existence, or reifying language.

(Fairclough & Graham 2002, p. 187)

To support this claim, they give many examples of Marx's anticipation of what would now count as Critical Discourse Analysis and/or argumentation analysis, ranging from the early 1840s to the late 1870s (see below on *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*).

Although Marx's later work was less directly concerned with language, he still explored its nature as practical consciousness and examined the semantics and pragmatics of political language. Marx and Engels also considered how ideologies differ from other sets of ideas insofar as they serve the interests of power and domination, and, relatedly, how ideological effects emerge – consciously or not – from language use in diverse contexts. So, their later, more or less systematic efforts at *Ideologiekritik* were directed against *specific* ideologies – technological paradigms, economic doctrines, legal systems, political imaginaries, party programmes, religious-belief systems, philosophies and general systems of ideas – in terms of how they obscured, mystified and legitimated social relations of exploitation and/or domination (cf. McCarney 1980, pp. 10–11). An example is the degeneration of classical political economy, with its real scientific achievements, into mere bourgeois apologetics as the working-class movement grows stronger and challenges the logic of capital (Marx 1967, pp. 23–26). Marx and Engels also recognised that the most powerful ideological effects may be sedimented in language, language use, practical consciousness and other forms of signification. In this regard, they both noted: the class character of language; its implicit value judgements; its role in generalising bourgeois mentality through turns of phrase, figures of speech and commercial language; the status of economic categories as objective forms of thought (*Gedankenformen*); and the mystifying effects of commodity fetishism and the juridical world-view (Engels 1976; Marx 1967, pp. 29, 49; Marx 1987a, pp. 538–541, 547–550; Marx & Engels 1976, pp. 102–103, 231; for many further examples, see Höpfe 1982, pp. 97–105, 199–203, 222–247).

Finally, although Marx starts from the social relations of production, he argues that social transformation is mediated through the political sphere. Indeed, he emphasises the primacy of the political over the economic. For example, in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, written in 1851, Marx noted that, while ‘men make their own history; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves’ (1979, p. 103). He then remarked that it was hard for revolutionaries to develop new political practices because the available political lexicon limits their ability to represent their own class interests and voice new demands. Thus, he refers to limits rooted in ‘the tradition of all the dead generations’, ‘superstition about the past’, and ‘an entire superstructure of different and distinctly formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and views of life’ (1979, pp. 103, 106, 128). This suggests, as James Martin noted, that Marx recognised ‘the “performative” character of politics, that is, the manner in which the symbolic is not simply some secondary “level” perched upon the hard rock of property relations but is itself integral to the materialisation of class power’ (Martin 2002, pp. 132–3).

Throughout *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, Marx explores the *language and other symbols* in and through which the class content of politics gets represented or, more commonly, misrepresented. He dissects the semiotic forms, genres, and tropes through which political forces articulate their identities, interests and beliefs. He reveals the articulation between: (1) the phrases and tropes of language and custom borrowed from the past or recontextualised through intertextual weaving in the present; and (2) current political and social realities, such that old phrases sometimes lead to spirited revolutionary action but, more often, prove to be empty signifiers open to manipulation for political or economic advantage (Marx 1979, pp. 103–112, 126–131, 142–146, 148–150, 190–193 and *passim*). Here and elsewhere, Marx also reflects on the type of political language in which the proletariat might formulate its demands, arguing that it must develop its own novel, political language rather than draw, as did earlier revolutions, on the ‘poetry of the past’ (Marx 1979, p. 106). In short, this and other texts can be read as contributions to the critique of *semiotic economy*, that is, to an account of how language and symbolism are involved in the imaginary (mis)recognition and (mis)representation of class interests.

Antonio Gramsci

In terms of the all-too-familiar base-superstructure metaphor, Gramsci is often regarded as a *theorist of the superstructures* (especially politics, civil society and culture) rather than of the material base (the forces and social relations of production) (for an important, more nuanced dispute along these lines between Norberto Bobbio and Jacques Texier, respectively, see the texts reprinted in Mouffe 1979, pp. 21–79). Another misleading interpretation sees Gramsci as pioneering a Marxist approach to cultural criticism, or cultural studies, as if he saw culture as separate from the economy, politics, law, or other fields. Yet, Gramsci explicitly rejected the validity of an *ontological* distinction between base and superstructure (while conceding its *analytical* or methodological value) and sought to transcend it by exploring the interpenetration and co-evolution of these allegedly separate social spheres. This is especially clear in his discussion of Americanism and Fordism (see below). Among other reasons for his rejection of the metaphor, one might be the difficulties of locating language within this schema. Thus, to cite Peter Ives, Gramsci regarded language as ‘material, albeit historically material. [...] Language is rooted in the materiality of the production of words’ (Ives 2004, p. 34). Although this recalls arguments in *The German ideology*, Gramsci was unaware of this text, given its publication history (see above). His arguments were, in this regard, his own.

As Italian commentators have noted for many decades (see especially Lo Piparo 1979 and Carlucci 2013; and, for illustrative Italian work, contributions to Ives & Lacorte 2011) and anglophone scholars have begun to argue more recently (e.g. Ives 2004), Gramsci's whole approach was inspired by his university studies in philology under the direction of Matteo Bartoli, who initiated an approach called neo-linguistics (in opposition to the German neogrammarian school, which had affinities with Saussure's semiology) and later known, more substantively, as *linguistica spaziale* (spatial linguistics). This approach was rooted in the idealism of the Italian philosopher and organic intellectual, Benedetto Croce, modified by broadly contemporaneous work in linguistic geography and historical linguistics. Neo-linguistics emphasised that language is an evolving human creation and that linguistic innovation is normal.

Significantly, Bartoli argued that language diffuses geographically and socially in regular ways mediated through relations of prestige and power (Bartoli 1925; also Ives 2004b, pp. 44–55). He explored 'how a dominant speech community exerted prestige over contiguous, subordinate communities: the city over the surrounding countryside, the "standard" language over the dialect, the dominant socio-cultural group over the subordinate one' (Forgacs & Smith 1985, p. 164). He also charted how innovations flowed from the prestigious *langue* to the receiving one, such that 'earlier linguistic forms would be found in a peripheral rather than central area, an isolated rather than an accessible area, a larger rather than a smaller area' (Brandist 1996, pp. 94–95). This is reflected in Gramsci's comments on the stratification of language use (e.g. how countryfolk copy urban manners, how subaltern groups imitate the upper classes, how peasants speak when they move to the cities, etc.) (Gramsci 1985, pp. 180–181; in Gramsci 1975, the Italian critical edition of the prison notebooks, this corresponds to *Quaderno*, or notebook, Q29, §2, pp. 2342–2343). This comparative historical and spatial linguistics strongly influenced Gramsci's ideas on hegemony before he met the term in Lenin's analysis of party and class alliances. In contrast to its conventional meaning in international relations and Marxist-Leninist alliance theory, Gramsci redefined hegemony to denote the formation and organisation of consent (see below).

Gramsci applied historical and spatial linguistics in much of his work, even describing his overall method as *philological*. He argued that: 'the whole of language is a continuous process of metaphor, and the history of semantics is an aspect of the history of culture; language is at the same time a living thing and a museum of fossils of life and civilisations' (1971, p. 450; Q11, §24, p. 1427). Like Marx and Engels, Gramsci emphasised that language permeates all social relations and secretes a particular view of the world into everyday life and special social fields. He also argued that:

All men are philosophers. Their philosophy is contained in: 1. *language itself*, which is a totality of determined notions and concepts and not just words grammatically devoid of content; 2. 'common sense' and 'good sense'; 3. popular religion and, therefore, also in the entire system of belief, superstitions, opinions, ways of seeing things and of acting which are collectively bundled together under the name of 'folklore'.

(Gramsci 1971, p. 323; Q11, §12, p. 1375)

Thus social relations can only be fully understood and explained through the 'determined notions and concepts' (Marx's term for these was 'categories') in and through which determinate social practices develop and get institutionalised.

Peter Ives even describes Gramsci's approach as 'vernacular materialism'. This applies 'the tenets of a historical materialist approach to language and [develops] a linguistically

concerned theory of politics and society' (Ives 2004a, p. 3). A deliberate play on words, this term serves to: (1) oppose vernacular to vulgar materialism; (2) establish the dialectical nature of Gramsci's work, with its focus on the organic relationship between language and social structures; (3) identify Gramsci's concern to develop a political programme that would 'popularise' culture rather than impose the culture of the dominant class from above, or force the development of a national – or international – culture through the imposition of an official, normative grammar, or resort to an artificial language, such as Esperanto; and (4) promote the historical materialist analysis of society (Ives 2004a, p. 4). It is worth noting the continuities between point two and Marx's historical materialist analysis of language as practical consciousness and, for point three, the similarities to Hegel's efforts to make philosophy speak German and Marx's commitment to developing a plain language with which workers could develop the poetry of the future. Indeed, as Gramsci wrote, Italian unification occurred without a popular revolution or radical social transformation such as that in France. This was reflected in the well-known aphorism from the 1870s: *Italia fatta, bisogna fare gli Italiani* (loosely translated, 'now we've made Italy, we must make the Italians'). For Gramsci, this required the development of a national-popular collective will grounded in a shared language, shared world-view, and shared hegemonic project that would encompass a new economic and political order.

These claims can be illustrated from Gramsci's analyses of the articulation of base and superstructure, the relations between political and civil society, and intellectuals' major and vital role in creating and reproducing these mediations in capitalist societies.

First, to replace the base-superstructure distinction, Gramsci redefined the meaning of base via the concept of *mercato determinato* (determinate market), which he misattributed to David Ricardo (Potier 1991, p. 87). For Gramsci, this is 'equivalent to [a] determined relation of social forces in a determined structure of the productive apparatus, this relationship being guaranteed (that is, rendered permanent) by a determined political, moral and juridical superstructure' (Gramsci 1971, p. 410; Q11, §52, p. 1477). This highlighted the need for an integral (totalising) analysis of historically specific economic regimes, their modes of social regulation, and their contingent, tendential laws of motion. For example, in his famous notes on Americanism and Fordism, Gramsci showed the importance of new economic imaginaries and organic intellectuals in promoting 'Americanism' as a mode of growth in response to the crisis of liberal capitalism and also identified how new social and cultural practices helped to consolidate Fordism as a new mode of regulation and societal organisation (1971, pp. 310–313; Q22, §13, pp. 2171–2175). He also noted, in remarks reminiscent of *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, that it would be hard to implant Fordism in Europe. This is because of the dead-weight of tradition, the incrustations of the past that must be swept away, and the presence of parasitic classes and strata (1971, pp. 281, 285, 317; Q22, §2, pp. 214–247, §15, p. 2179). These arguments put the struggle for political, intellectual and moral leadership at the heart of efforts to build and embed new economic regimes in capitalist societies.

Second, another, broader, concept is that of 'historical bloc': rather than redefining the base, this covers base-superstructure relations. Gramsci asked how and why 'the complex, contradictory and discordant ensemble of the superstructures is the reflection of the ensemble of the social relations of production'. He answered that it reflects 'the necessary reciprocity between structure and superstructure' (1971, p. 366; Q8, §182, pp. 1051–1052). This is realised through specific intellectual, moral and political practices. These translate narrow sectoral, professional, or local (in his terms, 'economic-corporate') interests into wider 'ethico-political' ones. Agreement on the latter not only helps to co-constitute economic

structures (by providing a shared orientation), but also gives them their rationale and legitimacy. Analysing the historical bloc also shows how ‘material forces are the content and ideologies are the form, though this distinction between form and content has purely didactic value’ (1971, p. 377; Q7, §21, p. 869).

Third, in his best-known concept, Gramsci related hegemony (*egemonia*) to the capacity of dominant groups to establish and maintain political, intellectual and moral leadership and secure the ‘broad-based consent’ of allied and subordinate groups to the prevailing relations of economic and political domination. Just as he studied the economy in its integral sense as a determined market, Gramsci studied the state in its integral sense. He defined it as ‘political society + civil society’ and examined state power, in liberal democracies based on mass politics, as ‘hegemony protected by the armour of coercion’ (1971, p. 263; Q6, §88, pp. 763–765). His analysis of hegemony–consent–persuasion is not restricted to civil society, but extends into what are conventionally regarded as economic and political spheres. Paraphrasing, effective hegemony depends on the capacity of dominant groups to suture the identities, interests, emotions and values of key sectors of subordinate classes and other subaltern groups into a hegemonic vision and embed this in institutions and policies – leading in turn to their translation into ‘good’ common sense. At the same time, reflecting the ‘material’ as well as the discursive moment of social practice, hegemony depends on material concessions to subaltern groups, and this means that it must rest on ‘a decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity’ (Gramsci 1971, p. 161; Q 13, §18, p. 1591).

For Gramsci, just as the moment of force is institutionalised in a system of coercive apparatuses (that may not always coincide with the state’s formal juridico-political boundaries), hegemony is crystallised and mediated through a complex system of ideological (or hegemonic) apparatuses located throughout the social formation. While present in the juridico-political apparatuses, hegemonic practices are largely concentrated in normal circumstances in civil society (i.e. the ‘ensemble of organisms commonly called “private”’) (Gramsci 1971, p. 12; Q8, §182, p. 1518). Relevant ‘hegemonic apparatuses’ include the Church, trade unions, schools, the mass media, or political parties (Gramsci 1971, pp. 10–14, 155, 210, 243, 261, 267; Q12, §1, pp. 1518–1524; Q13, §23, pp. 1602–1603; Q13, §27, pp. 1619–1620; Q26, §6; pp. 2302–2303; Q17, §51, pp. 1947–1948).

Fourth, Gramsci’s interest in the determined market, historical blocs, and state power was closely related to his studies of intellectuals (also broadly defined). He observed that, while everyone is an intellectual, not everyone in society has the function of an intellectual (Gramsci 1971, p. 9; Q12, §1, p. 1516). This claim has a dual significance. It rejects an elitist or vanguard role for intellectuals, stressing the need for hegemony to be rooted in everyday practices and interests. At the same time, those with the function of intellectuals are regarded as the creators and mediators of hegemony, as crucial bridges between economic, political and ideological domination, and as active agents in linking culture (especially common sense, or everyday knowledge, passions, feelings and customs) and subjectivity in the production of hegemony. Specifically, Gramsci saw hegemony as being anchored in the activities of traditional and/or organic intellectuals whose specialised function in the division of labour is to elaborate ideologies, educate the people, organise and unify social forces, and secure the hegemony of the dominant group (Gramsci 1971, pp. 5–23; Q12, §1–3, pp. 1511–1552; for an excellent review of intellectuals’ role in this regard, especially in forming a historical bloc, see Portelli 1972). Thus, the task of organic intellectuals is to promote and consolidate a conception of the world that gives homogeneity and awareness to a fundamental class in the economic, political and social fields; this, in turn, becomes the basis for efforts to

create hegemony within the wider society (Gramsci 1971, p. 5; Q12, §1, p. 1513; cf. Althusser 1990, p. 258). Whereas organic intellectuals identify with the dominant classes, or at least, have roles coeval with the specific forms of their economic, political and ideological domination, traditional intellectuals have roles dating from earlier modes of production, or ways of life (e.g. priests) and have weaker ties to the currently dominant classes.

Louis Althusser

Louis Althusser was a Marxist philosopher and member of the French Communist Party who criticised Stalinist doctrines and party practices. He researched political theory, wrote some major essays on Marx's philosophical and theoretical development and, with four students, presented an influential structuralist reading of Marx's *Capital* (Althusser et al., 1968; cf. Althusser & Balibar 1970). Here I focus on his views on language, ideology and politics. In contrast to Marx and Gramsci, Althusser did not study language, as such. Instead, he focused on ideology, which he regarded as 'a "representation" of the imaginary relationship of individuals [members of social classes in class societies] to their real conditions of existence' (1971b, p. 162; cf. 1971a, p. 241; 1990, p. 25). This definition draws on Claude Lévi-Strauss' notion of *culture*, that is, the languages, the unconscious categories, through which people give meaning to experience (Althusser 1971a, p. 241). Another direct influence was Jacques Lacan (whose work he would later reject), who, inspired by de Saussure, wanted to reorientate psychoanalysis on the assumption that the unconscious is structured *like* a language (e.g. Lacan 1993, 166–67). Nonetheless, while there are cultural and linguistic influences in Althusser's work, language is not, for him, a crucial topic.

Let me explore Lacan's influence. He distinguished three registers of analysis. The *imaginary* is the restricted, superficial, non-psychoanalytic level of everyday lived experience. It denotes, he wrote, my imagined relation to myself, to my feelings, to others, to others' perceptions of me, and to the real world. For Althusser, ideology is so pervasive in individuals' thoughts and deeds that it is '*indistinguishable* from their lived experience' (1990, p. 25, italics in original). These imaginary relations, which have real effects, are structured and overdetermined by the *symbolic* order. This register comprises sociolinguistic structures, rules and dynamics, and the wider moral and institutional order (cf. Althusser 1990, p. 26). The third register is the Real, which is less relevant here, because Althusser does not discuss reality in Lacanian terms (see Johnson 2013; on Freud and Lacan, Althusser 1971a; for the wider Althusser–Lacan connection, Resch 1992, pp. 208–213).

Althusser argued that, because individuals' lived experience of real conditions is always mediated through language and/or practice, it is not possible to equate ideology with false consciousness of the real world, for our reliance on language to construe the world traps us permanently inside *ideology in general*. However, we can compare *particular ideologies*, that is, different imaginary representations of our relationship to that world. Indeed, one task of science is to test the practical adequacy of different ideologies, to separate good and bad ideological thinking – Gramsci writes here of organic versus arbitrary, rationalistic and willed ideologies (1971, pp. 376–377; Q7, §19, p. 868). Another task of science is to identify what is possible in specific conjunctures – although, for Althusser (1990), even scientific practices are also shaped by ideological concepts, metaphors, and so on, as regards their presentation, reception and effects.

Furthermore, against a purely ideational account of ideology as comprising only ideas or representations, Althusser claims that ideology has a material existence (1971b, pp. 165, 169–170). It 'always exists in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices' (1971b, p. 166).

Thus, ideology has real effects. One of these is *interpellation*. Specifically, Althusser suggests that ‘all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects’ (1971b, p. 115). Language has a key role here: indeed, Althusser’s example is the hailing of a pedestrian by a police officer with the phrase, ‘hey, you!’ This also illustrates how, in acting towards others as subjects, we also reproduce institutions, here the police apparatus (Althusser 1971b, pp. 167–168, 170–171, 173). Furthermore, ‘individuals are always-already subjects’ (1971b, pp. 175–176) because they are interpellated even in the womb thanks to naming and other practices that occur in ‘the specific familial ideological configuration’ (1971b, p. 176). This *assujettissement* (or process of subjectivation) is the crucial ideological mechanism because it forms our reality and makes it appear natural, true, or self-evident. Indeed, a key ideological effect ‘is the practical denegation of the ideological character of ideology by ideology’ (1971b, p. 175).

In contrast to his direct references to Lévi-Strauss and Lacan, Althusser does not mention Marx or Gramsci in his remarks on ideology *as lived experience*, or how it is structured *like* a language. While generally supportive of Marx’s later, scientific work (in contrast to his youthful humanism), Althusser was hostile to Gramsci’s allegedly unscientific philosophy of praxis (for reasons noted in my conclusions). But he did recognise the latter’s major contributions to political analysis and ranked him next to Marx and Lenin in this regard. In particular, he praised Gramsci’s innovative notion of hegemony, broad concept of intellectuals and recognition of how civil society helped to reproduce class domination (see 1969, pp. 114, 114n, 105n, respectively). That said, Althusser did not engage seriously with these insights because he read them through the Marxism-Leninist optic that Gramsci aimed to overturn (Thomas 2009, pp. 26–35). So, profound differences remained in their respective studies of ideology and politics.

Althusser emphasised the importance of *assujettissement* to economic reproduction, which depends on the ‘superstructural ensemble’. Yet, he tried to go beyond the purely *descriptive* value of the base-superstructure metaphor (1971b, p. 136) to ground it *scientifically* in the causal power of the superstructure, especially its juridico-political institutions and the ideological field (Althusser 1969, pp. 113–14; cf. 1971b, pp. 134–137). This opens space for a half-hearted rehabilitation of Gramsci, which Althusser attempted in his famous note on ideology and ideological state apparatuses:

Gramsci is the only one who went any distance in the road I am taking. He had the ‘remarkable’ idea that the state could not be reduced to the (Repressive) State Apparatus, but included [...] institutions from ‘*civil society*’: the Church, the Schools, the trade unions, etc. Unfortunately, Gramsci did not systematise his institutions.

(Althusser 1971b, p. 142n; cf. 1990, p. 257; 2006, pp. 138–139)

In addressing this defect, Althusser even claimed to have completed the Marxist state theory that Marx, Lenin and Gramsci had only sketched in a series of pre-theoretical intuitions. He formulated this account in five theses: (1) the core of the state is its repressive (state) apparatus, or RSA; (2) the state also includes various ideological state apparatuses, or ISAs; (3) each ISA has its own particular ideology and apparatus logic; (4) the state plays a vital role in reproducing the relations of production and intervenes in all areas that bear on their reproduction; and (5) while economic exploitation is foundational, changes in the state form must precede reorganising the economic base. These theses were first published in an extract (Althusser 1971b) from a longer, but incomplete, work, *On reproduction*, published posthumously (see Althusser 2014).

For Althusser, whereas the RSA functions mainly via repression (including physical violence), the ISAs function primarily through ideology (1971b, pp. 144–146, 149). The latter are so diverse, relatively autonomous, and wide-ranging that the entire society becomes saturated by class relations and submitted to a class power that acquires coherence through ‘a certain *political* configuration [...] imposed and maintained by means of material force (that of the State) and of moral power (that of the ideologies)’ (Althusser 1968). What unifies the ISAs is: (1) their common subordination to the ideology of the ruling class (1971b, pp. 146, 149, 154–157); and (2) the RSA’s role in securing the political conditions for the functioning of the ISAs, ‘which largely secure the reproduction specifically of the relations of production, behind a “shield” provided by the repressive State apparatus’ (1971b, p. 150). This last phrase, which recalls Gramsci on ‘hegemony protected by the armour of coercion’, is explained in terms of a ‘logic of the supplement’, whereby something apparently secondary is actually crucial to the existence of what appears original or primary (Derrida 1976, p. 315). As applied here, the relations of production/exploitation determine, *in the last instance*, the character of the state (RSA + ISAs) that underwrites the political and ideological relations of domination that, *in their turn*, ensure the reproduction of the social relations of production/exploitation that would otherwise fail or collapse.

Denying that Gramsci’s work on hegemony anticipated his analysis of ISAs, Althusser protested that Gramsci’s ‘answer to the question of the *material* infrastructure of the ideologies’ was rather mechanistic and economic, that he never talked about ISAs, but only ‘hegemonic apparatuses’, and that he failed to explain the ‘hegemony-effect’.

Gramsci, in sum, defines his apparatuses in terms of their effect or result, *hegemony*, which is also poorly conceived. I, for my part, was attempting to define the ISAs in terms of their ‘motor cause’: ideology. Furthermore, Gramsci affirms that the hegemonic apparatuses are part of ‘civil society’ [...] on the pretext that they are ‘private’.

(Althusser 2006, pp. 138–139, italics in original)

Althusser claims superiority, quite unfairly, because he can explain the hegemony-effect through the ideological mechanism of interpellation and does not erroneously take the ‘public–private distinction’ as real when it is just one result of bourgeois juridico-political ideology. More generally, in a class society, ideology helps individuals to ‘bear’ their condition, whether this be one of exploitation, or exorbitant privilege (Althusser 1990, p. 25). Moreover, subaltern individuals who reject their condition are disciplined by the RSA as ‘bad’ subjects who reject the dominant ideology (1971b, pp. 137, 149–150, 181). In sum, while hegemony depends on ISAs, the RSA is also needed (cf. Gramsci above). Finally, while ideology is located in the superstructure and has its own logic and effects there vis-à-vis law and the state, it also penetrates the entire social edifice (not the continued use of the base-superstructure metaphor) and provides the *cement* [*sic*] that assures the cohesion of subjects in their roles, functions and social relations (1990, p. 25).

Althusser develops his theses in various pseudo-dialectical and formalistic ways. For example, he mentions the secondary ideological functions of the RSA, the secondary repressive functions of ISAs, and the possibilities that specific institutions may switch between primarily ideological and primarily repressive functions. But he provides no substantial historical analyses and few clues about how different political and ideological fields are articulated, let alone unified (‘cemented’), apart from the equally formal claim that this occurs when one ISA is dominant. For Althusser, this was currently the school system (1971b, pp. 152–155), although followers, such as Régis Debray (1981) and Nicos

Poulantzas (1978), later claimed that the mass media held this place. Overall, this argument seems quite functionalist. There is no sense that the ISAs may be riven by contradictions and class struggle, that there is a specific role for intellectuals, political forces, and so on, in class struggle, or, indeed, that ideology may also be secreted in the organisation of production (cf. the critiques by Buci-Glucksmann, 1980, pp. 64–67; Poulantzas 1973, pp. 300–305). Later, in a post-script to his famous ISAs essay, Althusser tried to correct its functionalist tenor by insisting on the primacy of class struggle over institutions (2006, p. 112). In contrast to Gramsci, however, he made no effort to produce appropriate concepts to explore the forms, modalities and potential disjunctions of class struggle in and across different fields.

Such reflections prompted a return to another classical political theorist. In *Machiavel et nous* (1972–1986), Althusser attempted to theorise the state and politics without resort to the deterministic and economically reductionist base-superstructure schema. His proposed replacement is an *aleatory materialism* that focuses on historical becoming based on the primacy of events or contingent encounters, rather than on the operation of ‘iron laws’, or an inevitable social progress. Althusser (1999) claims that Machiavelli raises the crucial question of how a durable political state emerges *ex nihilo*. Machiavelli’s answer, he argues, was that, while the prince founds the modern state, it can only be stabilised through a shift from a despotic principality to a modern republic based on the rule of law. Moreover, while Althusser once regarded people as passive subjects to be interpellated and mobilised by the ISAs, and disciplined by the RSA if they resisted, his reading of Machiavelli leads him to see ‘the people’ as the prime source of refusal and struggle against political repression and ideological subjectivation. In these respects, Althusser’s interpretation marks a radical epistemological break with the functionalism of his ISA texts. It grounds social order in the contingent, aleatory historical development and succession of state forms (cf. Vatter 2004). It also marks another shift towards Gramsci’s views insofar as the latter had already updated Machiavelli’s call for ‘a new prince in a new [Italian] principality’ by positing the need for a ‘modern prince’ to create a unified Italian republic. This would not be a dictatorial vanguard party, but a communist party operating as a hegemonic social force, one that is in continuing dialogue with the popular masses and, on this basis, can develop a political, intellectual and moral hegemony that advances the national-popular will.

Conclusions

Marx interpreted language as an expression of practical consciousness and critiqued the effects of the manual–mental division of labour, which inclined intellectuals to believe that ideas were the motor force of history. He engaged in systematic, even symptomatic, critiques of the basic categories that organised capitalist relations of production and corresponding juridico-political, intellectual and philosophical social forms and consciousness. Given that politics, not the development of the productive forces, was the key moment of social development, Marx also paid much attention to the role of language in politics and to the specificities of political struggle, especially to develop and secure support for an illusory account of the general interest.

Gramsci elaborated many of these ideas (on the basis of limited access in prison to key Marxian texts, ignorance of some and over-familiarity with others, notably the 1859 *Preface*), based on his prior training in historical and spatial linguistics. He also emphasised the need to develop hegemony (political, intellectual and moral leadership) that would articulate a national-popular will as the basis for a revolutionary transformation of society. He was also interested in how intellectuals secured the unity of the power bloc and the

hegemony of the power bloc over the popular classes. Developing a common language grounded in common sense and orientated to good sense was a crucial dimension of the struggle for hegemony (cf. Carlucci 2013).

Althusser cannot be read as the natural successor of Marx and Gramsci. On the contrary, he criticised Marx's views on ideology and the state as, at best, descriptive and pre-theoretical, and he falsely accused Gramsci's 'philosophy of praxis' of trying to explain historical development through the evolution of consciousness. Yet, Gramsci stressed that concepts, institutions and practices only gain meaning and significance in particular circumstances and that one task of the philosophy of praxis is to explain this historical contingency. While Althusser tended to conflate language with 'ideology in general' and his approach also inclined to functionalism, he also noted the role of language in *assujettissement* via interpellation and emphasised the materiality of ideology as expressed in specific apparatuses. Others have done this better. Thus, of the three figures considered above, those interested in Marxist approaches to language and politics would be well advised to start with Marx and Gramsci.

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Jürgen Habermas

Between democratic deliberation and deliberative democracy

Simon Susen

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that Jürgen Habermas is an advocate of a deliberative model of democracy.¹ In essence, Habermas's discourse ethics constitutes a systematic attempt to locate the normative grounds of deliberative democracy in the rational foundations of language. From a Habermasian point of view, every time we engage in the co-existential exercise of seeking mutual understanding (*Verständigung*), we anticipate that we are capable of reaching agreements (*Einverständnisse*). Put differently, our communicative ability to understand one another equips us with the deliberative capacity to reach agreements with one another. Thus, the emancipatory potential of communicative action manifests itself not only in our 'weak' orientation towards intelligibility (*Verständlichkeit*) but also in our 'strong' orientation towards consensus-formation (*Konsensbildung*). Language use, irrespective of its quasi-transcendental features, is embedded in the pragmatics of interaction. Symbolic forms emerge in relation to spatio-temporally contingent modes of existence, whose political constitution is reflected in the socio-ontological significance of discursively motivated practices, which are vital to the construction of democracy. This chapter aims to demonstrate that Habermas's concern with democracy is inseparably linked to his interest in language. More specifically, it seeks to illustrate that the following ten elements are central to Habermas's multifaceted account of democracy: (1) deliberation, (2) reciprocity, (3) self-determination, (4) citizenship, (5) the state, (6) sovereignty, (7) communicative rationality, (8) regulation, (9) will-formation and (10) constitutional law. The chapter concludes by addressing a number of issues that arise when confronted with the task of assessing both the validity and the usefulness of Habermas's communication-theoretic account of democracy.

1. Democracy and deliberation

One of the most fundamental features of democracy is that it allows human beings to engage in processes of *deliberation*. Acts of collective deliberation are processes of intersubjective contemplation aimed at the construction of symbolically mediated and materially relevant

arrangements shaped by potentially empowering dynamics of action co-ordination. To deliberate, then, means to reflect, to ponder and to contemplate. More specifically, to deliberate with others obliges us to navigate our way through situations of purposeful interaction that require context-sensitive frameworks of communication. If, following Habermas, we ‘shift the burden of justifying the effectiveness of practical reason from the mentality of citizens to the *deliberative forms of politics*’ (Habermas, 1998b, p. 386, italics added), we move the weight of substantiating the anthropological distinctiveness of communicative reason from the cognitive capacity of the subject to the recognitive potential built into experiences of intersubjectivity. Democratic decision-making processes can never be based solely on the self-referential motivations of isolated individuals; rather, they are founded on the mutually dependent wills of interconnected actors. One of the main objectives of deliberative forms of democracy is to give a rationally grounded voice to members of a particular community, whose capacity to develop a sense of solidarity constitutes a precondition for guaranteeing the relative stability of symbolically mediated and relationally constructed realities.

Democratic modes of social organisation cannot dispense with rationally determined processes of collective deliberation. Only insofar as we deliberate collectively over the purposive organisation and normative habitualisation of society can we ensure that the course of history is guided by the transperspectival force of shared responsibility. In this sense, the ‘*linguistic turn*² in the social sciences, which is motivated by the rejection of the atomistic presuppositions underlying traditional philosophies of consciousness and the defence of the intersubjectivist assumptions underpinning post-metaphysical sociologies of language,³ is homological to the ‘*deliberative turn*’ in social reality, which is characterised by a shift from an arbitrarily ruled collective entity to a discursively constituted order, whose key institutions enjoy a considerable degree of legitimacy in terms of their capacity to regulate behavioural and ideological reference points shared by members of a given community (cf. Susen, 2010c, pp. 110–111, 116–117; cf. also Susen, 2014b). If, following Habermas, ‘a *discursive or deliberative model* replaces the contract model’ (Habermas, 1994, p. 137, italics added) and if, as a result, ‘the legal community constitutes itself not by way of a social contract but on the basis of a *discursively achieved agreement*’ (Habermas, 1994, p. 137, italics added), then the normative cornerstone of a democratically organised society is not simply its formal commitment to producing and protecting judicially confined social relations but, rather, its *substantive* capacity to enhance its members’ active participation in collective processes of consensus-oriented deliberation.⁴

2. Democracy and reciprocity

A further central feature of democracy is that it permits human beings to build social relations based on *reciprocity*. Indeed, systems of democracy depend on relations of reciprocity; that is, we can shape the development of society democratically only insofar as we co-ordinate our actions reciprocally. The whole point of democracy is to do justice to the fact that human existence is a condition of *discursive reciprocity*: not only do we need to reciprocate each other’s socially embedded actions, but we also need to reciprocate each other’s linguistically articulated reflections, in order to provide society with the solidity of a collectively sustained, communicatively structured and rationally justified background of normativity for the daily construction of reality. The overall stability of society is contingent upon its capacity to incorporate, and to respond to, the demands of its members’ intersubjectively negotiated search for context-specific forms of validity.

Our quotidian quest for symbolically mediated modes of validity is indicative of the meaning-laden nature of society. Our constant exchange of linguistically uttered claims to validity illustrates that even large-scale systems of political representation hinge upon small-scale spheres of communicative deliberation. Thus, ‘the *reciprocity* of raising and responding to validity claims’ (Habermas, 2005, p. 384, italics added) is maintained by an intersubjectively constituted process derived from the co-existential necessity of articulating and exchanging legitimacy claims: the validity of collectively co-ordinated actions depends on the normative power they obtain through *mutually* established codes of legitimacy.⁵ Democracy, then, is inconceivable without reciprocity because of the interdependence of individual and collective freedom: ‘the individual liberties of the subjects of private law and the public autonomy of enfranchised citizens *reciprocally* make each other possible’ (Habermas, 1994, p. 141, italics added; cf. Susen, 2009b, pp. 104–105). Just as the discursively motivated reciprocity between subjects is crucial to the functioning of democratic processes of collective deliberation, the confluence of autonomy and solidarity is central to successful bonding processes generating empowering dynamics of social integration.⁶

3. Democracy and self-determination

Another significant feature of democracy is that, due to its capacity to foster social relations based on mutual understanding and agreement, it allows for the emergence of both individual and collective forms of *self-determination*. Individual self-determination and collective self-determination are two complementary moments in the human striving for autonomy: the self-determination of individuals is pointless if not granted by collectives, just as the self-determination of collectives is worthless if not supported by individuals.⁷

Following Habermas, there are four conditions for subjects’ free association within a democratic framework:

- a. the consolidation of an effective political *apparatus*,
- b. the formation of a more or less clearly defined ‘*self*’,
- c. the construction of a *citizenry*, and
- d. the creation of an economic and social *milieu*.

(see Habermas, 2003, pp. 88–89)

In other words, genuine forms of democracy need to draw on various *political, cultural, institutional* and *economic* resources of a given society to claim that they have the legitimate power to affirm their bonding function within the domain of a territorially circumscribed reality.

To the extent that ‘[t]he identity requirement for the determination of a collective subject capable of *self-determination* and *self-direction* is fulfilled by the *sovereign territorial state* of classical international law’ (*ibidem*, p. 89),⁸ the right to both individual and collective autonomy is inscribed in the agenda of democratically organised societies. In essence, the right to self-determination and self-direction designates the legitimate capacity to define what one does and where one goes – individually or collectively. If subjects are granted the right to self-determine their actions, they are entitled to fill the space of historical indeterminacy with the self-empowering force of autonomy.⁹

According to Habermas’s account of autonomy, however, the right to both individual and collective self-determination obtains not only *force* but also *legitimacy* insofar as its carriers

are *actively* and *directly* involved in discursive processes of opinion- and will-formation. For assertions of self-determination are embedded in processes of communication. In this sense, self-government rests upon both communicative power and political power. ‘*Communicative power* is the power that emerges from the exercise of political autonomy, and hence cannot be separated from the discursive processes of will-formation, i.e., from *democracy*’ (Preuss, 1998, p. 331, italics added). And *political power* is the power that emerges from the exercise of communicative freedom, and thus cannot be divorced from the linguistic processes of social integration, that is, from *everyday intersubjectivity*. Democracy and self-determination, then, are intimately intertwined because our ability to shape the course of history through communicative processes of critical intersubjectivity is indivisible from our capacity to develop a sense of individual and social responsibility by mobilising our species-constitutive resources¹⁰ through which we, as human beings, acquire a sense of both personal and collective sovereignty.¹¹

4. Democracy and citizenship

A further key component of democracy in modern society is its dependence on different forms of *citizenship*. According to *universalist* conceptions of citizenship, *civil, political and social rights* constitute integral elements of modern democracies.¹² According to *differentialist* conceptions of citizenship, *numerous* rights – that is, not only *civil, political and social rights*, but also several other rights, such as *cultural, sexual and human rights* – represent vital ingredients of late modern democracies.¹³

The historical significance of civil, political and social rights manifests itself in the existence of three institutions that are central to the functioning of modern society: the law courts, the parliament and the welfare system (see Turner, 1994 [1990], p. 202; see also Turner, 2009, p. 68). The present-day relevance of the struggle over further – for instance, cultural, sexual and human – rights is illustrated in the commitment of an increasing number of modern democracies to protecting their citizens from both hidden and overt mechanisms of social discrimination. In the modern world, the pursuit of democracy cannot be disconnected from ‘the struggle for, and attainment of, citizenship’¹⁴ – the ideal of democratic freedom cannot be realised without a commitment to the construction of democratic citizenry (cf. Habermas, 2003, p. 88).

It is far from uncontroversial, however, what the main elements of a democratic citizenry are and to what extent complex forms of society require complex forms of citizenship (see Susen, 2010b). Notwithstanding the issue of addressing the multiple challenges posed by high levels of societal complexity, it is hard to deny that the genealogy of large-scale systems of democracy is inconceivable without the establishment of differentiated models of citizenry.

When reflecting upon the relationship between democracy and citizenship in the contemporary context, we need to face up to three historical processes, which – from a sociological perspective – are of paramount importance: (a) the consolidation of the *neoliberal* project, (b) the emergence of a *post-communist* world and (c) the rise of *multicultural* politics (see *ibidem*, pp. 260–262).

- a. If, under the *neoliberal* model, citizenship has been converted into a privatised affair of an increasingly *commodified* society, the question remains to what extent modern democratic systems have the capacity to undermine, rather than to reinforce, the detrimental effects of economic reification processes.¹⁵

- b. If, in the *post-communist* context, citizenship has been transformed into a universalised affair of an ever more *globalised* society, the question remains to what extent modern democratic systems have the capacity to cope with both the intra-national demands ‘from below’ and the supra-national pressures ‘from above’ in a world characterised by an intensified degree of interdependence of local and global developments.¹⁶
- c. If, following *multicultural* agendas, citizenship has been turned into a hybridised affair of a culturally *fragmented* society, the question remains to what extent modern democratic systems have the capacity to translate the presence of advanced levels of cultural complexity into an empowering resource, rather than a disempowering obstacle, in the pursuit of social stability, economic prosperity and developmental elasticity.¹⁷

In short, the increasing differentiation of society has led to the complexification of the dynamic relationship between democracy and citizenship.¹⁸

5. Democracy and the state

One of the most controversial issues in contemporary social and political theory is the question of the extent to which democracy and *the state* constitute two irreducible components of modern society. More precisely, the question in this regard concerns the degree to which *democracy* and *the state* can be considered two *interdependent* foundations of highly advanced civilisational formations. From a historical point of view, it appears that the creation of modern democracies is inextricably linked to the consolidation of legitimate states. If there is a predominant – and, indeed, appropriate – consensus according to which, the ideal of democracy in the modern world can be realised only through the construction of a legitimate political state, then another controversial question arises, namely the following: What should such a state look like, in terms of both its ideological outlook and its institutional set-up?

From a Weberian perspective, ‘the *sovereign territorial state*’ constitutes a cornerstone of modern societies (Habermas, 2003, p. 89, italics in original). From a Habermasian standpoint, the ‘sovereign *Rechtsstaat*’ represents an indispensable source of political legitimacy in modern democracies (see, for example, Habermas, 1996 [1992]-a). Both interpretations illustrate that, in a world characterised by the ubiquity of large-scale bureaucratic organisations, it is difficult – or, perhaps, implausible – to examine the concepts of ‘democracy’ and ‘the state’ in isolation from one another. To the degree that the question of ‘democracy’ and the question of ‘the polity’ are intimately intertwined, it is impossible to dissociate the possibility of collective deliberation from the necessity of political organisation. Just as we need to accept that a ‘distinctive feature of the modern state is the possession of the monopoly of the means of *violence* within a given territory’ (Hirst & Thompson, 1995, p. 410, italics added), we need to recognise that a predominant feature of modern democracy is the possession of the monopoly of the means of political *discourse* within a given society (cf. Susen, 2010c, pp. 110–111, 116–117). The territorial integrity of the modern polity is a precondition for the legitimate affirmation of the state’s institutionally established sovereignty, and the pluralistic elasticity of modern democracy is a prerequisite for the legitimate consolidation of the state’s discursively negotiated autonomy.¹⁹

6. Democracy and sovereignty

Another key issue arising from debates around the constitution of democracy is its relation to the idea of both individual and collective *sovereignty*.

- a. The legitimacy of democracy depends on its capacity to protect and to promote the *individual sovereignty* of the members of a given society. At this level, democracy is aimed at converting the philosophical ideal of personal autonomy into a social reality based on individual responsibility and accountability (*Mündigkeit*) (see Habermas, 1987 [1965/1968], p. 311; see also Susen, 2007, pp. 37, 40, 69, 72, 82, 251).

According to the early Habermas, we – as a species capable of cognition and action – possess *knowledge-constitutive interests*, which manifest themselves in our ability to control, to comprehend and to critique particular aspects of reality by generating, and making use of, technological, hermeneutic and critical forms of knowledge (see esp. Habermas, 1987 [1965/1968]). According to the late Habermas, we – as a species capable of speech and action – possess *language-constitutive interests*, which permeate our ability to represent, to regulate and to relate to particular aspects of reality by raising assertive, normative and expressive validity claims.²⁰ Owing to the socio-ontological significance of our *species-constitutive interests*, we are obliged to recognise that the pursuit of individual and collective forms of sovereignty (*Eigenständigkeit*) is built into the nature of human linguisticity (*Sprachlichkeit*).

Our ‘*emancipatory cognitive interest*’ (Habermas, 1987 [1965/1968], pp. 310, 314, italics added) in personal and social liberation from ‘dependence on hypostatized powers’ (*ibidem*, pp. 310, 313) enables us to pursue our ‘human interest in autonomy and responsibility (*Mündigkeit*)’ (*ibidem*, p. 311). Our linguistic capacity to question the unquestioned and to discuss the undiscussed permits us to follow our human interest in acquiring an empowering degree of individual sovereignty by immersing ourselves in discursively mediated forms of critical intersubjectivity. In other words, the *emancipatory* value of democracy – in the Habermasian sense – depends on its capacity to defend both *the right* and *the will* to individual sovereignty, which is indispensable to both the construction of personal autonomy and the development of a sense of responsibility (cf. Susen, 2009a, 2015b). Put differently, democracy – understood in Habermasian terms – is inconceivable without the emergence of linguistically anchored and discursively cultivated modes of sovereignty.

- b. The legitimacy of democracy depends on its capacity to protect and to promote the *collective sovereignty* enjoyed by the members of a given society. In the modern world, *collective* sovereignty is typically associated with *national* sovereignty, that is, the sovereignty of nation-states. In essence, two key levels underlying collective sovereignty can be distinguished: *internal sovereignty* and *external sovereignty*.

Whereas *internal* sovereignty stems from a political body’s capacity to claim legitimacy in relation to a particular society, *external* sovereignty is reflected in a political body’s capacity to claim legitimacy in relation to other political bodies. The former enables a given government to assume the supreme command over civil society by virtue of both *de jure* – that is, legal – and *de facto* – that is, coercive – institutionalised means. The latter, by contrast, is derived from nation-states’ *mutual recognition* of their respective territorial integrity and political legitimacy. Put differently, collective sovereignty is consolidated and sustained on the basis of both internal *and* external sovereignty. Hence, rather than presuming that the capacity for sovereignty simply emanates ‘from within’, we need to acknowledge the fact that ‘to a significant degree the capacity for sovereignty came from *without*’ (Hirst & Thompson, 1995, p. 410, italics in original; on this point, see also Susen, 2015a, pp. 126, 127, 133, 134, 216, 225, 229).

If, therefore, we accept that the seemingly endogenous power of sovereignty is inextricably linked to its exogenous conditioning, we are compelled to concede that democracy is never simply a *local* or *national* affair, but always, at least in principle, also a *global* and *transnational* matter. Internally, democracy can work only insofar as the members of a given society are willing to engage in discursive forms of communicative intersubjectivity oriented towards collective deliberation. Externally, democracy can work only insofar as different polities are prepared to commit to transnational co-operation and transcultural dialogue, both of which are central to generating fruitful communication processes between different societies.

In brief, democracy and sovereignty are two elements necessary for the construction of a society that is shaped by discursively constituted and morally valuable modes of agency.²¹

7. Democracy and communicative rationality

Democracy, in the Habermasian sense, has another crucial ingredient: *communicative rationality*. Indeed, Habermas's plea for an *ethics founded on communicative rationality* can be conceived of as a proposition for a set of principles oriented towards deliberative democracy. The paradigmatic primacy ascribed to the construction of a discursively configured reality is motivated by the conviction that, as linguistic beings able to raise rationally justifiable validity claims, we can mobilise the empowering resource of communicative rationality to determine both the constitution and the evolution of society.

In order to make sense of the discursive nature of democracy, we need to reflect upon five – interrelated – dimensions of *communicative rationality*.²²

- a. Communicative rationality is based on *Verstand* (reason): as such, it is derived from our rational capacity to attribute meaning to the world by virtue of linguistically articulated claims to validity.
- b. Communicative rationality enables us to engage in processes of *Verständigung* (communication): as such, it permits us not only to co-ordinate our actions, but also to attribute meaning to them by virtue of intersubjective practices oriented towards mutual understanding.
- c. Communicative rationality is the main driving force guiding our species-constitutive search for *Verstehen* (understanding): as such, it allows us to imbue the givenness of reality with the meaning-ladenness of language and thereby to permeate the facticity of worldly objectivity with the normativity of lifeworldly intersubjectivity.
- d. Communicative rationality is both a means and an end of our orientation towards *Verständlichkeit* (intelligibility): as such, its existence is symptomatic of the fact that, as subjects capable of speech and action, we make sense of the world by making sense of each other.
- e. Communicative rationality is the principal socio-ontological force behind our ability to reach an *Einverständnis* (agreement): as such, its presence demonstrates that we – as a communicative species – are capable of mutual understanding and that we – as a discursive species – are capable of reaching agreements.

This is the point at which *democracy* comes into play. Democracy rests upon the empowering potential of communicative rationality, because the symbolically mediated and intelligibly structured co-ordination of our actions within the sphere of reality lies at the heart of every discursively organised society.

- a. Democracy is inconceivable without *Verstand*: in democratic societies, the ultimate resource of justification is not faith but *reason*.
- b. Democracy is unthinkable without *Verständigung*: in democratic societies, the ultimate resource of argumentation is not monologue but *dialogue*.
- c. Democracy is impossible without *Verstehen*: in democratic societies, the ultimate resource of signification is not the acceptance of facticity but the struggle over *normativity*.
- d. Democracy is unimaginable without *Verständlichkeit*: in democratic societies, the ultimate resource of action co-ordination is not egotistic self-referentiality but mutual *intelligibility*.
- e. Democracy is unimaginable without *Einverständnis*: in democratic societies, the ultimate resource of both small-scale and large-scale organisation is not violence but the search for *agreements*, including – if necessary – the agreement to disagree.

In short, deliberative democracy and communicative rationality are two mutually inclusive conditions for the understanding-oriented co-existence of interdependent subjects.²³

8. Democracy and regulation

It would be overly optimistic to suggest that the running of democracy is driven by exclusively empowering – notably, deliberative, communicative and discursive – forces. In fact, one of the less obvious dimensions of democracy is its *regulative* function (see Habermas, 1994, p. 138), which may be perceived as ambivalent in that it contains both positive and negative aspects:

- On the *positive* side, the regulative function of democracy is illustrated in the fact that its existence allows for the establishment of relatively *predictable* – and, thus, fairly stable – forms of both small-scale and large-scale social interaction.
- On the *negative* side, the regulative function of democracy is reflected in the fact that its existence can trigger inconveniently *rigid* – and, hence, excessively synchronised – forms of both small-scale and large-scale social interaction.

If ‘morality and law both serve to regulate interpersonal conflicts’ (*ibidem*, p. 138) and if ‘both are supposed to protect the autonomy of all participants and affected persons equally’ (*ibidem*, p. 138), a key function of democracy consists in organising human life forms in terms of both micro-sociological concerns, arising from people’s tangible experiences of *Gemeinschaft*, and macro-sociological issues, emerging from people’s intangible experiences of *Gesellschaft*. The validity claims of moral commands raised in the lifeworld (see *ibidem*, p. 139) and the legitimacy claims of legal norms imposed upon ordinary actors by the system (see *ibidem*, p. 139) form a dual regulative totality that permeates the praxeological horizon of every modern democracy.

Democracy, then, is not only a ‘legislative practice of justification’ (*ibidem*, p. 139), but also a regulative process of normalisation. Just as ‘different types of reason’ (*ibidem*, p. 139) can be brought forward to make a case for a particular kind of legislation, different collective strategies can be employed to shape the development of a given society by specific patterns of regulation. Indeed, what manifests itself in the functional interdependence of legislative practices of justification and regulative practices of normalisation is the intertwining of validity and normativity: rationally justified claims to validity that are aimed at equipping a collective entity with a framework of legislative regularity express a demand for normativity, without which there would be no meaningful organisation of society.

In this sense, ‘law has a more complex structure than morality’ (*ibidem*, p. 139): whereas the latter serves to regulate people’s interactions in the concrete realm of *Gemeinschaft*, the former operates as a legislative umbrella that stipulates people’s interactions in the abstract realm of *Gesellschaft*. The distinctive power of democracy, in this context, is its capacity to make both ordinary claims to moral validity and institutional claims to judicial legitimacy subject to critical scrutiny by virtue of communicative rationality. In a democratic society, understood in the Habermasian sense, it is not the *forceful force of symbolic or physical violence* but, on the contrary, the *forceless force of the better argument* which gives *validity* to moral patterns of justification as well as *legitimacy* to legislative patterns of normalisation.²⁴ In short, an important function of democracy is to guarantee the *regulation* of society – not by relying upon arbitrary forms of authority, but by drawing upon communicative rationality. Hermeneutically equipped entities capable of speech and action can determine the course of history by mobilising the discursive resources inherent in linguistically mediated practices of intersubjectivity.²⁵

9. Democracy and will-formation

The construction of democracy is inextricably linked to the formation of both individual and collective *wills*. Put differently, democratic power is expressed in *will power*. Yet, democratic and non-democratic modes of will-formation are fundamentally different in the following sense:

- In the former, every member of society has the right to express their opinion and, consequently, to participate in both private and public debates.
- In the latter, some members or groups of society may be excluded from collective decision-making processes on relatively arbitrary – for example, economic, ideological, religious, cultural, ethnic, ‘racial’ or gender-specific – grounds.

The universal right to be directly and actively involved in collective processes of will-formation, then, is a *sine qua non* of genuine articulations of democracy – notwithstanding the question of whether they are supposed to operate as models of deliberative or representative participation. Collective processes of democratic will-formation, however, are far from straightforward and can be successful only to the extent that people are able to question – that is, both to recognise and to relativise – the perspectival determinacy of their claims to discursive validity.

Thus the opinion- and will-formation of the democratic legislature depends upon a *complicated network of discourses and bargaining* – and not simply on moral discourses. And unlike the clearly focused normative validity claim of moral commands, the legitimacy claim of legal norms – like the legislative practice of justification itself – is supported by *different types of reason*.

(Habermas, 1994, p. 139, italics added)

In other words, what we, as critical theorists of democracy, need to examine are the sociological implications of the fact that collective will-formation – as a process based on discursive negotiation and consensus-oriented communication – constitutes a normative challenge that requires actors who participate in practices of argumentation to *transcend* the perspectival determinacy of their claims to validity by engaging in the dialogical exercise of