

The Politics of Knowledge: Introduction

Samuli Hurri & Iiris Kestilä*

1. Introduction

The politics of knowledge is an open-ended notion that releases a whole variety of critical research possibilities. What we introduce in this volume is collective work by researchers who have come together for one academic year to explore those possibilities.¹ The question for us was how different types of knowledge and exercise of power mingle in the governing of societies. At the beginning, we had in mind a number of rather traditional dichotomies whose ‘hybridization’ or ‘deconstruction’ the notion of politics of knowledge seemed to suggest: science and politics, theoretical and practical reasoning, facts and norms, description and prescription, and so forth. How we proceeded from there will be explained shortly. Before that, however, we feel we should say a word on the topicality of our theme. The politics of knowledge is not a new notion and even less a new thing, yet we think that it opens a view on to what is going on in the world at the present time.

A couple of years ago, public ridicule of statements by a certain White House press secretary about how many people attended Donald Trump’s inauguration ceremony seemed entirely unimportant.² Ridicule was not so much about that statement as about its subsequent defence by someone else. That defence appeared somewhat obtuse at the time, but also comical and amusing: the Counsellor to the President publicly on television termed the number of attendees as offered by the press secretary not as plain falsehood but as an ‘alternative fact’. As we now know, the waters quickly became more muddied and nothing is amusing about alternative facts any longer. On the one side, there is the rise of cultural, socio-economic and anti-establishment populism that distrusts all knowledge as mere official dogma

* Adjunct Professor and Researcher, Universities of Lapland and Helsinki.

1 This was the academic year 2018–2019. The work was organized within the framework of what we have come to call the ‘problematizations seminar’. For its current themes and problems, see <<http://ulapland.fi/Problematizations>>.

2 He said it was the ‘largest audience to ever witness an inauguration’. It was quickly established that more people attended Obama’s inauguration in 2009.

whose function is to constrain the will of the true people.³ On the other side, there is the uncanny figure of the furious teenager Greta Thunberg speaking before the U.S. Congress and the UN General Assembly and urging everybody to ‘listen to the scientists’ in the face of imminent destruction.

The politics of knowledge apparently stands in the midst of these types of development that may sometimes appear very dramatic. They surface in our awareness as broadcast events like any other matter does, but are they perhaps generated by more intricate, less visible contradictions of our *Zeitgeist*? Should we try to find out whether a steadier current of politics of knowledge exists beneath the headlines, the task first involves capturing its nature, then corroborating its existence, and finally measuring its size and trend. For that task, one would need rigorous analytical tools and fruitful research materials. Each of the articles in this volume will provide their own vision with precisely those ends in mind. Before introducing this more elaborate work, we will provide a brief illustration of the idea by way of a couple of examples from newspapers.

2. Illustration of the idea

The following are from the specific field of the politics of *economic* knowledge and it is not clear whether any other or even all knowledge works in the same way, but it is not impossible that they do.

The Wall Street Journal reported in September 2019 about the findings of NYU economics professor Thomas Philippon.⁴ Having compared the development of prices and wages in the European Union and the United States, Philippon had found as a fact that on both counts Europe has done considerably better than the USA over the last decade. Philippon’s explanation for that was that the USA had given up on the free market by letting business concentrate and competition dry out, whereas the EU had been more careful in upholding and enhancing the functioning of the free market. This may of course very well be true.

The Financial Times reported one month later about the changing of the guard at the European Central Bank.⁵ The story was really about Christine Lagarde, but the Bank’s outgoing president Mario Draghi was also considered. He had frequently defended the Central Bank’s so-called bail-out and austerity policies that were often criticized as interventions in the functioning of the market. According to Draghi, the eleven million new jobs created in Europe during the previous ten years prove that the policies of the European Central Bank were the right thing to do. Like Philippon’s theory, Draghi’s may also be true. We will return to both of these shortly.

The New York Review of Books published one month later a book review⁶ by

3 According to the study by Jordan Kyle and Limor Gultchin (2018, 20) the number of countries with populism in power increased fivefold between 1990–2018.

4 ‘What France – Yes, France – Can Teach the U.S. About Free Markets.’ *Wall Street Journal*, 6 September 2019.

5 ‘What will Christine Lagarde’s ECB look like.’ *Financial Times*, 27 October 2019.

6 ‘Against Economics.’ *The New York Review of Books*, 5 December 2019. The book reviewed was Robert Skidelsky’s *Money and Government: The Past and Future of Economics*. Baron Skidelsky is an emeritus

David Graeber opening as follows: ‘There is a growing feeling, among those who have the responsibility of managing large economies, that the discipline of economics is no longer fit for purpose. It is beginning to look like a science designed to solve problems that no longer exist.’ The paragon for all such futile economic sciences is the microeconomic theory of rational choice. According to Graeber, what was at first simply ‘a technique for understanding how those operating on the market make decisions’ transformed into ‘a general philosophy of human life.’ This philosophy, in turn, posits ‘purely rational actors motivated exclusively by self-interest, who know exactly what they want and never change their minds.’ The point that for us illustrates the implicated notion of politics of knowledge comes immediately next:

Surely there’s nothing wrong with creating simplified models. Arguably, this is how any science of human affairs has to proceed. But an empirical science then goes on to test those models against what people actually do, and adjust them accordingly. This is precisely what economists did *not* do. Instead, they discovered that, if one encased those models in mathematical formulae completely impenetrable to the noninitiate, it would be possible to create a universe in which those premises could never be refuted.⁷

What do we get out of these three pieces of economic news? As to the first two, we do not know in fact whether Philippon and Draghi are right about the causes of the current state of Europe’s economy. For that matter, we are not even sure whether such an upbeat assessment of the situation is correct at all. Perhaps someone competent in economics could establish all this. What even we as a couple of simple lawyers can point out and problematize, however, is that the scientist Philippon and the central banker Draghi here seem to explain more or less the same facts with rather different wisdoms. Apparently, one of them explains the current state of Europe by its vigilant free market policy, whereas the other says it is because of its cautious interventionist policy.

It is no news of course that different theories exist and that the choice between them depends at least partly on one’s political views. This is not the problem that emerges from the newspaper articles. The problem is whether proponents of economic knowledge, such as Philippon and Draghi, ever really are honest interpreters of facts. Prices, wages and employment rates are facts, but the theories explaining them clearly are not. We all know that economic theory is both empirical and normative at once (it informs us not only about facts, but also about norms, about what should be done) but this is not the point. The point is that economic theory not only informs and regulates action, but also *constitutes* the domain of those facts which it then goes on to describe and explain.

This constitutive effect and function of theory brings us to Graeber’s review,

professor of political economy at the University of Warwick; Graeber is professor of anthropology at the London School of Economics.

⁷ This is what Thomas Piketty also lamented about his experience of American academic economics in his *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (2013).

where the critique was not only of the microeconomic theory of rational choice, but of all mainstream (neoclassical) economic theory. What matters to us is that in Graeber's view this type of economic theory is not really knowledge because it is too hermetic to be tested or criticised adequately. However, the result has not been rejection of economic theory as not a good basis for knowledge, but only that no theoretical alternatives exist. Another question is whether this type of theory is political by nature as it ascribes a normative model of behaviour to human beings (self-interested, knowing what one wants, unwavering). Not really, because this normative model is not posited as debatable opinion, but indeed as something like the ideal or truth itself. The result has not been rejection of economic theory as not a good basis for policy but only that no political alternatives exist.

Here it seems we have one ideal-typical version of the politics of knowledge, that of economics: whatever view this mongrel comes up with, it has no alternatives. It has no theoretical alternatives, because it is fundamentally a matter of politics. But it also has no political alternatives, because it is fundamentally a matter of knowledge. Elements of the compound exclude each other, so that the politics of knowledge grows into something entirely different.

Leaving economics aside, we can think about science and knowledge production more generally. To what extent can any thoughtful knowledge ultimately avoid the element of politics of knowledge? Is avoidance possible, or even preferable? Some of us would respond straight away that at this very moment and in this global situation, one should indeed turn back from whatever politically naïve post-modern constructivism, as Jürgen Habermas (1989) suggested many years ago. But if and when we 'turn back' this way, are we then to reclaim exactly the same old values of science: objectivity and truth as the very opposites of politics?

Some of us would perhaps be ready to recognize that only objectivity and truth may provide the ultimate meaning and purpose of research. Only objectivity and truth may function as the ultimate standards of criticism for the results of research. Perhaps so. But if objectivity and truth are indeed given this way as *values*, and if moreover the alternative would be *politically naïve* (as it opens gates for denialist villains who are 'sceptical' about a whole range of things from climate change to concentration camps) then are we not somehow led back again to the sphere of politics of knowledge?

Very well, this much should be enough of journalism. We should next explain what kind of entrée to the problem of politics of knowledge we have started to develop and present an overview of what our work has resulted in so far. Our initial idea was to approach the problem from both sides separately, first from the side of science and then from the side of politics. Yet it quickly became clear that this was not a feasible arrangement. Each of the articles is in one way or another about the hybridization or deconstruction of the whole distinction, not about analysing politics and knowledge separately.

While it was our starting point that science should be defined as 'production of knowledge' and politics as 'production of common will', these were only working

definitions, something to begin with. The real problem and objective was to establish the role played by will in production of knowledge, on the one hand, and the role played by knowledge in production of common will, on the other. Therefore, neither the articles nor the following sections of this introduction will attempt an analysis of politics first and then knowledge, as it were, so as to maintain a clear difference between these two things. Instead, we will present some sort of four-point guided tour in the politics of knowledge, which is all about intersections and mixings between the two.

3. Cultural pluralism: politics of dominant and subjugated knowledge

One way to start discussing the politics of knowledge is to question the idea of unity that seems to underlie certain views of both politics and knowledge. Politics has since ancient times been constitutive of the unity of a nation, a *demos*. Politics in this sense is based on the idea of a group of people that is unified in its need to form a common will on public matters. Knowledge, in turn, is by and large defined precisely by its unity as universal validity for everyone equally. This type of unity is indispensable, at least in the Western scientific sense of the term 'knowledge'.⁸ In this regard, the politics of knowledge suggests a completely different perspective. Politics is not based on the idea of a unified nation, but on struggles between different groups of people that coexist in the same political space. Moreover, knowledge is not unified but diversified from the outset because it is always understood as something inherent to a culture, that is, the particular ways of thinking of particular groups of people.

In this context, the politics of knowledge materialises in relations of dominance and resistance between different socio-cultural groups and their knowledges. Of special concern here are the struggles of marginalized, subjugated or underdog cultural knowledges against a dominant culture.⁹ For our purposes, 'dominant' culture knowledge is one which cannot really understand how the whole notion of knowledge could be expressed in the plural: 'knowledges'. Against the type of knowledge that can hardly imagine anything else but itself as knowledge, a whole variety of 'other' knowledges exist: knowledge of oppressed social classes; knowledge of ethnic, racial, cultural sexual and religious minorities; knowledge of children and the elderly, and so on.¹⁰

One of the fields of politics between dominant and subjugated knowledges consists in the struggles by indigenous peoples against the culture of the 'settler West'. It is common to consider this as a struggle by indigenous people to secure their peculiar mode of living and being as something inscribed in their traditional knowledge. Traditional knowledge, in turn, is something to which an outsider, typically someone trained in universalist scientific culture, cannot really gain genuine

8 One expression of the unity of knowledge consists in the so-called laws of thought in logic: the law of contradiction, the law of excluded middle and the principle of identity.

9 The notion of 'subjugated knowledges' was coined by Michel Foucault; 2003, 7.

10 More recently, the 'forgotten knowledge' of the male, middle-class, heterosexual white has entered the field of politics of knowledge.

access. Moreover, any intrusion by a member of the universalist scientific culture will be considered as an existential threat to traditional knowledge and to the mode of being inscribed in this knowledge. Hence, the need to protect indigenous cultures from colonisation and appropriation by the hegemonic majority population.

In his article *'Ensnare the Language': Imagination and Resilience in Indigenous Arts*, Julian Reid discusses the notion of resilience as a colonial image of indigenous peoples. 'Settler West' for Reid is more or less identical to its neoliberal regime of governing. Reid maintains that resilience is used as an element of neoliberalism's strategy of interpellation that operates through the self-imagination of its subjects. Presenting them with a resilient image of the human, neoliberal power means seeking to convince the people it subjugates of their capacity to bear all the difficulties on their own. The strategic objective is to trap people into accepting harshness of life as a kind of natural necessity, so that it would no longer cross their minds to consider this harshness as something generated by oppressive social structures. Resilience is perfect for that type of power, because it does not have to be taught to people as some kind of doctrine, but by way of putting their own imagination to work. As an idea of oneself, a resilient person is in fact rather pleasant and therefore easy to endorse.

Reid's analysis does not stop there, however. He goes on to look for positive imageries that would open up possibilities for indigenous peoples to develop counter-strategies of resistance. In view of those possibilities, Reid discusses certain alternative images from contemporary indigenous activist art. Characteristic of these is that people are not presented as resilient victims who will suffer their destiny eternally, but as a political people who are capable of action. Artistic work itself is political action that manages to conduct the rather surprising operation of double appropriation. What does this mean? What these artists are doing in their radically alternative images is in fact cultural appropriation of political modernity(!) In other words, they borrow the imagery of the West and 'counter-colonize', as it were. This is returning the favour, so to say, so that indigenous artists are in fact appropriating not only the settler imagery, but the settler's very own mechanism of appropriation itself.

In her article *Enhancing Resilience Through Indigenous Traditional Knowledge in Ecological Restoration*, Punam Noor adopts a notion of resilience very much opposite to that of Reid's. One might say that Noor's discourse itself proves 'resilient' against Reid's, in that it is capable of resisting the critical lore of his analysis of the notion of resilience as a subtle ideological trap. For Noor, gaining resilience means becoming stronger, not weaker. Not abandoning the normative stance that resilience is after all something good and worth striving for, Noor too is still - like Reid - critical of what she calls the 'epistemological authority of Western thought processes'. However, unlike Reid, who focuses on these processes in the Western political regime of governing, Noor focuses on how they are implicated in natural science and ecological knowledge.

In her article, Noor substantiates her critique anthropologically, that is, by way of researching ecological restoration projects conducted in the lands of indigenous peoples. These peoples have much at stake in such projects, as their livelihood is

often dependent on nature. This is also evident in the particular case study that Noor provides in her article, namely, focusing on a river restoration project that was important for the indigenous people living on its banks because of its fisheries. Noor observes especially the ways in which the traditional knowledge of indigenous people was consulted in the restoration project. Noor's argument is not only that this knowledge was quintessential for the success for the project, but also that its inclusion in an otherwise rather technical and pragmatic project also had significant societal effects. Through the use made of their knowledge, the restoration project enhanced indigenous people's sense of belonging and resilience.

4. Critical traditions of human sciences: phenomenology

A second and rather different perspective on the problem of the politics of knowledge would be to consider what human and social sciences already have to offer. In that direction, one would be reminded of the rich variety of critical traditions pertaining to our problem. For instance, members of the Frankfurt School, from Horkheimer and Adorno (1997) to Habermas (1971), were very much concerned with the dispersion of the natural sciences type of experimental methods and technical reasoning to the field of human and social research. The Frankfurt School's state of the art today is Axel Honneth's (2011) theory of justice as analysis of society, the aim of which is to cross the boundary between normative political theory and empirical social science.

Another example would be so-called Science and Technology Studies, spearheaded by the French anthropologist Bruno Latour. This stands for a more radical intervention of the human and social sciences into the heart of hard natural sciences. This school has developed a way of looking at scientific practices of knowledge production from the constructivist perspective of human and social sciences, asserting for instance that facts are produced in science laboratories comparably to the way in which judgments are produced in law courts (Latour & Woolgar 1989; Latour 2009). This may very well be seen as an offspring of the French tradition of the history of science, from Canguilhem to Foucault, that for a long time now has studied the hidden normative effects pertaining to empirical sciences, something that Foucault (2008, 34) called 'intersections between jurisdiction and veridiction'.

One could go even further back in the history of modern thinking to find out that at the root of these and other European traditions critical of knowledge probably stands the effort by Kant to draw limits to purely theoretical, empirical and objective reason, together with the effort by Hume to show that norms cannot be derived from facts. One interesting response to precisely these two postulates is the phenomenological tradition that began with Husserl's critique of what he called the 'natural attitude' of the objectifying empirical perspective and went on to redirect attention to the domain of human thinking instead of knowing. At present, with Luce Irigaray especially, the phenomenological tradition has moved on to consider perception as an ethical relationship between two embodied subjects rather than between subject and object.

In his article *Justice as a Matter of Thinking: A Phenomenological Approach*, Juha Himanka offers a close reading of Husserl's lectures on *The Idea of Phenomenology* to track down the way in which Husserl's method of reduction or *epoché* was born and put to work. This meant, first, staying within the limits of immanence of thoughts, but second, from there to find out about the ways in which a correlation forms between an appearance and that which appears. What matters is that this correlation varies in different cases (e.g., 'counting a number, seeing a thing, remembering something, or considering something as beautiful or just') and in Himanka's reading it is exactly the explication of these differences that phenomenology is about.

In addition to close reading of Husserl, Himanka offers an example of the way in which phenomenology might work out in the case of considering something as just. Here he draws on Alexandre Kojève and his example of distributing food in a situation where one is hungrier than the other. Two different notions of justice might be applied, the one requiring that each should get the same and the other that the hungrier should get more. What seems to be phenomenological about this is that considering these options is a matter of thinking, including the thinking of others in an intersubjective process, rather than making observations in nature. Concepts of justice belong to that realm, not to the external world.

In her article *Towards a New Ethics of Sexual Self-determination: Finnish Rape Law through the Speculum of Feminist Philosophy*, Minni Leskinen works out a novel phenomenological perspective on law. In the background stands Luce Irigaray's phenomenology emphasising the human body as a site of ethical communication. Quite like in Himanka's justice concepts, in Leskinen's discussion two different *thoughts* are also foregrounded. These thoughts are the alternative ways in which the definition of rape may be construed: either as a violation against sexual self-determination or against sexual integrity. The first creates two distinct fields of freedom and reduces sexuality to penetration, whereas the second is more sensitive to dependencies and asymmetries that define real-life human relations.

While this perhaps is not Leskinen's main objective, her analyses of legal cases involving rape provide a highly convincing demonstration of the feasibility of the phenomenological approach in law, also in the sense Himanka advocated. One might say that as far as justice is concerned, rape is a *thought*, a definition through which the thing itself appears. Yet Leskinen's article goes even further and moves to the Irigarayan phenomenology of the body, to consider the way in which sexual intercourse 'is not a space that can be divided into two', but 'a space where two persons not only coexist but communicate, relate, intertwine'. For Leskinen this raises the need of a new ethics, but not only that: sexual intercourse is also an indispensable way of gaining knowledge and wisdom. Perhaps we might add 'an indispensable bodily way of experiencing the truth'. Leskinen's discourse implies that this phenomenological aspect is also a worthy concern when thinking about the object of protection in the criminal law on rape.

5. Politics of knowing other cultures: China and Europe

The third perspective on the politics of knowledge would be to consider the relationship between the effect of social, cultural and historical reality on knowledge. Starting from the view that knowledge is bound to a certain place and time, one could revisit the old project common to early anthropology (Durkheim & Mauss 1963) as well as Marxist sociology of knowledge (Mannheim 1948) to start from the hypothesis that not only certain ways of thinking but also the mind's cognitive structure is in fact the product of social structure. Explorations of the 'primitive' or 'savage' mind were meant to examine the depth of formative and constitutive power that culture exerts on human knowledge.

One of the most influential perspectives on that sort of orientation is the type of cultural studies which Edward Said (2003) conducted in his critique of orientalism. This is based on the awareness that anything one says about 'other' cultures may often be an illusory construct that has the function of clarifying one's own culture. This type of exploration of remote cultures is made use of as the inner other whose real function is to constitute the self. Said was exploring the orientalism of nineteenth century European literature, but the concept of critique he was articulating there could very well be developed into a general method of researching the politics of knowledge.

Saidian awareness should not lead to an impasse, however. It would be foolish to simply block off all interest in other cultures because of the postulate that latent in that interest is always an interest in one's own culture. Insofar as that is a necessity, we should perhaps make a virtue of it. Why not openly confess that research into other cultures implies research of one's own culture? Not of course in the orientalist manner that would consider everyone else a barbarian, but as an honest learning process, where one could see new things about one's self in the image of the other.

In his article *Dao: Cosmological Thinking and Social Practice*, Matti Nojonen discusses the ancient Chinese philosophical notion of *Dao*, proposing it as the foundation of Chinese thinking even today – not only in philosophy, but also in Chinese policy making and in the everyday life of ordinary people. Interesting from the point of view of the politics of knowledge is Nojonen's observation that the notion of *Dao* seems to undo the distinction between politics and knowledge. *Dao*, and therewith Chinese thinking in general, does not seem to distinguish between verb and noun: *Dao* is both the action of traversing and the path itself. Likewise, Chinese *Dao* thinking does not operate on the distinction between practical and theoretical that is fundamental in Western philosophy.

Hence, what we learn is that the distinction between 'politics' and 'knowledge' – without which our notion of 'politics of knowledge' could hardly be perceived as a problem – appears to be curiously non-existent in Chinese culture. Is it then the case that we can learn precisely nothing about the politics of knowledge from Chinese culture? On the contrary, we learn pretty much everything. Insofar as Chinese culture provides a holistic view that has not decomposed into politics and knowledge, we are in fact witnessing the politics of knowledge. Inserted into politics, every piece

of knowledge is always already an element of a strategic game, where the value of any knowledge depends on the following type of questions: whether only you know; whether your opponent knows the same; whether you know that your opponent knows; whether your opponent knows that you know what they know; and so on.

In his article *Cosmology and Practices of the European Union*, Samuli Hurri draws inspiration from Nojonen's text on Chinese culture and tries to make something similar work in the context of the European Union. Having the European Union as a playground, Hurri's text is a theoretical experiment with certain notions that derive from the work of Michel Foucault: 'regimes of practices', 'the logic of strategy' and 'subjectivation'. Hurri's idea is to take seriously Nojonen's Daoist dialectic (between the so-called *yin* and *yang* properties) as something materialising in the interaction between the European Union's different governing dispositions – political, juridical, economic and security. Operative as concrete regimes of practices, these four connect to each other through the logic of strategy, so generating an unending process of transformation of the European Union as a field of power relations.

Drawing again on Nojonen's ideas, Hurri envisions the governing of the European Union as a sort of Chinese political cosmology. One cannot control, let alone freeze, the process of continuously changing constellations, the process of *dao* that is 'autogenerative' as Nojonen puts it. The interaction between regimes of practices is something like the *dao*-path, whose generative mechanisms one can learn by way of internalising its 'mode of spontaneity', according to Nojonen. Central in Hurri's article are the different types of subjectivation pertaining to the governing dispositions of the political, juridical, economic and security regimes. The purpose of subjectivation seems to be again comparable to that of the political *dao*, which is to 'cause people to be in complete accord with their ruler [and] follow him to death or survival undismayed by any danger', says Nojonen quoting the strategic thinker Sunzi.

6. Critique of the knowledge-based society: economic and psychological knowledge

As the fourth and final perspective on the politics of knowledge, we would consider the prospect of developing a critique of the so-called knowledge-based society, meaning by that a society that aspires to govern itself through proven and indubitable science. Undoubtedly, sciences play a huge role everywhere in modern society. The problem is, however, whether science is only the provider of helpful information that may be fed in the processes of collective will formation, or whether it has in many places replaced democratic politics. Consider for example technology, medicine and ecology that are all very much involved in the governing of today's society. The attraction of these very 'hard' sciences is probably due to their promise of objectivity. But does objectivity mean, in this context, neutrality towards politics as choices between values?

When one thinks about the actual practices of governing in concrete situations, then technology, medicine and the ecology may quickly lose their virtue of scientific

objectivity, insofar as by that is meant purity from value choices. Let us think, for instance, that in the context of extraction of minerals some practical solution stands out as the most efficient from a technological perspective. It is easy to imagine that this will not necessarily appear as a good choice from the perspective of health or the natural environment. Assuming that these sciences are not just objective but *equally objective*, their confrontation departs from the domain of neutral knowledge and will have to enter the open field of political deliberation. No value-free level of uncontaminated objectivity exists to make conflicts between equals disappear. This is where the sorry business of the politics of knowledge probably belongs: preferences, opinions, struggles over hegemony, suspicion of hidden agendas, and so on.

In his article *Governing the Rural Family in Australia from a Distance; The Family Provision Act and the Role of 'Expert Knowledges'*, Malcolm Voyce conducts a critique of the Australian Family Provision law from the perspective of Foucauldian governmentality studies. Voyce's idea is to study the way in which rules of inheritance might be penetrated by what Michel Foucault termed 'examination' and 'normalisation'.¹¹ From the perspective of the politics of knowledge, examination and normalisation are important as elements of Foucault's genealogy of social and human sciences in the practices of power and control. Foucault himself considered 'examination' as associated with the new panoptic techniques of social control that were developed in the context of 18th and 19th century urbanization and capitalism. Voyce's question is whether mechanisms of examination have found new employment, but this time in the rural context that is not defined by capitalism.¹² Foucault's normalisation, in turn, stands for the tendency of the capillary power of society's immanent normality to replace the externally given legal norms. On this count, Voyce's observation is that in inheritance cases a kind of normalisation is at work, which may be detected in the legal rhetoric that draws on common knowledge about family farming.

In his article on *The Financial Stability of the Euro Area as a Whole: Between Jurisdiction and Veridiction*, Tomi Tuominen addresses the problem of the politics of economic knowledge. Employing Michel Foucault's concepts of jurisdiction and veridiction, Tuominen investigates the European Court of Justice's judgment in the famous case of *Gauweiler* concerning the European Central Bank's government bond purchasing programme. In Tuominen's discussion, this case grows into a display of a set of problems at the very heart of modern governance: conflation of means and ends, exercise of political power behind the veil of technocracy, the growing power of the market, and so on. Hovering in the background of Tuominen's discussion is the problem of how much legal analysis still has independent leeway with respect to the

11 *Examination*: 'A constant supervision of individuals by someone who exercised a power over them – schoolteacher, foreman, physician, psychiatrist, prison warden – and who, so long as he exercised power, had the possibility of both supervising and constituting a knowledge of concerning those he supervised.' This new knowledge 'was organized around the norm, in terms of what was normal or not, correct or not, in terms of what one must do or not do'; Foucault 2000, 59. *Normalisation*: 'The normal comes first and the norm is deduced from it'; Foucault 2007, 63.

12 Farmers both work and own their means of production.

requirements of a functioning market. The result of Tuominen's critical analysis is that modern society, characterized by financial capitalism, is not so much governed through the economy, but rather *for* the economy.

In her article *Embodied and Embedded Vulnerable Subject: Asylum Seekers and Vulnerability Theory*, Laura Tarvainen addresses the problems arising from what may be seen as insertion of psychological knowledge in a system of the toughest type of state power: the system of immigration administration. The object of her analysis consists in cases concerning asylum seekers whose psychic system suffers from exertion of the most extreme type of violence: torture. In Tarvainen's work, the tortured subject is not so much the marginal and extraordinary case that one would perhaps expect it to be. Instead, torture victims unveil the ways in which politics and law work on what she calls the 'vulnerable subject'. Vulnerability, in turn, should be seen as something that defines all human beings, every one of us. Insofar as psychological knowledge considers human beings as fundamentally vulnerable, fragile and dependent beings, this would probably create the sharpest possible contrast with what is often considered to be the ideal subject of economic knowledge: the rational and radically independent master of one's own will and desire.

7. Where does all this leave us?

At the beginning we said that research on the politics of knowledge involves three tasks: capturing its nature, corroborating its existence, and measuring its size and trend. We also said that rigorous analytical tools and fruitful research materials would be needed, with respect to which the articles in this volume prove of the progress made on both counts. Trusting that on that point the articles will speak for themselves, we would like to end this introduction by returning to the first of our tasks, the one concerning the nature of the politics of knowledge. Let us first sum up the above discussion as stages of development of a singular idea and then conclude with something that hopefully explains the rationale of our research.

What has our team gained to capture the nature of the politics of knowledge? We would like to point at the stages we have just gone through and make some points on their basis. At the first stage, we were considering economic theories. In that context it seemed that sometimes when politics and knowledge come together to form a compound, all *alternatives will be eliminated* in both directions. Economic theory provided itself as a basis of both knowledge and policy in such a way that nothing else was seriously thinkable any longer. At the second stage, however, an entirely different and even opposite view was produced. The politics of knowledge appeared to constitute both politics and knowledge, not as unified wholes, but as *diversified pluralities*. This time, the politics of knowledge is about struggles and confrontations between groups that think and know differently. An apparent discrepancy exists between the first and the second stage: how can the politics of knowledge be elimination of alternatives and affirmation of plurality at once? A *contradiction* exists, but maybe this belongs to the nature of the politics of knowledge.

At the third stage, the perspective of phenomenology brought in light that at the foundation of knowing there should be an intersubjective and ethical element. We would go a bit further and ask whether a political element may also exist in the same way. Should it be so, the politics of knowledge provides us with a view of the stream of 'appearing' and 'experience' as something fundamentally political. Let us say, it would consider this as a *stream of onto-epistemological interventions*: interventions of thought in the reality and interventions of reality in the thought. At the fourth stage, an intercultural learning experiment between China and the European Union transposed the stream-view of the politics of knowledge in a *strategic field of structures of governing*. Interacting in that field, different knowledges and policies were implicated in a process that may be best seen as a struggle for survival. Autogenerative and spontaneous, this process stages the competition between functionally differentiated regimes of power.

At the fifth and last stage, we were finally asking what way the politics of knowledge considers science. The articles in this volume will not discuss the field of academic knowledge production as a social institution that has its particular normative structures and organisational arrangements.¹³ These structures and arrangements undoubtedly constitute an interesting domain of very peculiar politics. What we do discuss instead of that, however, is the way in which different types of power draw on sciences in their practices of governing the society. Perhaps we can call this dimension of the politics of knowledge *the uses and abuses of science*. Having said that, one should avoid mistaking science as something that was originally pure and only afterwards contaminated by political uses and abuses. Scientific methods are meant to justify the characterization of knowledge as something universal, objective and disinterested, but in the light of their history, they may be found as first developed for the practical purposes of monitoring society (Foucault 2000). We think that insofar as this so-called 'genealogical' view of science captures something essential of the nature of the politics of knowledge, a pertinent question emerges: is science ultimately allowed to exist only to the extent that it makes the society more productive and less dangerous?

Let us conclude by turning at last to the question of the rationale: what are the perspective, mode of operation and objectives of research on the politics of knowledge? Like any critical research, it may very well start from some set of statements given as knowledge. We did something alike at the beginning of this introduction when discussing the statements of professor Philippon and president Draghi. The normal way of proceeding would be to test the validity of the statements, find out whether they are true or false. This is where the way to the domain of the politics of knowledge departs from the normal way: research is not interested in testing the validity of statements. If not that, what then?

Indeed, *what is the question* in which the type of research that considers

13 The normative structure involves something that may be called a 'scientific ethos': the ethos of universalism, scepticism and disinterestedness, for instance. The organisational arrangement is university that has its own kind of compartments, reward systems, processes of evaluation, and so on. See Merton 1973.

knowledge as always already associated with politics is interested? We think that a certain passage in Sigmund Freud's *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* fittingly illuminates this problem of research interest. In that passage, Freud first invites the reader to imagine that someone would have just maintained that *the centre of earth is made of jam*. Then he (Freud) says:

The result of our intellectual objection will be a diversion of interests; instead of their being directed on to the investigation itself, as to whether the interior of the earth is really made of jam or not, we shall wonder what kind of man it must be who can get such an idea into his head. (Freud 1933, 49.)

In somewhat similar way, research on the politics of knowledge is not interested in the truth of what is given as knowledge. Borrowing Freud's expression, there is a *diversion of interests* towards the political motivations, political employment and political effects of any given knowledge. This type of diversion is where the study of the politics of knowledge begins, the way it operates, and the way it defines its objectives.

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