



Project No.: CIT4-CT-2006-028698

RECON
Reconstituting Democracy in Europe

Integrated Project
Priority: 7 - Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-Based Society

Deliverable No. 90
Workshop: the methodological relevance of reconstruction in democratic theory

Due date of deliverable: May 2011
Actual delivery date: 26–27 May 2011

Start date of project: 1 January 2007

Duration: 60 months

Lead contractor for this deliverable:
Partner 1 ARENA – Centre for European Studies
Oslo University, Norway

Draft Version

Project co-funded by the European Commission within the Sixth Framework Programme (2002-2006)		
Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	X
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

1. Introduction

RECON Deliverable No. 90 – *Workshop: the methodological relevance of reconstruction in democratic theory* is part of work package 1, which establishes the theoretical framework for the project and seeks to develop an overarching theoretical approach to the study of European democracy. By providing a normative assessment of three different models for reconstituting democracy in Europe, it gives a theoretical account of democratic legitimacy in the European multilevel constellation. It seeks to spell out the deliberative perspective in relation to each of the RECON models and to establish whether a post-national union with a cosmopolitan imprint is possible. Dealing with the basic questions regarding democracy beyond the nation state, WP 1 examines the nuts and bolts of deliberative democratic theory with the aim of discovering what democracy can mean under conditions of pluralism, complexity and multi-level governance structures. In the last year of the project, WP1 will continue and finalise the work on democratic legitimacy in a transnational context and on the establishment of the conceptual relationship between democracy, statehood and legitimacy.

2. Presentation of the workshop

The workshop ‘The Methodological Relevance of Reconstruction in Democratic Theory’ was organized by ARENA – Centre for European Studies in cooperation with the Research Programme on Democracy at the University of Oslo. Workshop conveners Daniel Gaus (ARENA) and Christoph Humrich (Peace Research Institute Frankfurt) launched a call for papers early 2011, and gathered scholars from political science, philosophy and sociology to discuss a key topic of RECON’s WP 1 research – the disciplinary divide between normative political theory and empirical political science. The event was hosted by ARENA on 26–27 May 2011 and brought together 11 researchers from Norway and Germany.

Democracy as an idea is almost exclusively discussed within political theory, whereas democracy as a political practice is largely covered by empirically oriented political science. To determine whether and how democracy can be preserved at the European or global level, it is essential to know more about how democracy as an idea functions in the political practice of modern democratic societies. The question is how to analyse the role and impact of ideas in practice. The workshop discussed methodological aspects of democratic and political theory starting from the Habermasian concept of reconstruction.

Daniel Gaus’ introduction to the workshop’s topic was followed by the first bloc of presentations that focused on Habermasian theory. Kjartan Koch-Mikalsen (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) compared the Kantian mode of normative justification with Habermas’ mode of functional explanation. Jørgen Pedersen (University of Bergen) discussed the relationship between philosophy and science in Habermas’ account. Christoph Humrich forged a bridge between Lakatos’ theory of research programmes and Habermas’ concept of rational reconstruction. The first day finished with a presentation by Odin Lysaker (University of Oslo) who drew attention to another author of the Frankfurt School and discussed Axel Honneth’s account of reconstructive critical theory.

The second day started with two presentations that focused on the work of David Miller. Andreas Busen (University of Hamburg) presented Miller’s work as a reconstructive approach in political theory and Tania Mancheno (University of Hamburg) reviewed Miller’s reconstruction of the concept of nation and its implications to questions of justice. Taking a

more general perspective, Cathrine Holst (ARENA) reflected upon the role of examples in political theory. Two scholars applied a sociological view on reconstruction; Oliver Schmidtke (Johann Wolfgang Goethe University) presented a reconstructive analysis of Thomas More's Utopia, and Ulrich Franke (University of Bielefeld) proposed a new approach to the analysis of global governance, drawing on insights from pragmatism and the method of objective hermeneutics. Emanuel Richter's (University of Aachen) presentation on 'The EU regarded from the viewpoint of radical democracy' concluded the workshop.

3. List of participants

Andreas Busen	<i>University of Hamburg</i>
Ulrich Franke	<i>University of Bielefeld</i>
Daniel Gaus	<i>ARENA, University of Oslo</i>
Cathrine Holst	<i>ARENA, University of Oslo</i>
Christoph Humrich	<i>Peace Research Institute Frankfurt</i>
Kjartan Koch-Mikalsen	<i>University of Trondheim</i>
Odin Lysaker	<i>University of Oslo</i>
Tania Mancheno	<i>University of Hamburg</i>
Jørgen Pedersen	<i>University of Bergen</i>
Emanuel Richter	<i>University of Aachen</i>
Oliver Schmidtke	<i>University of Frankfurt</i>

4. Programme

See attachment.

Democracy as an Idea in Practice: The Methodological Relevance of Reconstruction in Democratic Theory

Research Programme on Democracy / RECON Workshop
WP 1 – Theoretical Framework

Oslo, 26-27 May 2011

Venue: Johan P. Olsen room, ARENA, Sognsveien 68 (2nd floor)
www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/about/maps/

Workshop organisers: Daniel Gaus (ARENA, University of Oslo)
Christoph Humrich (InIIS, University of Bremen)

Organized by ARENA – Centre for European Studies in cooperation with the Research Programme on Democracy at the University of Oslo. The workshop takes place within the framework of RECON's work package 1 'Theoretical Framework'.

The aim of this workshop is to shed light on the disciplinary divide between normative political theory and empirical political science. Democracy as an *idea* is almost exclusively discussed within political theory, whereas democracy as a *political practice* is largely covered by empirically oriented political science. To determine whether and how democracy can be preserved at the European or global level, we need to know more about how democracy as idea actually works in the political practice of current democratic societies, and how it is engrained in the presuppositions and practices of modern governance.

Programme

Thursday, 26 May 2011

- 12:00-12:30 **Introduction**
Daniel Gaus, ARENA, University of Oslo
Christoph Humrich, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt
- 09:20-10:10 **Kant and Habermas on Law: Normative Justification vs. Functional Explanation**
Kjartan Koch-Mikalsen
 University of Trondheim
- Lunch break
- 10:10-11:00 **Habermas and the Philosophy/Science Interplay**
Jørgen Pedersen
 University of Bergen
- 11:30-12:20 **Research Programmes, Rational Reconstruction**
Christoph Humrich
 Peace Research Institute Frankfurt
- 11:00-11:30 Coffee break
- 12:20-13:00 **Democracy from Within: The Methodological Reconstruction of the Practice of Democratic Ideals in Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognition**
Odin Lysaker
 University of Oslo
- 11:00-11:30 Dinner

Friday, 27 May 2011

- 09:15-10:05 **Reconstructing "what the people think" - nationally and globally**
Andreas Busen
 University of Hamburg
- 10:05-10:55 **About the role of examples in political philosophy (title to be delivered)**
Cathrine Holst
 University of Oslo
- 11:00-11:30 Coffee break
- 11:30-12:20 **The Nation: A Comparative Reconstruction**
Tania Mancheno
 University of Hamburg
- 13:00-14:00 Lunch
- 14:00-14:50 **The utopian Society needs no Utopia - Reconstruction of the Dissolution of Sociality in Thomas More's "Utopia"**

Oliver Schmidtke
University of Frankfurt

14:50-15:40 **In search of a democratisation of Global Governance. A
reconstructive approach**

Ulrich Franke
University of Bielefeld
Coffee break

15:45-16:15

16:15-17:15 **The European Union Regarded from the Viewpoint of Radical
Democracy**

Emanuel Richter
University of Aachen

17:15 **Conclusion**