

A proposition for a general theory of ideology

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Abstract

This is a paper proposing a general theory of ideology based on two theoretical components, liberty and change. Liberty is seen as a system for understanding the individual and its relation to the group, change is seen as a system for understanding our future prospects. I propose that these two components can be used to coherently describe ideology over time and space. I describe the various perspectives on liberty and time that are needed to do this. I also conduct a small q-study to test whether there is any indication that this approach holds weight. The results indicate that this conception of a general theory of ideology is plausible.

Nyckelord: Ideology, Liberty, Change, Negative Liberty, Republican Liberty, Positive Liberty

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Innehållsförteckning

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Why is this a good idea?	1
2	Methodology	2
2.1	Aim and Question.....	2
2.2	Hypothesis	2
2.3	Ideology.....	2
2.4	Studying subjectivity.....	4
3	Liberty and Change.....	7
3.1	Liberty	7
3.2	Negative Liberty.....	8
3.3	Republican Liberty	9
3.4	Positive Liberty	14
3.5	History and Change.....	18
4	Test, Results and Conclusions	20
4.1	Results	22
4.1.1	Factor Loadings.....	22
4.1.2	Distinguishing statements for Factor 1.....	22
4.1.3	Distinguishing statements for Factor 2.....	23
4.1.4	Distinguishing statements for Factor 3.....	23
4.1.5	Consensus statements.....	23
4.2	Conclusions	24
5	Concluding remarks	27
6	References.....	28

1 Introduction

I propose describing ideology through a two component model, the reason for this is to try and understand ideology beyond the practicalities of a particular political moment. By observing, what I contend are, the two basic streams of logic within an ideology, we might be able to establish taxonomies of ideology that transcend the practicalities of various spatio-temporal incarnations, and show where and why major shifts or schisms occur.

The two components that I hypothesize can be used to describe ideology are time and liberty. More specifically, time as the individual's perspective on change, is it rational-prognostic or prophetic (Koselleck, 2004), and liberty as in the individual's understanding of the relationship between individual and group. Furthermore liberty is described beyond the usual negative-positive dichotomy. The Republican, or Neo-roman conception of liberty is included to give liberty a broader explanatory range.

1.1 Why is this a good idea?

In a sense this paper should be understood as proposing a general theory of ideology based on the idea that there are fundamental political drivers, namely the perspective on the individual and its relation to the group, and the individual's perspective on change. There is of course massive complexity within these perspectives, however I think complexity in itself is not an issue as long as the complexity is contained within a coherent framework. The simplicity of my proposed model allows for analytically structured comparison over time and space. It alters our perspective on ideology from a series of disconnected schools of thought, to instead being various iterations of various combinations of a finite number of factors. This allows us to coherently analyse ideological trends historically, and understand present ideological trends without creating overly complex (specific) analytical tools that fail to operate coherently over time and space.

2 Methodology

2.1 Aim and Question

As a first step in studying this model I intend to present the foundational assumptions made about liberty and change. I will then conduct a small q-study to see if there is any credence to the notion that perspectives on time and liberty pattern individual thought in relation to ideology. If there is that supports further study, if not it would invalidate the basic structure of the model, thereby rendering it uninteresting.

2.2 Hypothesis

My hypothesis for this paper is that we will be able to observe patterning of thought based on liberty and time. More specifically we will be able to observe patterns of thought based on negative liberty, positive liberty and republican liberty, furthermore we will be able to observe how these patterns interact with patterning of thought based on a rational-prognostic perspective on change and a prophetic perspective on change. Furthermore these patterns of time and liberty should correspond to the current spatio-temporal pattern of ideology that these actors exist within. The null-hypothesis for this paper would be no structured patterning of thought along the lines of liberty and time that I propose.

2.3 Ideology

Why are liberty and time useful constructs for understanding ideology? To answer this question we must first clarify the concept of ideology. The term ideology has a long and varied history, emanating from the period of the French revolution. The word ideology came into life through the idea of studying ideas as “universal and nomothetic categories (Stråth, 2013: 3).” From this point forward the term has racketed about political discourse, mainly inhabiting the space of denigrating political opponents for being “ideological”, i.e. in some way divested from the political realities, and in some way deceiving the public with partisan politics. This has taken the shape of; Marxist critique of the role bourgeoisie ideology plays in legitimating oppression, or Napoleon's critique of ideologues as a label for “unrealistic theories that tried to intervene in the spheres of government and political action (Stråth, 2013: 5).” The Marxist usage might be seen as

revolutionary, and the Napoleonic as conservative, either way ideology has traditionally had a pejorative connotation, where objectivity stood in contrast to ideology.

According to Peter Breinner (2013), Karl Mannheim, in his book *Ideology and Utopia*, was one of the first theorists who showed the relative nature of political knowledge. He did this by pointing out the phenomenological truth of personal myths and rituals that serve to shape ideology. This enabled the removal of the pejorative connotation attached to ideology and acknowledged the theoretical poverty inherent to studying ideologies objectively, as one would merely be engaged in judging one subjective myth/fact complex using another. Breinner (2013: 39) writes of Mannheim's perspective that, "A synoptic understanding of the political field must come from a point within it." This relativized, value-free, understanding of ideology is echoed in the functionalist account that emerged after the second world war (Stråth, 2013), the functionalist perspective sees ideology as a framework for structuring individual value preferences, ideology is thereby seen as contingent on actors values.

Continuing in this relativized understanding of ideology, the linguistic turn "made it possible to view ideologies as an interpretive framework constituted by semantic fields and key concepts" (Stråth, 2013: 15). This perspective perceives ideology in the contestation of "key political concepts and the occupation of semantic fields" (Ibid: 15). In this sense language as a concept of ideology collapses Mannheim's myth/ritual social construct and the individual values of the functionalist concept into a discursive context, the discursive context being a field "always containing multiple and contested meanings" (Ibid: 15). However the sources of meaning might be less definite, and there is a larger focus on hegemonic discourse in this understanding of ideology. Liberty for instance, is understood as a relative concept in all three previously mentioned relative understandings of ideology, however, whereas Mannheim and the functional account focus on understanding the subjective reality of its origins; the linguistic perspective might be seen as having a more critical focus on how actors establish and maintain hegemonic control over the concept in the discursive context.

I find myself firmly in the relativistic camp of ideology, perhaps trending more towards the functional account in this particular paper. However I think all relativistic accounts can be useful in understanding the various perspectives of ideology. The functional account can perhaps be seen as carrying within it both Mannheim's perspective, and the linguistic perspective on ideology, expanding as one allows the functional perspective to become increasingly complex as more functionality is included as one allows for greater complexity of the subject and the relational nature between subject and ideology. This perspective is perhaps captured in one of Stråth's (Ibid) summarizing statements on ideology:

The term is seen simultaneously as an instrument that provides orientation and initiates political action and as an instrument to control the world manipulated

by the powers that be or want to be. However, as Freedman has put it, not every ideology is dropped from a great height on an unwilling society. Ideologies are also everyday phenomena which we produce, disseminate, and consume throughout our lives (pp. 17)

So when it comes to ideology we stand on a morass of moving parts and relativity. But, I think we can all agree that no matter the causal chain, be it factors of production, the linguistic context, genetics, individual values, myth, ritual, whimsy; that the individual is a fixed point for us to rest on. If ideology is based on myth, language or values, these all emanate and actualize themselves through the individual, even with the most pessimistic view of individual will, the individual remains the conduit. Even if we allow for the incarnation of ideology outside of the individual, in text, architecture, geography, planning, all this is still interpreted by the individual. Of course someone might still talk of false consciousness, and when they prove anything we will be in for trouble. But until then I think that we should be able to study the individual and it doesn't really matter how the individual came to think what it does.

Now, we must of course still be very aware of the power differences in individuals. Brown (1980) talks of a case where there was one individual with a completely different perspective from all others measured. In a typical study he might have been hidden in the mean, but as it turned out this individual was the manager of the group; because of his power, his point of view was immensely important for understanding that particular case. What certain individuals think is quite probably more important than what other individuals think.

To summarize, ideology as a term in itself is relative, ideologies are subjective, and the individual has subjective perspectives that interact with ideology shaping and being shaped, but as long as we're only describing individual perspectives on ideology, we might be safe from the tricky relativity of the term itself by focusing squarely on what the individual thinks and not bothering with wondering why. Furthermore I think any attempt to understand why an individual would think in a particular way would be greatly improved by having a subjectively produced map of the individual's thoughts to begin with.

2.4 Studying subjectivity

I propose to study ideology from the standpoint that each ideology represents a coherent phenomenologically true collective consciousness, to study this we must observe the subjectivities that produce the consciousness to avoid imposing an external frame of reference.

Within political science we've studied phenomena extensively, but perhaps we lack understanding of the subject that wills phenomena into being. Could it be the case that by focusing on the phenomenon, ideology, instead of studying the

patterning of subjectivities we are missing something about the nature of ideology? I say this because one might contend that the constant here is not the produced phenomena (ideology), but rather the individual, subjective, frames of reality that produce it, and that the particular spatio-temporal incarnation of ideology is merely constant, subjective, frames of reality interacting with practical context. So one might conceptualize an idea of ideology that could be studied by analysing the subjectivities that produce the phenomena. Perhaps it's the case that we are dealing with a set of relatively constant "meta-ideologies" oriented around subjective perspectives that produce spatio-temporal variance in ideology as they interact with the particularities of context.

The question one needs to ask then is, is subjectivity random, or patterned? This claim has been extensively tested by Steven R. Brown (1980) using Q-methodology, with the conclusion that subjectivity is patterned and it can be a fruitful area of empirical study.

With this in mind, the first step in testing a model of a subjective perspective on ideology, is testing the validity of the claim that subjective understandings of liberty and time are patterned according to the two component model of ideology that I propose and that the patterning corresponds to current ideological patterning. This can be done by querying individuals, on their subjective understandings of liberty and time. If they pattern according to the model then this would indicate that it might be well worth to continue with this theoretical understanding of ideology.

The way this could be done is with Q-method, Q-method is a methodology for objectively studying subjectivities by having them rank statements and then factor analysing the statements to reveal patterns of thought. By ranking statements they are transformed from disparate statements into numbers that can be analysed mathematically. This is done through a four step process, described by Steven R Brown (1980) in his book *Operant Subjectivity*. First you study the concourse or communicative field of the field of interest, in this case liberty and time. Then you produce a Q-sample, these are statements that represent the various point of interest within the concourse, these statements are then sorted in a Q-sort, by the actors. The sorted Q-samples are then factor analysed to see if the subjective patterns of thought are structured among the actors. Hopefully there will emerge points of convergence between individual subjectivities, this would illustrate regularities of subjectivity that we can then try to understand and describe.

The advantages of using q-method in studying contested concepts such as liberty and time are clear. They allow us to map out the various positions held by political actors from their own perspective. This is vital, as the nature of contested concepts, and ideological terms more broadly, is that they contain biases. So in studying these contested concepts we should proceed from the inside out so to speak, using the subjective view of the actor as our starting point and then mapping the data that the actor produces when it interacts with the range of

statements that pertain to the phenomena. In this way theory points out what we should ask the actor, but it does not structure the actor's response, this is done by the actor.

I see this as an inductive method of studying subjectivities, it allows us to actually see who thinks what and then proceed from there in mapping these individuals. Instead of guessing who thinks what and then measuring the variance accordingly, with individuals who map outside the presupposed variance being seen as errors instead of pointing out the problems of the theory. Brown (1980) writes of typical studies of public attitudes that:

They are to logicocategorical because, lacking operant categories, they employ arbitrary social categories (Polish, Catholic, low income, etc.) without considering whether or not these categories are functional in any individual case. Consequently, they end up describing relationships among their own mental constructs rather than the reality upon which the constructs are superimposed, i.e., we are left knowing little about the actual phenomena of public- or private-regardingness, but a good deal about a variety of attitudes and variables with which they are said to be correlated. (pp. 28)

The aim is to discern functional categories, based on the subjective thought patterns of individuals. What I intend to do is to test if change and liberty might be functional categories in relation to ideology.

3 Liberty and Change

3.1 Liberty

I contend that liberty as a concept fundamentally relates to the conceptualization of the logos and its relation to nature. Furthermore liberty as a concept establishes some means of attaining liberty within the conceptualization of the logos and its relation to nature. I'm inspired to this understanding of liberty by Hannah Arendt's (2013) discussions on how the polis constitutes the space for the articulation of the logos in Greek thought. Set in contrast to the Lockean (n.d.) conception of the reasoning man in the state of nature entering into a political society "to supply those defects and imperfections which are in us, as living single and solely by ourselves, we are naturally induced to seek communion and fellowship with others (Locke n.d.: 206)."

Whereas Arendt (2013) presupposes the articulation of the logos as being predicated on the existence of the ordered polis, distinguishing men outside the polis as barbarians who by the nature of their living in a pre-political state of violence are mute in relation to their logos. Locke (n.d.) presupposes that the logos indeed can articulate itself in the face of the violence in the pre-political state of nature and that the entering into society is done to succour some other need than the need for articulation of the logos. The succinct point being not in the question of reason in pre-political societies or state of nature but in the question, is the political group an artificial construction or is the articulation of the logos contingent on the political group and therefore, is the political an essential aspect of being human. We find different thoughts in Aristotle:

It is clear therefore that the state is also prior by nature to the individual; for if each individual when separate is not self-sufficient, he must be related to the whole state as other parts are to their whole, while a man who is incapable of entering into partnership, or who is so self-sufficing that he has no need to do so, is no part of a state, so that he must be either a lower animal or a god." (Aristotle, 1932)

And Locke:

The only way whereby any one divests himself of his natural liberty, and puts on the bonds of civil society, is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community, for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst

another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any, that are not of it. (Locke n.d.: 279)

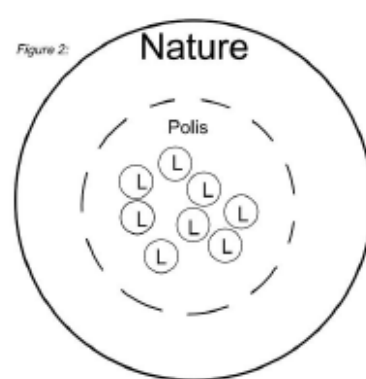
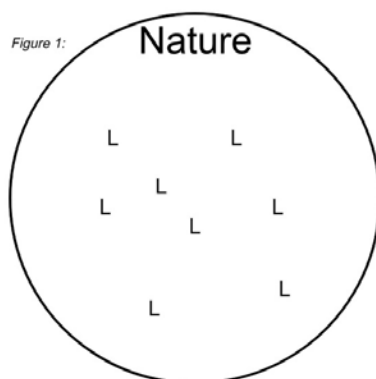
These contrasting perspectives on the logos and its relation to the polis inform my reading of three seminal texts on liberty. I will proceed first in discussing negative and republican liberty as they proceed from the logos as a constant, with positive liberty presenting a radical departure from this with its raising the spectre of false consciousness thereby relativizing the logos. The texts are Isaiah Berlin's (2006) *Two Concepts of Liberty*, Charles Taylor's (2006) *What's wrong with Negative Liberty?* And Quentin Skinner's (2006) *A third concept of Liberty*.

3.2 Negative Liberty

I will start this discussion of negative liberty with two quotes from *Two Concepts of Liberty*, in this text, Berlin (2006) writes, "Political liberty in this sense is simply the area within which a man can act unobstructed by others." (pp. 369). And: "The criterion of oppression is the part that I believe to be played by other human beings, directly or indirectly, with or without the intention of doing so, in frustrating my wishes. By being free in this sense I mean not being interfered with by others. The wider the area of non-interference the wider my freedom (Ibid, 2006: 370)."

What Berlin is affirming in these two quotes is the Hobbesian position that liberty should be understood as non-interference. In this understanding the Individual is at liberty in relation to the amount of interference it experiences when it acts. The interesting aspect of this perspective on liberty, as described by Locke (n.d.) in *The Second Treatise of Government*. Is that the state of nature is seen as being the state in which the logos is most free, by entering into civil society the logos divests itself of liberty for some other good.

This fundamental pre-political view of the logos is illustrated in figure 1, where we see Logos (L), enjoying liberty in an unobstructed state. This rather simplistic



view of liberty is then complicated by the contractarian notion that "this kind of 'natural' freedom would lead to social chaos in which men's minimum need would not be satisfied; or else the liberties of the weak would be suppressed by

the strong” (Berlin, 2006: 370). This leads to the establishment of some polis, but as Berlin goes on to point out, the sacrifice made by the logos in entering into this polis is a sacrifice of the liberty enjoyed in the state of nature for other goods, such as security and equality.

In figure 2, this second stage is illustrated, where the logos have organized in a polis to protect against the licentiousness of others, so they might enjoy their liberty in peace. If they so please they might also sacrifice more of their liberty for increased justice, equality or some other unspecified good. These two stages represent the essential principles of negative liberty.

An essential point is that the logos has not changed in this movement from nature to the polis. The logos might sacrifice liberty for “values”, but this is all, there is no Aristotelian transformation from beast to citizen. In a sense the negative conception is based on the idea that there is no differentiation between relations outside the polis or inside the polis, in that they all inevitably entail a loss of liberty. Unless of course one reduces the other party of the relation to for instance property, as with slaves. But in relations between the protected logos of the polis and in the individual's relation with the polis as a whole, one is exchanging liberty for other goods. Liberty is only concerned with the amount of constraint that is placed on the logos through relations with other logos, be that in personal or state-individual relations. This is what leads Berlin (2006) to write:

Liberty in this sense is principally concerned with the area of control, not with its source. [...] The despot who leaves his subjects a wide area of liberty may be unjust, or encourage the wildest inequalities, care little for order, or virtue, or knowledge; but provided he does not curb their liberty, or at least curbs it less than other regimes, he meets with Mill’s specifications. (pp. 373)

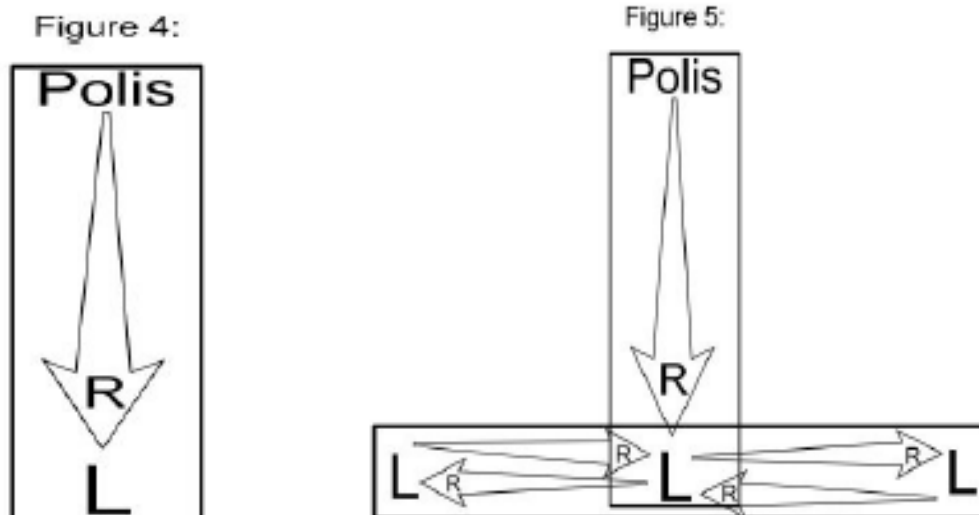
This is an important point as it illustrates the nature of negative liberty and how it views relations as a zero-sum game as relates to liberty. There is no qualification of the good or the bad relation, one might live under a Sultan or a democratic government, it matters little in regards to liberty, the important matter is the extent of the area of interference. This is because all relations come at a cost of liberty for the isolated logos. This transactional nature of liberty and its conception of the isolated logos, are what defines negative liberty and enables an ideology that isolates the individual from both the polis and other logos as regards his or her liberty.

3.3 Republican Liberty

As republican liberty is slightly more complex and less well known than negative liberty I will briefly describe it before discussing how it relates to the logos as such.

Skinner (2006) writes that republican liberty as a concept harkens back to the Roman conception of citizenship and slavery, the *Digest* of Roman law states that “the fundamental division within the law of persons is that all men and women are either free or slaves” (Skinner, 2006: 402). In the *Digest* the definition of a slave is; an individual who, contrary to nature, is subject to the dominion of another. The definition of slavery then produces the definition of a free citizen, this is an individual who is “sui juris, capable of acting in their own right” (Skinner, 2006: 403). With this definition of a free citizen as a foundation, the “democratic gentlemen” of England argued against the discretionary power of the monarchy. They argued that the discretionary powers of the monarch, led to the citizens of England being “sub potestate, under the power or subject to the will of someone else” (Skinner, 2006: 403). The discretionary powers of the monarch meant that they were living in dependence on the goodwill of the monarch and that they were therefore living as slaves not as free citizens. Skinner (2006) quotes Henry Parker and writes:

If we accept that the king has a right to impose this levy, so that ‘to his sole indisputable judgement it is left to lay charges as often and as great as he pleases’, this will ‘leave us the most despicable slaves in the world’. The reason is that this will leave us in a condition of total dependence on the king’s goodwill. [...] if we have not alternative but to ‘presume well of our Princes’, then ‘wherein doe we differ in condition from the most abject of all bondslaves?’ (pp. 404).



As we see this notion of liberty is not based on the absence of coercion or interference, but rather on the state of living under the dependence of another's goodwill. In Figure 4, we see that the polis exercises power over the logos and this can be seen as a relation (R). What Skinner says is that, the structure of this relation defines liberty, not the mere existence of the relation as such. Figure 4, represents the vertical relation that is implied in republican liberty and serves as the main point of argument in *A Third Concept of Liberty*, with the democratic gentlemen arguing against a despotic monarchy and for a sort of constitutional

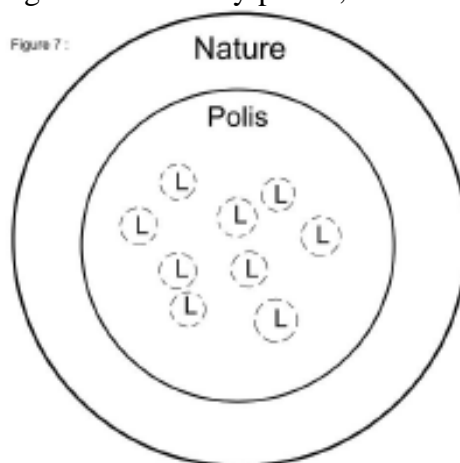
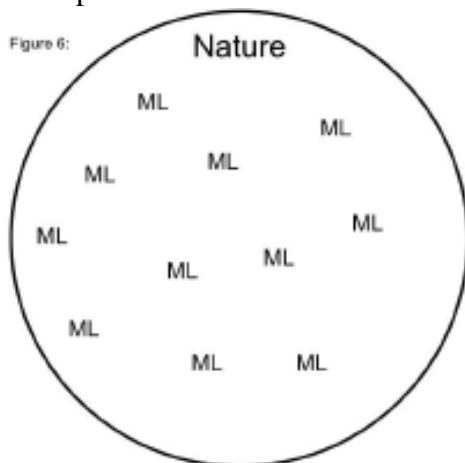
monarchy. The idea being that the extent of power exercised is not the principal point, rather how that power is exercised.

However, the thrust of the argument goes further than that, because the principle of republican liberty is this, that dependence on the goodwill of *anyone* impinges the individual's liberty (Skinner, 2006). This leads to the addition of a horizontal layer of relations between logos, as seen in figure 5. The relations as such don't constitute a constraint on liberty, it's the nature of the relationship that defines it as a constraint on liberty. To summarize the republican conception of liberty, Skinner provides a clear differentiation from the negative conception when discussing the concepts relation to autonomy. Skinner (2006) writes:

Those who believe that liberty is nothing other than absence of interference are committed to the view that the will is autonomous so long as it is neither threatened nor coerced. By contrast, those who embrace the neo-Roman argument deny that the will can be autonomous unless it is also free from dependence on the will of anyone else (pp.409).

The question now becomes how this conception of liberty relates to the conception of the logos in nature. To answer this question we need turn to Arendt's (2013) description of the ancient Greek perspective on barbarians, the household and how these entities relate to the polis. She writes that to be political, to live in a polis, means that all questions are regulated via speech and not violence, here I think we need to see violence as a metaphor for domination. This comes out in Arendt's writing, because the demarcation of the political from the private in the Greek conception is the absence of domination, because both to dominate and to be dominated is seen as muting the logos, it is in the nature of equals to *speak*, both as senders and receiver, this is distinct from the dominated relationship because it cannot "hold" a dialogue.

The household in the polis and the barbarian communities outside the polis were in this way seen as pre-political entities, because in these entities speech was disturbed by relations of domination. The paterfamilias exercised despotic power in his household, and the essence of barbarians were that they allowed violence to mute speech. These are both states of being where arbitrary power, most often in



the form of violence, mutes the logos. So whereas we've previously focused on the vertical domination that can occur, as pointed to by the democratic gentlemen, the state of nature illustrated in figure 6, can be seen as the horizontal of figure 5, without the control of the vertical dimension, this would be similar to the barbarian entities.

According to the Greek perspective, an individual in this pre-political state would be aneu logou, which means without logos. But Arendt (Ibid) writes that we shouldn't understand this as them being conceptualized as individuals without logos, rather that they exist outside of the space where the logos can articulate itself through speech, I conceptualize them as mute logos (ML), seen in figure 6. The understanding of liberty as the absence of arbitrary power is linked in this way to the understanding of the logos. If the logos exist in the horizontal without vertical control it will be dominated, however as shown by the arguments of the democratic gentlemen the polis can also come to dominate the logos vertically through arbitrary powers of the state.

Figure 7, shows a movement by the mute logos to a state of speech in a polis, the nature of this relation is illustrated in figure 8. In this entity, the polis regulates the interpersonal relations of the logos, the simplest example is the institution of some sort of police to eliminate violence, as this is the most arbitrary form of domination. The logos then in kind regulate the polis to protect themselves from the arbitrary domination of, for instance, the police. This creates a situation wherein one might expect to see the sort of institutions that exist in western liberal-democracies. This is the reason for the hard boundary between the polis and nature, and the porous one between the logos and the polis in figure 7. This is meant to represent the fact that in this structure the hard compromise of liberty and relations existing in negative liberty is not present in the same way. While republican liberty is a negative concept (Skinner, 2006: 409), it's negative in a different way than negative liberty, in that it demands the absence of domination. The absence of domination might demand a non-dominating relation to secure it, as for instance we see in a regulated police force. This is in essence a diametrically opposed conception of the position of the logos in the polis as

Figure 8:

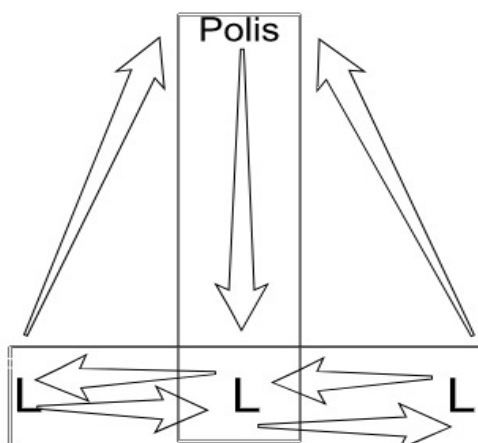


Figure 9:

L = Logos
 Lib. = Liberty
 AOI = Area of Interference
 J = Justice
 X = Unspecified Good

$J = -0 \rightarrow 1$
 $AOE = 0 \rightarrow 1$

$L - Lib.(AOI - J) + X$

9A: $L - Lib.(1 - 0) + x$
 $L - 1 + x$

9B: $L - Lib.(0 - (-1)) + x$
 $L - 1 + x$

9C: $L - Lib.(1 - 1) + x$
 $L - 0 + x$
 $L + x$

compared to the one in negative liberty. If we recall Berlin's statement that the important question is not, who governs me or how, but to what extent I'm interfered with. In the republican case, it's very much a question of who governs me and how, and the question of area of interference is secondary.

To summarize, I've tried to represent the essence of the republican conception of the logos and its relation to liberty in the polis via the completely un-mathematical functions in figure 9. Justice is meant to represent the nature of the relationship, this is of course a very broad and contested concept, but I merely use it to conceptualize the opposite of an arbitrary relation. Area of interference is thought of as in negative liberty and seen to vary from 0 to 1 while Justice varies from -1 to 1. I've illustrated some of the important functions, to show the porous nature of the relations of the logos in the polis. As we see in function 9A, this is the negative diminishing of liberty through area of interference. In 9B we see liberty be diminished even though there is no increase in the area of interference merely through the nature of the relationship being "unjust". Then in function 9C we see how a "just" expansion of the area of interference leads to no loss of liberty, but an increase in the unspecified good, for instance, security.

How does this relate to what am I and how I relate to the world around me? In this case my pre-political state is one of mute power which inhibits *speech*. As I enter a political state, my logos is protected from domination by horizontal actors by vertical power controlling the horizontal actors around me. But now I face the peril of the arbitrary power of the vertical actor, so for my logos to be free in both the vertical and horizontal dimension I must disabuse the state of its arbitrary power. In this equilibrium of "justice" I'm a citizen in a structure defined by non-arbitrary rules that ensure the protection from arbitrary power. Again it's important to emphasize the porous nature of the logos as a citizen in relation to the "logos in polis" within the negative conception. Whereas the logos in the negative conception is isolated by liberty from both other logos and the group as institutionalized by the polis. The logos of a citizen is isolated by the republican

conception of liberty from arbitrary domination but not from relations with the group and other logos as such.

3.4 Positive Liberty

In my discussion of positive liberty and its relation to the logos I will be working from the position that positive liberty is best understood in its relation to negative liberty. This because I see positive liberty as an empirically fluctuating position, a quality that's inherent in its empirical nature whereas negative liberty is constant in its separation from the empirical, we might therefore understand the relation to the logos illustrated in negative liberty as a deviation from a norm of positive liberty. I will try and illustrate this using Kant's (2012) conceptualization of understanding and sense in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*.

Positive liberty is fundamentally different from the negative theories of liberty (I will be referring to both negative and republican liberty as negative liberty as they are both negative theories of liberty) in that it questions an article of faith concerning the nature of the logos. In conceptualizing negative types of liberty we viewed the logos as an object moving through space and time, we then defined its liberty in its relation to certain externalities. For republican liberty it was arbitrary power and negative liberty it was interference by others. Negative and republican liberty presupposes an idea of the logos as an object who accepts it's will without questioning the will as an autonomous generator of action. Negative liberty is in this sense merely concerned with the space that the agent moves through.

This perspective can be related to Kant's (2012) proposition that man is separated into two entities, an intelligence that exists in the world of understanding, and an entity that is present in the world of sense. He writes that by the nature of distinguishing between the world of senses and the world of understanding we prove the existence of reason and mark the boundary of understanding itself. In this view we must understand that man can consider himself from two vantage points, and recognize two different laws that govern his behaviour. He writes "first, in so far as it belongs to the world of sense, under the law of nature (heteronomy), secondly, as belonging to the intelligible world, under laws that, independent of nature, are not empirical but have their foundation merely in reason. (Kant, 2012: 62)" So, as far as a man considers himself a rational being, hence belonging to the world of understanding, he must think of his will as being free from the heteronomy of the world of sense. In this way the notion of a man having a will that is causally undetermined, is based on the notion that it's free from the heteronomous laws of nature and instead governed by the apodictic law of reason. This idea is in a sense based on faith in that it can't be proven in relation to the natural world. But Kant writes that "By thinking himself into a world of understanding practical reason does not at all overstep its boundaries; but it would if it wanted to look or sense itself into it." He reiterates the point by stating that reason only dictates that the will must act according to an apodictic

maxim dictated by reason. If however “it were to fetch in addition an object of the will i.e. a motive, from the world of understanding then it would overstep its bounds, and presume acquaintance with something of which it knows nothing. (ibid: 67)” So regardless of these laws and if we actually act according to them, we see that Kant conceptualizes a logos that is in the dialogue between the senses and reason. What is fundamentally clear is that sense or the natural world can’t be used to infer anything about reason and as he makes explicit in earlier chapters an apodictic maxim of reason is that it must treat all other reasoning beings as ends in themselves i.e. as independently willing agents. (Ibid: 51).

This might seem a rather convoluted way of stating something rather simple and commonly accepted, that we all possess a transcendental element that makes us equal as humans, regardless of empirical circumstances. However, it does provide us with an analytic structure within which we can discuss the differences between the sacred and the profane logos which is useful for understanding negative and positive liberty. Furthermore it’s important to distinguish between perspectives that hold the logos as autonomous and that don’t, in that we must see the particular transcendentalism that underpins negative theory as unique and that its uniqueness is explained via the universality presupposed in Kantian metaphysics for a synthetic a priori statement. There may very well be other transcendental ideas about man that don’t presuppose universality and instead discriminate in some positive fashion.

Returning to the difference between positive and negative liberty. In positive liberty the perspective is different from negative in that it questions the fundamental assumption about the logos inherent in negative theory. Charles Taylor’s (2006) text *What’s wrong with negative liberty* seems to be a critique of negative liberty but is really an argument for positive liberty as he makes some fundamental claims about the logos that contradict the negative position. Taylor (2006) questions the constancy of the logos when he articulates the idea that the logos might be acting in an unfree capacity because of internal “blockage”. He writes

For they seem to be cases in which the obstacles to freedom are internal; and if this is so, then freedom can’t simply be interpreted as the absence of external obstacles; and the fact that I’m doing what I want, in the sense of following my strongest desire, isn’t sufficient to establish that I’m free. On the contrary, we have to make discriminations among motivations, and accept that acting out of some motivations, for example irrational fear or spite, or this too great need for comfort, is not freedom, is even a negation of freedom. (pp. 393)

We see that positive liberty tries to remove the transcendental aspect and bring all of “man” into the empirical, and there judge if the logos is truly internally free. Taylor (2006) writes that just by admitting the fact that the logos might be wrong or negating its own liberty, he’s not proposing that anyone else should be capable of judging the logos, he’s merely stating the fact that the logos might be hindering

itself. However, when we view positive liberty from the perspective of it as an ideological component, we must concede that positive liberty only becomes a relevant idea ideologically if one proposes a rationality or normative idea of the logos and its motivations and goals. Positive liberty in the Kantian sense produces a contingent idea of the logos from the world of sense. Whereas negative liberty is based on the transcendental proposition of universality and works from the synthetic a priori statement of “The autonomy of the will as the supreme principle of morality. (Kant, 2012: 51)”.

One might think, in viewing the ideological implications of negative and positive liberty that negative theory produces incarnations defined by flexibility or relativity while positive liberty produces rigidity. Because negative liberty proposes a limit set of rules, whereas positive generally proposes a much broader set of rules. However, I think this is a misunderstanding, and the illumination of this misunderstanding was of course the great contribution of Kant's Copernican revolution of philosophy. He showed that the empirical world is a world of sense, that objects are possible not through themselves but through conception. By first admitting this constructivist proposition, he created a space outside or divorced from sense where a priori reasoning could be embarked upon. In this sense by discarding what was previously considered firm ground that had been irrevocably shaken by David Hume's critique of causality, he found a kernel of stability in reason (De Pierris, 2013). Kant wrote:

Experience never gives its judgement true or strict, but merely assumed or comparative universality (through induction) so that properly speaking, it must be formulated: so far as we have observed until now, no exception has been found to this or that rule. If therefore, a judgement I thought with strict universality, i.e., so that no exception at all is allowed to be possible, then it is not derived from experience, but is valid absolutely a priori. Empirical universality is thus only an arbitrary augmentation of validity from that which is valid in most cases to that which is valid in all--as, e.g., in the proposition: all bodies are heavy. By contrast, where strict universality essentially belongs to a judgement, this [universality] indicates a special source of cognition for [the judgement], namely a faculty of a priori cognition. Necessity and strict universality are thus secure criteria of an a priori cognition, and also inseparably belong together. (Ch. 2)

This same logic might usefully be applied to conceptualizing negative and positive liberty. So that in fact positive liberty, because of its recourse to the empirical becomes relative, while negative liberty, with its limited but strict universality becomes rigid and absolute. Skinner (2006) echoes the relativity of positive liberty when he writes:

What underlies these theories of positive liberty is that the belief that human nature has an essence, and that we are free if and only if we succeed in realizing that essence in our lives. This enables us to see that there will be as many

different interpretations of positive liberty as there are different views about the moral character of mankind. (pp. 400)

Correspondingly we must try and consider if we might be able to see some general aspects of interest when considering positive liberty as an ideological component.

One is inclined to interrogate the meeting of the positive vision with the world, in that it might be conceptualized as one moving and internally dynamic object trying to match the movement of another moving, dynamic, object. In the inevitable mismatches we might look for violence or repression. Or we might look to the positive visions themselves, for instance the current debate within the Catholic Church (Brown, 2017) if the church should strive to match the world or if the world should match the church. We might say that a positive ideology becomes apolitical if it resorts to the mute force of violence to enforce its vision and perhaps we might say that the “political” positive vision uses “soft” power rather than hard. But I think in these cases we are not respecting the internal coherence of the positive argument.

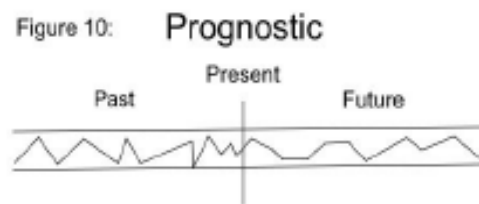
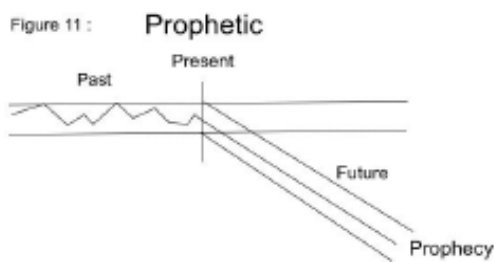
Take the example of the debate within the Catholic Church. If Pope Francis is arguing for acceptance of non-Catholics or heretics based on a universal or Kantian conception of the logos he is moving outside or to a position fundamentally different from the positive one. In the sense that he is arguing for the acceptance of non-Catholics and heretics on the base of interpretation of catholic dogma these claims are merely contingent on an empirical observation. Positive liberty is defined by its empirical nature which divests it from the absolute laws of reason and leaves it in the relativity of the world of sense. In this analysis the defining characteristic of positive liberty becomes its contingent conception of the logos as opposed to the negative universal conception of the logos. Furthermore this is based solely on the metaphysical underpinning of the two conceptions of liberty not on any particular expression of these ideas. This separation is what Taylor (2006) tries to overcome in *What's wrong with negative liberty*. He writes, “The idea of holding the Maginot Line before this Hobbesian concept is misguided not only because it involves abandoning some of the most inspiring terrain of liberalism, which is concerned with individual self-realisation, but also because the line turns out to be untenable. The first step from the Hobbesian definition to a positive notion, to a view of freedom as the ability to fulfil my purposes and as being greater the more significant the purposes, is one we cannot help taking. (Taylor, 2006: 397)” However I think he is wrong, the Maginot line stands, and Kant offers us a useful conceptual structure to understand it.

3.5 History and Change

I propose two different conceptions of change as summarized by Koselleck (2004) in his book *Futures past - on the semantics of historical time*, prognostic and prophetic. The prophetic perspective is separated into two distinct parts, the eschatological and the secular. Koselleck (2004: 42-48) writes that the eschatological prophecy was central in Europe up until the 17th century when it was challenged by the prognostications of politicians in the then freshly minted European nation-states. However, both the religious prophecy and the prognosis had a similar static character to it, in that the religious end-time had stabilized history through the tradition of the church. Similarly the prognosis stabilized history in that it reproduced the past into the future. The prognosis shapes the future, but it's based on the past, it thereby projects the past into the future as a political act. This created a cyclical perspective on history based on what was seen as natural constants, the longest cycle was seen as the life of the monarch, as this was the essential natural constant. In this way, the state that operates on a prognosticating basis becomes tied into what Koselleck (2004) calls a static-dynamic time structure, the future varies within the static structures that are reproduced by the prognosis. So in the particular example of the 17-18th century monarchies of Europe, things happened, but they happened within the spatio-temporal political and social structure. This was all challenged by the secular prophetic perspective. Koselleck writes that his grew out of the conflict between states that were based on the old religious idea of salvation, but operated on a prognostic basis which in a sense froze time. From this arose a prophetic perspective within 18th century citizen who, thinking beyond both monarchy and church became "le prophete philosophe", the philosophical prophet. What was unique of this secular prophet, was that he called for the betterment of man through radical progress, radical in the sense that it made long term prognosis based on prophecy and not the past. This opens up a future that transcends the natural constants and the previously predictable static-dynamic structure (Koselleck, 2004: 48) and is in a sense fully dynamic in relation to the relativity of prophecy.

I've tried to illustrate the difference in figure 10 and 11, in figure 10 you see the static-dynamic pattern that is produced by projecting natural constants into the future through political prognostication. In figure 11 we see how the prophecy breaks entirely with the social and political structure of the past, breaking with the natural constants, and establishes a new timeline based on the prophecy. I think it's vital to see that these lines of history are not merely ephemeral visions of the future. The static-dynamic time horizon that one projects out from the present has very real political and social consequences for the individual in that this fundamentally relates to the individual's evaluation of how his or her position will change in the political and social structure. In a sense I'm trying to say something rather simple and obvious in a convoluted way, individuals are liable to respond to what they perceive as negative change to their future prospects. This is a universal

response that might vary according to individual sensitivity to threats or other psychological dimensions, however the point is that we can't attribute a conservative position to any particular ideology. A resistance to change that manifests itself in political action is in a sense pre-political and is liable to appear anywhere organised interests are threatened. I include change into the model because this allows us to systematically map the seeming similarities that can occur when a prophecy converges or for a time runs along a static-dynamic "line". Furthermore any divergence from the current static-dynamic structure will be liable to produce a counter, and this counter is liable to be co-opted by other prophetic visions. The point being not so much to critique whatever practical variations that might occur but instead to produce a systematic description of the ideological space as it's constituted by prophetic visions and conservative urges.



4 Test, Results and Conclusions

I produced a sample of statements that were to represent the various relevant aspects of liberty and change that I discuss in this paper. This resulted in thirteen statements, concerning fundamental aspects, nine questions to test: liberty as such, political liberty and the law in relation to liberty and four questions for the two perspectives on change. The statements were administered using HTMLQ, a program for producing online q-tests. This online test was then distributed through social media, I asked a left leaning student group and a right leaning student group to share the test with some of their members. Furthermore I asked respondents to list what party they would vote for if there was an election today.

The statements that I used where: (These are translated from the Swedish statements used in the study).

1. Liberty is to act unhindered
2. Liberty is to act rationally
3. Liberty is to not be controlled by arbitrary power
4. Political liberty is to act unhindered by the state
5. Political liberty is to act in line with your interests
6. Political liberty is to act as equals
7. Laws limit individual liberty
8. Laws can force individual liberty
9. Laws create liberty
10. The most important thing when we make decisions is our understanding of the past
11. Stability is more important than change
12. The most important thing when we make decisions is our aim
13. Stability is usually an excuse to avoid change

The parties I listed where:

- M (Moderaterna)
- L (Liberalerna)
- C (Centerpartiet)
- KD (Kristdemokraterna)
- SAP (Socialdemokratisk arbetarpartiet)
- V (Vänsterpartiet)
- MP (Miljöpartiet)
- FI (Feministiskt initiativ)
- SD (Sverigedemokraterna)
- U (Undefined)

From this I received 36 answers (q-sorts), I factor analysed them to identify relations among the q-sorts, or if you will relations among particular patterns of answers. This is an important point in using q-method, that one is interested in the relationship between “packages” of answers as a whole and not among particular answers although particular answers become relevant for defining various answer “packages”. Because I had the participants order various statements from -2 to +2, these previously disparate statements are all coded along a coherent axis of values and can be exposed to factor analysis.

The first step in analysing the data was to perform a centroid factor analysis. What the factor analysis does is take our 36 different sorts, stack them in a matrix and then identify the line or vector that runs through the “grand average of the relationships between all the sorts as they are represented by their correlation coefficients” (Strickling & Almedia, 2004). What we do in the analysis is to instruct the data to identify more than one vector to discern a multiplicity of averages within the data.

After this the data is rotated, this is done to further increase the explanatory power of the factors. One might imagine a two-dimensional coordinate system, with 36 various points scattered across it, what the rotation does is to shift the axes (the factors) to alter the variance in some way. I used a varimax rotation, which aims to maximize the variance between factors. If for instance one has a cluster of q-sorts positioned between the x and the y axis one might rotate the axis so that this cluster aligns with the x axis. There is no manipulation of the data, one merely increases the clarity of the factors.

With the factor analysed and rotated data, I flagged relevant q-sorts to be used in a final analysis, these are marked with an X in figure 13. The Q-sorts were flagged if they were highly significant to the factor at an error level of $p < 0.05$ (Zabala 2014: 165-166). These flagged q-sorts are the subjects that particularly define a certain vector, these were then analysed to produce an archetypal picture of each particular factor and this picture is presented via distinguishing statements. The statements show the average variance on highly significant statements for each factor, the variance varies from -2 to 2, with 0 meaning that the factor is neutral to that statement.

4.1 Results

The results are based on the 23 out of 36 (63%) q-sorts that were mapped onto the three significant factors that were identified through the centroid factor analysis, these are shown in figure 12. In figure 12 we see both the party affiliation to the left and to what extent the q-sort corresponds to the archetypal q-sort produced by the average of that factor, this varies from -1 to 1.

When analysing the distinguishing statements it's important to keep in mind that each factor in and of itself does not present the whole picture. All factors positions on all statements are present, they are merely separated out according to significance and to provide a clearer picture of the essential statements for each factor. Of course in analysing the data we must take into account the loadings for each statement.

4.1.1 Factor Loadings

4.1.2 Distinguishing statements for Factor 1

Figure 12: Loadings

QSORT	1	2	3
1 M1	0.3406	0.1657	0.5401
2 VFI1	-0.1772	0.4343	-0.5201
3 U1	-0.8195X	0.1453	-0.1872
4 U2	-0.5496X	0.1248	0.1093
5 FIV2	0.0127	0.7475X	0.0077
6 FI1	-0.2148	0.0982	0.1700
7 V1	-0.0913	0.7224X	0.1512
8 SAP1	-0.0663	0.5638X	-0.1773
9 SAP2	-0.6820X	0.0818	0.1243
10 SAP3	0.3799	0.6614X	-0.0394
11 V2	-0.1900	-0.0527	0.3731
12 M1	-0.1507	0.3450	-0.5497X
13 FI2	-0.0150	0.0235	0.4186
14 SAP4	0.0414	0.5269	0.3212
15 V3	-0.2573	0.5614X	-0.1535
16 SAP5	-0.3715	0.7340X	-0.3142
17 U3	-0.2637	0.6470X	-0.0122
18 M3	-0.1028	0.1842	0.2553
19 M4	0.4992	0.0048	0.3178
20 L1	0.0477	0.3298	0.4577
21 SD1	0.6913X	0.2321	0.3148
22 KD1	0.0046	-0.0109	0.2797
23 C1	0.2162	0.4177	0.2289
24 M5	0.3526	0.0528	0.7860X
25 MKD1	0.7241X	-0.0000	0.3263
26 M6	0.6263X	-0.1320	-0.2372
27 M7	0.7123X	-0.1838	0.3579
28 M8	0.4363	-0.1343	0.7396X
29 KD2	0.0630	0.0194	0.9631X
30 L2	0.5870X	-0.3432	0.1023
31 M9	0.6396X	0.5401	0.1665
32 L3	0.2494	0.1694	-0.0624
33 C2	0.4701	0.0831	0.3568
34 SAP6	0.0927	0.6454X	0.0991
35 C3	0.1765	-0.0229	0.7437X
36 KD3	0.7257X	0.1594	0.4072

(P < .05; Asterisk (*) Indicates Significance at P < .01)

No.	Statement	Factors		
		1	2	3
7.	Laws limit individual liberty	1.29*	0.36	0.10
2.	Liberty is to act rationally	0.16*	-1.88	-1.41
8.	Laws can force individual liberty	-1.41	0.73	-0.87
9.	Laws create liberty	-1.42*	1.10	-0.21

4.1.3 Distinguishing statements for Factor 2

(P < .05; Asterisk (*) Indicates Significance at P < .01)

No.	Statement	Factors		
		1	2	3
9	Laws create liberty	-1.42	1.10*	-0.21
8	Laws can force the individual to liberty	-1.41	0.73*	-0.87
6	Political liberty is to act as equals	-1.13	0.64*	-0.64
5	Political liberty is to act in line with your interests	0.31	-0.73*	0.04
11	Stability is more important than change	0.53	-0.85*	0.99
4	Political liberty is to act unhindered by the state	0.89	-1.05*	0.82

4.1.4 Distinguishing statements for Factor 3

(P < .05; Asterisk (*) Indicates Significance at P < .01)

No.	Statement	Factors		
		1	2	3
1.	Liberty is to act unhindered	0.30	-0.16	1.43*
10	The most important thing when we make decisions...	-0.12	-0.24	1.25*
9	Laws create liberty	-1.42	1.10	-0.21*
8	Laws can force the individual to liberty	-1.41	0.73	-0.87
12	The most important thing when we make decisions...	0.84	1.16	-1.46*

4.1.5 Consensus statements

All Listed Statements are Non-Significant at P>.01

No.	Statement	Factors		
		1	2	3
3	Liberty is to not be controlled by arbitrary power	1.12	1.45	0.81

4.2 Conclusions

I'm greatly constrained in what conclusions I can draw from this data as I made the fatal mistake of thinking I could construct a concourse from literature, in doing this I failed to foresee the fact that statements that are coded one way by philosophy are coded another in current Swedish political discourse. Because of this it would require at least an exposition of the current Swedish political climate to adequately analyse the data, something that I feel is not in the remit of this paper. What I might say is that statements two and five which were intended to capture a positive conception of liberty map horrendously, I hypothesise this is because of their connection to economic rationalization and self-interested voting, as in voting with your wallet. Statement eight, which was to represent the willingness to coerce that we might see as a positive conception meets a dynamic reality, was just plain bad. It is of course an aspect of both positive and republican liberty that one can be coerced into greater liberty. So for the purpose of mapping positive liberty I would say all three statements failed completely. In a sense this disturbs the entire mapping, as individuals are responding to information outside the theoretical model and thereby shifting the maps of their answers that they were to create. Furthermore because I didn't interview my subjects, I have no data on how they understood the statement, so when the data throws up any answers that are in the slightest unexpected I am left resorting to conjecture, see above.

To summarise I failed both on the front-end and the back-end in relation to properly examining the subjects. I failed to produce statements that coherently mapped to the way the subjects conceptualised liberty, and I failed to ask them how they thought about the statements when they ranked them so as to have some explanatory foundation for unexpected patterns.

Notwithstanding these failures, we might see if there are any patterns in the data that we might point out with some sense of plausibility. The first pattern I would like to bring to your attention is the indication of patterning based on perceptions of change. Both factor one and two map positively towards statement 12, while factor three is highly negative. Similarly factor one and two are slightly negative to statement 10, while this is a defining statement for factor three.

	1	2	3
12 The most important thing [...] is our aim	0.84	1.16	-1.46

	1	2	3
10 The most important thing [...] the past	-0.12	-0.24	1.25

Now there are some kinks in this description, statement 13 was the only statement that failed to map significantly and statement 11 contradicts this pattern somewhat, with factor 1 also being positive to the notion that stability is more important than change. Here is an example of where interviews would have been useful.

	1	2	3
11 Stability is more important than change	0.53	-0.85	0.99

Moving on, it would seem that our factors generally map towards the negative and republican conceptions of liberty, not very surprising considering that positive liberty is out of the game. Everyone seems to agree with statement three, it being the only significant consensus statement. However there is some disagreement as to whether the logos is porous or isolated.

	1	2	3
3 Liberty is to not be controlled by arbitrary power	1.12	1.45	0.81

If we look at statement nine and six, we see a pattern emerging where factor two represents a republican conception of liberty while factors one and three are opposed to this notion. If we include factor eight, which might accidentally be contributing, this pattern becomes stronger. If you then look at statement four, a statement that clearly goes against the notion of the vertical relation protecting the logos from domination in the horizontal sphere. I think you can plausibly state that factor two represents a republican conception while factors one and three do not.

	1	2	3
9 Laws create liberty	-1.42	1.10	-0.21

	1	2	3
6 Political liberty is to act as equals	-1.13	0.64	-0.64

	1	2	3
8 Laws can force individual liberty	-1.41	0.73	-0.87

	1	2	3
4 Political liberty is to act unhindered by the state	0.89	-1.05	0.82

So we know what factor two is, its prophetic republican liberty. The problem arises when you try and understand factor one and three, we know that they're not republican liberty, we know that factor one is inclined towards a prophetic vision while factor three is highly conservative. We might say that they're both negative liberty factors and that the differences in change are throwing up some anomalies that might have been explained by interviews or that factor three is focusing on its conservative position which leaves less room for a clear position on liberty. Regardless, statements one and seven mess things up, and the difference in

emphasis on statement nine also seems perturbing. I do however think we can say that factor one and three represent different negative conceptions of liberty.

	1	2	3
1 Liberty is to act unhindered	0.30	-0.16	1.43
	1	2	3
7 Laws limit individual liberty	1.29	0.36	0.10
	1	2	3
9 Laws create liberty	-1.42	1.10	-0.21

Before concluding I would also like to present the fact that out of 33 subjects that indicated what party they would vote for, 18 out of 20 (90%) right wing subjects trended towards factors one or two. While 9 out of 13 (69%) left wing voters trended towards factor 2, with two of the missing left wing voters indicating that they would vote for the extraparliamentary party FI, which might explain their variance. This high degree of stratification does seem to indicate some relation between factors and current ideological differences in Swedish politics.

To conclude, the empirical test was not a success, neither was it a complete failure. I think it manages to produce some plausible patterns of both liberty and change that indicate to me that this line of inquiry is worth pursuing and finally that q-method requires a lot more legwork than I'm used to.

5 Concluding remarks

Yuval Noah Harari (2017) writes that *Homo sapiens* ability to utilise constructed collective fictions of consciousness enables us to transcend our genome and our environment. In a sense we have come to dominate Cartesian space through phenomenologically true fictions. This paper should be seen as trying to systematically describe and perhaps attribute some functionality to certain patterns of collective consciousness that I've observed.

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