# Four Times of Politics:
# Policy, Polity, Politicking,
# and Politicization

## Kari Palonen*

There is just one noun corresponding to the adjective *political* in French, German, Swedish, Finnish and so on, while the English language has three: *policy, polity*, and *politics*. Here, I shall take the tripartite division of the English polit-vocabulary as a point of departure for rethinking politics in a "de-centering" mode. The English vocabulary provides us with a glimpse into the linguistic possibilities for the formation of different perspectives from which to conceptualize politics.

I have modified the tripartite division by taking into account two linguistic novelties, *politicking* and *politicization*.[1] My intention is to take each of these nouns as an allusion to four aspects of conceptualizing politics. In addition, two different concepts of politics—namely, politics-as-sphere and politics-as-activity, have been commonly used since the nineteenth century, the first indicating a spatial and the second a temporal mode of conceptualizing. Here, I am exclusively interested in the concept of politics-as-activity, and, consequently, I will search for the temporal opportunities present in the four polit-nouns.

In this conceptual horizon, *policy* refers to the regulating aspect of politics, *politicking* alludes to a performative aspect, *polity* implies a metaphorical space with specific possibilities and limits, while *politicization* marks an opening of something as political, as "playable." Policy-politicking and polity-politicization form two conceptual pairs. In the sphere-concept, the core of politics is occupied by the borders and regulations of the polity-policy space, whereas in the activity-concept politics is constituted by the "verbal" figures of politicization and politicking.

*Social Sciences and Philosophy/Political Science, P.O.B. 35, MaB, FIN 40014 University of Jyväskylä, Finland, kpalonen@cc.jyu.fi

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I will speculate here on the conceptual possibilities of this vocabulary. To consider the times of politics is to conceptualize the contingent, fluid and disorderly, and to do so in a manner that does not *a priori* reduce the contingency of politics through the very act of conceptualizing. Here, time constitutes the very activity of politics: It is a medium through which to render a fluid activity intelligible as politics.

### Politics as Activity: A Weberian Perspective

Politics is both a time-consuming and a time-playing activity. We can thus distinguish two modes of playing with time in politics, namely the background time (time in politics) and the operative time (time of politics), or playground-time and playmedium-time. I will attempt to read the temporal presuppositions and implications of politics as activity, departing from the nominalistic perspective, as expressed in Max Weber's famous formulas on politics, power, and struggle. In other words, I want to continue Weber's conceptualization of politics by programmatically explicating the temporal dimension of the concept.

Let me begin with Weber's main proposal for the understanding of politics in *Politik als Berufs*, in a longer and shorter version:

'Politik' würde für uns also heißen: Streben nach Machtanteil oder nach Beeinflussung der Machtverteilung . . .

Wer Politik treibt, erstrebt Macht.[2]

The verbal expressions *Streben, Erstreben,* and *Treiben* refer to a temporal activity. Politics is oriented toward changing the existing state of affairs. The temporality of politics is a negative finality, an activity of getting rid of that which is. As an activity, politics has no substantive or purposes "above" itself. This is the proper temporality of doing, oriented toward change but not in an already determined direction.

With his brief formula, Weber insists that striving for power (*Macht*) is a necessary condition for acting politically. Power is a *medium* of politics, through, and only through which one can act politically. He who does not strive for power is doomed to powerlessness (*Ohnmacht*) and inactivity. Power expresses the openness of politics as striving, and striving for new power shares leads to the next decision one must take: what to do with these shares. In order to understand this better, let us examine Weber's famous power-formula in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*.

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*Macht* bedeutet jede Chance, innerhalb einer sozialen Beziehung,
den eigenen Willen auch gegen Widerstreben durchzusetzen,
gleichviel worauf die Chance beruht.[3]

As with all the concepts in the Weberian vocabulary of human
actions and relationships, power is a *chance*-concept. As such, it
expresses the contingent character of politics-as-activity, it is "only"
a possibility, an occasion, or an opportunity to do something. It
opens a horizon of action, but does not specify how to act within
this horizon. In a temporal perspective, chances refer to possibili-
ties that are present and "real" in the experience of the persons
acting politically, while the "realized reality" is for political agents a
contingent result of past political struggles.

"Power," in Weber's nominalistic view of politics, consists only of
the "shares" (*Machtanteile*) and their distribution (*Machtverteilung*).
The German concept of *Anteil*—as opposed to *Aktie*—refers to an
egalitarian enterprise, in which every agent has some *Anteile*. With
his conception, Weber gives every political agent some shares of
power—without which he or she could not act politically. Nobody
who "strives for power" is entirely powerless, nor are those who
resist this striving omnipotent, but rather "power" is a relative mat-
ter of the "distribution of shares."

Although there can be some paradigmatic sources of power,
there is no obstacle to turning anything into a power share. The
lack of conventional resources of power, and even the recourse to
the sheer existence of agents, can in principle be turned into a
power share. When politics concerns power, it concerns the rela-
tionships between different types of power shares, different man-
ners of distribution between them, as well as the relationship
between the same types of power shares.

Weber's power-formula also indicates a limit-situation. "To real-
ize one's own will" refers namely to a situation in which neither the
agent nor the "patient" has any chances left. The latter has been
excluded from agency, played out of politics, but the agent's will is
also turned into an existing "fact" and as such can no longer be an
object of her strivings. Weber's view of power as a chance thus
excludes a complete realization of the "will." In this sense, the fig-
ure of intentional resistance (*Widerstreben*) to the attempted real-
ization of a will also marks the difference between human agents'
resistance and mechanical obstacles to the realization of the "will."

In the Weberian perspective, any chance is temporary, arising
only on specific occasions and having only a limited duration.
Time is also something that can be turned into a chance, into a
share of power in a relationship with other agents. Time as source
of power means the disposable time of the political agent, which

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allows her a certain temporal sovereignty as a "player." In addition
to these "absolute" power chances, which are available through dis-
posable time, we can speak of "relative" power chances, which are
related to the comparative ability of the players, using time as a
resource. Even when time is scarce and the margins for its use as a
background factor of action are small, the differences in the com-
petence of using time may gain significance, and playing with the
margins of temporality can be turned into a decisive instance in a
political struggle.

The political dimension of the contingency of *Chancen* not only
refers to the formal possibility of having acted otherwise but also to
the presence of plural agents conflicting in their strivings for power.
Politics as *Streben* is something unpredictable in terms of its results,
both because of the sheer facticity of the existing situation and the
presence of *Widerstreben,* of an intentional activity against the
attempt to gain new power shares. We can distinguish here between
the contingency of facticity and the contingency of struggle. This
concept is explicated in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft,* which explicitly
uses the same vocabulary as the power-formula some pages later.

> *Kampf* soll eine soziale Beziehung insoweit heissen, als das Han-
> deln an der Absicht der Durchsetzung des eigenen Willens gegen
> Widerstand des oder der Partner orientiert ist.[4]

Weber's *Politik als Kampf* topos does not indicate a zero-sum
game, but the plurality and mutability of the types of power shares
render the struggle an open contest, in which the agents are also
obliged to revise their views and redirect their striving for power
shares. The struggle against the opposing political agents is, in the
Weberian view, a "moving" instance of politics. In particular, he
writes in *Politik als Beruf,* how in politics the results are in a para-
doxical relation to the intentions of any of the participants.

> Es ist durchaus wahr und eine—jetzt hier nicht näher zu begrün-
> dende—Grundtatsache aller Geschichte, das schliessliche Resultat
> politischen Handelns oft, nein: regelmässig, in völlig unadequatem,
> oft in geradezu paradoxem Verhältnis zu seinem ursprünglichen
> Sinn steht.[5]

The situational drama of the unanticipated consequences of
actions (*Nebenfolgen*) is constitutive of politics. Time modifies both
the projects of agents and the relations between struggling agents,
while the relative competence in time-playing consists of the ability
to use *Nebenfolgen* as a special kind of *Chancen.*[6] The political point

is to turn the scarce margins of time-playing into opportunities in the changing constellations.

It is now possible to reformulate the four aspects of politics in Weberian terms. *Politicization* names a share of power, opens a specified horizon of chances in terms of this share, while *politicking* means performative operations in the struggle for power with the already existing shares and their redistribution. *Polity* refers to those power shares that have already been politicized but have also created a kind of vested interest that tacitly excludes other kinds of shares, while *policy* means a regulation and coordination of performative operations by specific ends and means. The next steps consist of outlining a temporal interpretation of each of them.

## Times of Policy

So-called "policy analysis" never poses the question of what constitutes a "policy" and its political significance. Despite this, we should ask: What kind of politics is to be understood by means of "policy" and what are its temporal implications?

A policy refers to a direction of activities, to a line, project, plan, program, or doctrine. Policy has, thus, a teleological connotation, an orientation toward the future, which is considered to be a priority over the present state of affairs as well as the activity itself. In addition, policy has a normative character as a criterion in the selection of what should be realized among possible futures. The construction of a policy signifies the inclusion and coordination of different acts, moves or measures, through which they are turned into the relative unity of activities, into a policy. In addition, a policy presupposes a criterion of judgment that regulates the inclusion and exclusion of activities, types and degrees of coordination, and so on. Thus, we can call a policy a complex of inclusion and coordination of measures into a project unified with a name, such as "the Paasikivi-Kekkonen line."

The normative and the teleological orientations of a policy remain opposed to one other. A limiting case is *Realpolitik*,[7] in which the realizability of a line is turned into a quasi-norm. Conversely, we can speak of fixed "moral" aims upheld independently of their realizability. These two situations mark the limits of a policy. In the first case, the flexibility of a policy is turned into a doctrine of passive adaptation, while in the opposite case the policy is limited to a declaration of desirability. Still, we may claim that both of them may also contribute to a change in affairs if used consciously as political strategies.

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In the Weberian perspective, none of the agents can perfectly realize a policy established prior to action. This is not acknowledged in the discourse of "policy making," if a "government" has monopolized the relevant power shares. The times "conducting" a policy, as a mode of politics, can, however, be best understood as being shaped by the insight into limited realizability of any policy. How can the revisions and deviations into the policy itself be calculated? What does the limited realizability mean for the formation and acceptance of a policy?

Understanding a policy does not thus rely merely on the continuity of a line or a project, but makes use of the temporal breaking points within it. The more fixed the policy is, the more dramatic the deviations will be and the more improvision is needed, in order to achieve at least some of the intended aims of a given policy. Such breaking points can be detected "before" the confrontation with other policies, either by the inclusion of the measures, by coordinating between them or by naming a policy. "After" the confrontation we can distinguish between *ad hoc* corrections, modifications, and revisions and giving up on the policy. The teleological character of the policy-time means that, up until the last point, the elements of the break are understood to be subordinated to the internal coherence or consistence of a project.

A lack of policy is commonly regarded as chaotic and, correspondingly, any policy is held to be better than no policy. This assumption relies on the superiority of the continuity over discontinuity in politics. My thesis is that it is possible to understand the policies as heuristic instruments in politics also when rejecting the continuity assumption. Temporalizing policies in relation to their breaking points then becomes a condition of their intelligibility.

In Weberian terms, policies are dependent on the power-shares as chances to which all policy aims must be related. However, striving for power always aims at improving the chances of realizing certain purposes (*Zwecke*) formulated in policies. Relating policy to the chances of power, including the *ex post* visible *Nebenfolgen*, means that the normative and teleological dimensions of a policy presuppose an assessment of the horizon of chances. An *a priori* fixation of a policy is not ideal, but a degree of revisability should always be provided for any comprehensive policy.

Due to the normative-teleological character of this type of politics, a policy cannot dispense with a certain continuity in time. Transcending the actual situation by a consistent line or project is legitimate on the condition that we acknowledge the value of continuity as relative to different breaking points. Dealing with these breaking points and their relations to continuity also alludes to

forms of politicking that transcend the policy-type. The alternative to policy does not consist of a reliance on ad hoc measures but of a type of politicking that is not regulated by normative-teleological criteria, or the priority of the future over the present.

## Times of Politicking

Politicking has received a minimal amount of attention in litera-ture on the concept of politics, although it refers to a key aspect in the understanding of politics-as-activity. The neglect of politicking is historically related to the fact that *Politics* was originally the title of a discipline,[8] and in most European languages acting politically is expressed by formulas such as *Politik treiben* or *faire de la politique*. In the English neologism *politicking* and the Finnish *politikoida*,[9] a single word suffices.

As a point of departure in the understanding of politicking we can take the Aristotelian idea of a *praxis*, which has its aim in itself, as opposed to *poiesis*, which is oriented toward external aims. A modern version of this idea is Hannah Arendt's metaphor of poli-tics as a performing art that is judged by the criterion of the virtu-osity of the performance:

> The Greeks always used such metaphors as flute-playing, dancing, healing and seafaring to distinguish political from other activities, that is that they drew their analogies from those arts in which the virtuosity of performance is decisive.[10]

In the language of the speech act theory, politicking consists of performatives. Politics-as-activity is never to be judged by its "results" alone, even if we count its unanticipated consequences. Or, politicking consists of asking not only *what* should be done but also *how* to do it.

Politicking as a performance relies on available power shares in order to increase the relative advantages in their distribution. The Weberian concept of *Chance* contains a gradation of the degrees of realizability of chances, although only as analogy to the calculus of probabilities.[11] For the agent, the analogy explicates the character of choices: there is no *a priori* reason for choosing a more cautious alternative over a riskier one, or vice versa. The key oper-ations of politicking consist of choosing between different types and degrees of chances, which then lead to different styles of per-formances. The simplest variation concerns the opposition between cautious and daring styles of politicking. More generally, we can

speak of genres of politicking, for example between theatrical, filmic, musical, or dance-related styles of politicking, of comic and tragic genres of politics, between the dramatic and epic variants of theatrical politicking.

When a policy consists of coordinated measures that have sources and limits in time, politicking consists of performances that are both time-consuming and time-playing events. In addition to an origin and an end, politicking has a duration and rhythm of its own, as do the performing arts. This can be viewed as an extension of the present time in politicking into a performative unity that cannot be measured by consumed time, but, in a sense, interrupts the time lapse for the duration of the performance. The virtuosity of the performance is judged by its capacity to convene the impression of the temporal autonomy of an extended present as an internal time of politicking.

The continuous moments of politicking consist of performances, of oblique or queer activities, that cannot be rehearsed in advance but presuppose improvisation and taking advantage of the details of the ongoing situation. If the core of the policy is understood to consist of dealing with the breaking point of the continuity, it marks a limit-situation politicking in which the continuities appear as regulations of the improvised performance of politicking.

Although a performance can only take place in the present, this present is not instantaneous, but, similar to the artistic performance, it contains internal temporal rhythms with chances to break from common-sense views. The stylistic alternatives in politicking have different temporal implications, for example in the rhythms of movement characteristic to each genre or style. By artistic exaggeration these "aesthetic" categories also illustrate temporal chances and modes of using them, which could also be utilized in the closer interpretation of more conventional forms of politicking.

The dual temporality of continuous and discontinuous aspects is thus of equal importance for both politicking and policy, although for politicking the present is the tempus of performance and the mark of its virtuosity. This introduces, however, a second dual temporality, namely that between the lapse of time and the extension of the present in the performing event. The temporality of performance must thus be interrelated to the interruption of the time-lapse by the extended present and the reappearance of this time-lapse at the limits of the performance. The specificity and the quality of politicking consists of dealing with both of these aspects of time.

In politicking, the aims to which policies are oriented serve as instruments in the struggle for power. The limited realizability of

the policies marks a limit-situation, which can be turned into a source of new chances, or at least into a relative advantage as compared with the encounter of similar limits by one's adversaries and their policies. The judgment of politicking should therefore be extended to the virtuosity in the competence to deal with the beginnings and ends of the performances. In this sense, politicking, too, presupposes the coordination of activities, not in order to regulate them but as an extension of the event-character of the simple performances to the interconnections and disconnections between performances.

## Times of Polity

Traditionally, *polity* has referred to a metaphorical space that demarcates the "political sphere" from other spheres. In terms of activity, polity can be considered as a temporalized space that has been politicized and commonly accepted as political, and that demarcates activity from that which is not accepted as political. In other words, polity can be viewed as a *Spielraum* of activity, resulting from previous politicizations and established to the extent that it at least tacitly serves as an obstacle of new politicizations.

In Weberian terms, polity refers to a complex in which the power shares are divided into legitimate and illegitimate ones. Certain power shares have gained privileged positions, others have faded away and appear as anachronistic, while attempts to create new ones are viewed with suspicion. The "core" *Spielraum* of the polity serves as a paradigm for politicking. For example, the public-private dichotomy can be interpreted as a result of contingent, although well-established, politicizations as opposed to a demarcation between two spheres. In naming the polity, such epithets as the "ordinary," "proper," or "strict" sense of the political similarly function as historical criteria of legitimating the established polity as opposed to the concurrent horizons of power shares.

However, the historical and temporal character of the polity means that the "central" *Spielraum* of the legitimate polity is constantly undermined due to the shifting significance of the sources of power in the situation. Disputes on the limits or demarcations of the historically and contingently formed polity also contribute to the reinterpretation of the "core" of the polity.

The struggle for power introduces an instability to the formation of a polity as a horizon of politicking. The invention of new topics on the agenda, new dimensions of human agency or new practices of politicking are liable to destabilize the polity, not only

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within its margins but also in the interpretation of what is essential
and decisive in it. Although these novelties are viewed with suspi-
cion, they can be mixed with old ones and in this way undermine
their established character. Thus, it is impossible to render the
established polity "immune" to new politicizations, even among
those who in principle accept the established polity as a legitimate
"regime."

Moreover, we can also speak of the polity of time itself; as a
metaphorical space, a polity is also a time-regime. The character of
the chances (power shares) illustrates a temporally understood
*Spielraum*, or, rather, *Spielzeit*. It is not only characterized by the lim-
its of the available time but also by the specification of the specific
occasions within this *Spielzeitraum*. The political competence con-
sists both of playing with the extremities of the legitimate time and
of gaining an insight into the specific opportunities of the time-
regime.

Parliamentary politics, controlled by the electorate and by the
government-opposition-game within the parliament, clearly signi-
fies a time-oriented regime. The complex of parliamentary prac-
tices is shaped by the presence of opportunities and controls, both
of them being limited not only "in time" but also "by time." The
various types of chances of the government to rule are shaped by
temporal distinctions, by the periodization of governmental poli-
tics to times of high and low control by the opposition respectively
by the electorate.[12]

A specific calendar of parliamentary politics was successively
introduced from the eighteenth century onward. General elections
are decisive in terms the chances of either getting rid of or re-
electing a government. The government formation in the parlia-
ment, the interpellations to overthrow the government, the annual
debates on the budget, the elections of chairpersons and commit-
tees, the decisions over the length of the session periods and on
the maximum duration of speeches mark the main instances of a
temporal polity. The events of the parliamentary calendar contain
occasions for the government to manifest its excellence in poli-
ticking and for the opposition to question these manifestations.

"Nur in Terminen rechnet der wahre Politiker," wrote Walter
Benjamin in his *Einbahnstrasse*.[13] He understood better than many
others how crucial the ability to play with time, in this case with
one's own "calendar events," is in politics. When considering time
as a decisive criterion of parliamentary politicking, we dispense
with the mythologies of the "right" of certain persons, or of "the
people" to rule. On the contrary, all rulers are subject to temporal
control by elections and parliamentary procedures. Even the

repeatedly confirmed reelection of a government appears as suspicious, despite the correctness of electoral procedures, for the temporal calendar of the polity tacitly presumes an alternation in government as a condition of avoiding the monopolizing tendencies over the shares of governmental power.

Regulating the political chances and their control by temporal measures is an advantage of parliamentary democracy over direct democracy. A simple rotation in office, according to the Athenian model and its imitations (Jacksonian democracy in the United States and the German Greens in the 1980s), also tends to devaluate the political competition that is so inherent to democracy. Similarly, the old ideal of "frequent elections" tends to diminish the chances of governments to use their power shares and facilitate the control by the opposition, without the need to construct a policy alternative.

The parliamentary regime illustrates an ideal type of temporal polity. In nominalistic terms, "polity" should be understood as any specific regime of power shares, and not as a single "political system." We can thus speak of street name polity, university polity, travel polity, and so on, which together do not constitute a whole, but a complex myriad of interconnected and disconnected polities transcending juridical, geographical, and other limits. If a single polity has a calendar of its own, the interconnectedness of the polities can, rather, be understood by the metaphor of a political timetable, showing the trains and their names, stations, and connections. As times are politically controversial, no exact timing can be given, and the very mode of constructing political timetables is contestable and constantly changing. As such, politicking within a complex of polities would largely consist of the competence to read and apply timetables.

## Times of Politicization

The word "politicization" was first used in German in 1907, when the historian Karl Lamprecht spoke of *die Politisierung der Gesellschaft*, although in the harmless sense of increasing the interest in politics. The neologism, however, was soon turned into a more offensive view of politicization as a perspectivistic reinterpretation of a phenomenon, especially among the expressionist literati Kurt Hiller and Ludwig Rubiner. To speak of politicization in this sense of creating a new *Spielzeitraum* for the activity of politicking, rendered it open to alternatives and controversies and contributed to the rethinking of the concept of politics. Such a rethinking took

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place in Germany during the two first decades of the twentieth cen-
tury, while *politicization* in English and *politisation* in French seem to
have been introduced only during the interwar era.[14]

Here, politicization thus means neither the juxtapositions of
things with politics nor the increased "interest in politics" among
certain persons. Instead, by politicization we can mark a phenom-
enon as political, as a *Spielzeitraum* for contingent action. Politi-
cization thus refers to the act of *naming* something as political,
including the controversies surrounding the acceptance of this
naming. There is no politics "before" politicization, either in a log-
ical or a temporal sense, and politicking is possible only if a
*Spielzeitraum* has been opened for action by politicization, while a
polity is a result of previous politicizations. Still, it seems equally
unnecessary to identify initial or original politicizations, for the
question of what can be considered to be a politicization is depen-
dent on the perspective of interpretation.

If a polity is a result of specific politicizations, we cannot refer
to a proper or ordinary sense of politics; politicization has no
quasi-natural subject matter. While nothing in human life can be
excluded from politicization, it always demands a specific and con-
centrated effort to politicize something new, to create a *Spielzeit-
raum*, for which no established practices of politicking are avail-
able. Politicization has to be more than a declaration and must
provide at least some indications regarding the forms of politicking
that are opened by the specific politicizing moves.

Politicization can be an invention, a construction of chances
with respect to which no chances were previously seen or admitted
to have existed. This sort of invention requires the construction of
a new perspective that renders things to appear different: The fem-
inist slogan "the personal is political," coined in the late 1960s,
seems today to be less of a novelty than it did then—German
expressionists, for example, proposed similar views in the early
twentieth century. Still, it opened a new horizon for both acting
politically and thematizing politics as a concept, which could then
be used in different and even opposing ways.

In another perspective, politicization means detecting the
political potential of some existing changes, shifts, or processes. It
will be based on analyzing the results or effects of long term
changes, which render some alleged "necessities" or "impossibili-
ties" obsolete and use these changes in order to declare a new
*Spielzeitraum* for action. Claims that without something "order" can-
not be upheld or "laws of nature" cannot be violated, and so on,
have been politicized in the sense of being rendered obsolete by
creating the "impossible" without catastrophes. For example, the

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arguments for extending suffrage always first had to overcome the resistance of such an "impossibility."

The distinction between the inventive and disruptive moments of politicization is relative. Without some disruptive processes against the old order already made visible, it is difficult to imagine invention of a perspective of politicization that is not a realizable horizon of chances. The detection of chances, as an unintended result of erosive changes, already alludes to a tacit shift in the perspective.

When an established polity with a calendar exists, politicization either introduces new items to it, which alter the relationships between the existing ones, or dismisses existing items. The introduction can concern a new topic on the annual agenda, or a new train added to the timetable and thus changing the significance of other connections. A more radical politicization could consist of the introduction of a new dimension into the calendar, putting the existing items into a new perspective. The slogan "the personal is political" represented precisely such a politicizing shift in the perspective of questioning the primacy of the conventional parliamentary-governmental-partisan politics, although it obviously was unable to radically alter the calendar and timetables, that is, the connections to the "old" politics. The politicization of lifestyles has remained disconnected from the traditional modes of politicking as opposed to altering them or making use of the rich experiences in parliamentary politics in order to construct analogies for lifestyle politicking.

In order to better understand the historical sequences of politicizations, we could make a use of Koselleck's metaphor of temporal layers.[15] Politicization both names a novelty against an established and sedimented practice and creates links between historical layers of politicization, when the previous ones have been established, naturalized, and spatialized to such an extent that their historical significance as politicizing moments has been lost or misrepresented. The rhetoric of politicization perhaps requires the simplification of an established polity as a space of stagnating and discriminating practices by neglecting its specific politicizing origins in order to dramatize the break and novelty. A radicalizing effect can, however, be achieved through reinterpreting history by accentuating forms of politicization that have been forgotten or marginalized in the established polity. Even if politicization increases the available *Spielzeitraum* in the future, it also presupposes a redescription or an *Umschreibung* of the past.[15] In this sense, the Benjaminian figure of "actualization" of a past in the present[16] remains an indispensable temporal resource in the conceptualization of politicizations.

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Thus, politicization has a dual relationship to politicking. It simultaneously creates new *Spielzeitraume* and makes some old ones obsolete in a given situation. Additionally, we can speak of a second order of politicking, which deals with the different layers of politicizations. This politicking operates with discontinuities in time, creates a relation between a radical break in the present and a recourse to the older past as something that provides some analogical resources with a sort of renaissance or rehabilitation in order to accentuate the radical break in the present.

## Conclusions

Nobody is able to master time, and the adversity and counter-finality constitutive of political actions places further limits on any attempts to master time. The classical alternative, taming the corruptive *fortuna* of time by creating a space of the *virtù*, appears today to be increasingly unrealistic; it cannot understand time other than as an erosive force. To play with contingency means to accept that time not only marks limits of political activities but also serves as their medium.[16] It is for this purpose that the nuances of the polit-vocabulary provide us with some hints as to how to deal with such a fluid and concept-escaping instance as time.

Politics as presented here, is understood as a correlate between two activities, politicization and politicking, while polity and policy refer to their "regulating" limit-situations. Politicization searches for new power shares, while politicking aims at the increase in the disposition over the existing ones. Agents making use of either of these performatives refer to the other one as well as to the past and future variants of the same operation. This reference indicates temporal discrepancies, highlighting chances of revision while simultaneously constituting a new relative continuity in time between historical forms of both politicking and politicization.

Every politicization disrupts continuity, although the sequence of breaks forms a second order of continuity in a series of novelties, mediated by the practices of politicking. Politicking contains a performative continuity, which is singularized by the shifting horizons of politicization and by the critical use of analogies to previous forms of politicking. In this sense, politicization and politicking signify, each in a different manner, a break with the mere lapse of time, which, however, can be assessed both as an erosive force alluding to the limits of the chances involved in them and as a temporal play-limit challenge to be enclosed in politicking and politicization as element of play. As an interruption of continuity, both

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of these performative operations mark an autonomization of the present. Politicization marks a moment, not just an instance, but a new horizon of chances, which can be utilized within a range of time, while politicking signifies a performance, which is singular yet has a relative duration of its own.

## Notes

1. I continue here the thought experiment presented in Kari Palonen, "Introduction: From Policy and Polity to Politicking and Politicization" in Kari Palonen and Tuija Parvikko, eds., *Reading the Political* (Helsinki: Finnish Political Science Association, 1993), pp. 6–16. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 16 (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1989), p. 34, both "politicking" and "politicization" seem to have been coined no earlier than during the interwar period.

2. Both quotations are from Max Weber, *Politik als Beruf* [1919], quoted from *Max-Weber-Studienausgabe 1/17, Wissenschaft als Beruf, Politik als Beruf*, Hg. Wolfgang Schluchter, pp. 35–88, at p. 36.

3. Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* [1922], Hg. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: Mohr, 1980), 28.

4. Ibid., p. 20.

5. Weber, *Politik als Beruf*, note 2, pp. 75–76.

6. On relating *Chancen* and *Nebenfolgen* to *Zwecke* and *Mitteln*, see Max Weber "Die 'Objektivität' sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis" [1904], quoted from *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, Hg. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: Mohr, 1973), pp. 146–214, esp. 149–150.

7. The term was coined by L. A. von Rochau in 1853, cf. his *Grundsätze der Realpolitik* (1853, 1869) (Frankfurt: Ullstein, 1972).

8. For the history of the transition from the discipline concept to the activity concept in Germany and France, see Kari Palonen, *Politik als Handlungsbegriff: Horizontwandel des Politikbegriffs in Deutschland 1890–1933* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1985); and Palonen, *Thematisierung der Politik als Phänomen: Eine Interpretation der Geschichte des Begriffs Politik im Frankreich des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1990).

9. For the Finnish polit-vocabulary, see Kari Palonen, "Transforming a Common European Concept into Finnish: Conceptual Changes in the Understanding of *Politiikka*," *Finnish Yearbook of Political Thought*, 5 (2001): 113–143.

10. Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* [1968] (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), p. 153.

11. Especially in Max Weber, "Über einige Kategorien der verstehenden Soziologie." In *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, note 6, pp. 427–474.

12. Cf. Gisela Riescher, *Zeit und Politik* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1994); Pierre Rosanvallon, *La démocratie inachevée* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000).

13. Walter Benjamin, *Einbahnstrasse* [1929] (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1988), p. 77.

14. Cf. Palonen, *Politik*, note 8, *Thematisierung*, note 8, Palonen and Parvikko, eds., *Reading*, note 1, as well as Palonen, "Korrekturen zur Geschichte von 'Politisierung,'" *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte*, 30: 224–234.

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15. Reinhart Koselleck, *Zeitschichten Studien zur Historik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2000).

16. In this respect Quentin Skinner's and Koselleck's views on conceptual changes through rhetorical redescription are parallel. See Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996); and Koselleck, "Erfahrungswandel und Methodenwechsel" [1988], republished in *Zeitschichten*, note 15.

17. Cf. Benjamin, "Über den Begriff der Geschichte," in Benjamin, *Illuminationen* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1980), pp. 251–262.

18. This discussion continues my thesis in Kari Palonen, *Das 'Webersche Moment,'* zur *Kontingenz des Politischen* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1998).