

concrete particulars, and that it was Hitler's geopolitical vision that was far too abstract to have any properly political meaning. He also tells a modified story about how Schmitt came to "ventriloquize" the idea of empty, abstract space as a pejoratively "Jewish-Enlightenment" aberration, whereas concrete order thinking, as he called it, was able to be simultaneously antiliberal but also comparative. And this capacity for simultaneously antiliberal but comparative perspective was the holy grail for Atlantic Realists. The standout discussion for me in the book, is the chapter on Wilhelm Grewe, historian of the "epochs" of international law and esteemed diplomat under Konrad Adenauer. Adding to the long-standing discussion about the transition from Third Reich to the *Wirtschaftswunder* of the West German state, Specter draws a portrait of Grewe as a committed Nazi jurist in the evolution of his book manuscript from 1933 to 1945, much of which is downplayed and sterilized in the version published around the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall, after he had been so consequential in shaping Germany's postwar foreign relations. Grewe's skepticism about the power of international law might have a resonance for both conservative as well as anticolonial writers and activists, but the genealogy of his realism, and his epochal divisions, tells a troubling story about the need to see clearly how the intellectual history of present ideas about the international sphere really came to the forefront.

Other hinge figures like Hans Morgenthau, whose prose mirrored the terse forms of the artistic movement of *Neue Sachlichkeit*, or new objectivity, transitioning from Weimar to the United States, tells another part of this evolving story of how Atlantic Realism was rebranded as it bridged from Germany into the development of North American IR. Yet what was presumed by the Atlantic Realists' habitus, what remained unseen to their eyes as they reproduced themselves, is precisely what has been challenged by more recent scholarship, from women's international thought, to writing alert to multiple forms of anticolonial internationalisms, or by environmental historians, among many others. What these and other writings are more straightforwardly attuned to, are the unacknowledged assumptions about the intersecting forms of exclusionary solidarities lying behind the realist habitus. And by showing us the powerfully imperial roots of Atlantic Realist thought, we might not be that surprised at the conservative, antiliberal, mostly White, and mostly male, sources that lie behind modern IR as a discipline. But by forcing us once more to confront the quixotic character of realism as both aggressively imperial, but with a hyperromantic attachment to politics as the art and exercise of power, Specter compels us to consider very carefully what exactly we think we are doing if we are also teachers of political thought in the first place. In this, it seems like we still

urgently need to learn how to do our own thinking for ourselves, as Quentin Skinner puts it, without cleaving to atavistic forms of realism as the best way of seeing the world and its politics.

Political Science and the Problem of Social Order.

By Henrik Enroth. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

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— James Farr , Northwestern University
james-farr@northwestern.edu

The title of Henrik Enroth's excellent book would come closer to its thesis and themes if it were *The History of Anglo-American Political Science, Mostly, and the Should-Have-More-Consciously-Been- and Should-Still-Be Problem of Social Order*. That's too long and clumsy for a book that is anything but long or clumsy—and even then it leaves out its probing attention to sociology, historiography, and the future of political science. But it gestures to what is on offer in this relatively short but hugely ambitious book.

Enroth narrates a select history of twentieth-century political scientists (and fellow travelers) mainly in the United States and England, whose concepts and theories—pluralism, process, community, conflict, interest groups, power, system, and the return of the state—were crafted in the wake of and in response to "the problem of social order" in diverse and divided societies. It turns out that this problem (paraphrasable as "what holds society together?") is "the unacknowledged debt of modern political science to social theory" (p. ix). For sociologists, however, "the problem" was the "front door" through which their discipline strolled, but "the problem came to political science through the back door" (p. 9), "unbeknownst to itself" (p. 1), "conspicuous by its absence" (p. 5) and submerged as an unacknowledged "presupposition" (p. 106). It has remained in this nearly comatose condition for more than a century, "buried—alive, or undead—in our concepts and theories of political life, where it has continued to haunt the discipline" (p. 164). Although it should have been more consciously addressed all along, it must now at last be disinterred and given a new lease on life as a self-conscious "object" of political inquiry or, perhaps, *dissolved* as a problem altogether (pp. 106, 171), for the living future of the discipline or its successor.

In this telling, the problem of social order clearly had—and still has—enormous power (even from the grave)—in itself and as a narrative framework. Instead of the discipline (like history) doing one damn thing after another, it was trying to do one grand thing in different ways, namely, *solve* the problem of social order—unconsciously and unsuccessfully, time and time again. Thus does Enroth tell his engrossing tale, economically executed in compelling prose, with flashes of wit and insight throughout.

Although there is a prefatory glance back at “the State” in the earlier political science of Francis Lieber and John W. Burgess, and although the ensuing episodes are mainly about American developments, the book takes off in Chapter 2 (in a great move) with Harold Laski, especially his *Authority in the Modern State* (1919). Laski is joined by other English pluralists—John Neville Figgis, Frederic Maitland, and G. D. H. Cole—who collectively stripped the state of its sovereign majesty and put it in its place as just one group amongst others. The state was not the solution to the problem of social order, as imagined by Lieber and Burgess. There were only groups, plural, that were somehow inexplicably to hold society together. The anarchistic implications for allegiance and authority—argued strenuously by American critics, such as Ellen Deborah Ellis and William Yandell Elliott—eventually pressed the pluralists into inconsistency when they conceded that, in the end, the state was more than a mere group. It was, in Laski’s later words, “the keystone of the social arch” (p. 40).

Something of a pattern is established in the chapter on Laski and pluralism. Per chapter, there is, more or less, a major figure or two, their major book or two, carefully quoted many times to good effect, drawing upon supporting figures, as well as critics, so as to perform in effect an immanent critique, showing how the major figure or figures in question failed to solve the problem of social order *in their own terms*. As goes for Laski, so it goes for Arthur Bentley, George E. G. Catlin, Robert M. MacIver, John Dewey (the philosopher!), Mary Parker Follett (for whom “the pluralist check bounced at the community bank” [p. 81]), the consensus-interest-group theorists especially E. Pendleton Herring, V. O. Key, and David Truman (whose collective work Enroth is tempted to interpret “as status quo ideology scantily clad as empirical political science” [p. 97]), David Easton (something of a hero of the story), Floyd Hunter, C. Wright Mills, Robert A. Dahl, Nelson Polsby, Peter Bachrach, Kate Millett, Theda Skocpol, and Carole Pateman, among others. Sidelong glances are given to Charles E. Merriam, as well as Harold D. Lasswell (who might have deserved more notice, given his explicit “problem of world unity” and his policy proposals for “world order” in *World Politics and Personal Insecurity* [1935] and *The Garrison State* [1941]). Amidst his telling, Enroth also generously acknowledges the work of other historians of political science, in particular and deservedly, John G. Gunnell and Jens Bartelson.

Readers will choose for themselves, but for me, besides Laski’s, Chapters 3 and 6 on Bentley and Easton, respectively, are especially insightful (as towering figures in *any* interpretation of what went down in the history of political science). Bentley endured half a century of silence, his work on process entirely forgotten until David Truman “resuscitated and domesticated” him as an alleged founder of behavioralism (p. 59). What is this, Enroth remarks, but

“carefully calculated exercises in self-justification, through the retroactive construction of a canon of behavioral research” (p. 46). Instead, Enroth emphasizes a more radical and weirder Bentley, given “the ontologically vertiginous implications” of his insistence on process upon process, as well as his wild polemics designed to “level a forest of human error” (pp. 45, 56). Before the “scientificator” Catlin is caught in the chapter “peeking over the fence into the neighboring discipline of economics” to find a social science of stronger stuff (p. 63), Bentley’s “processual superabundance” invites a lesson and receives an assessment from Enroth:

If we believe this [processual abundance] to be the lesson—and the only lesson—that Bentley taught in *The Process of Government*, then, ironically, he appears not so much as the celebrated founding father of behavioralism in political science as the forgotten Nietzsche of social science. Take Nietzsche’s aphorisms on “the Will to Power as Knowledge” as a blueprint for a sociology of politics, apply the results to the realities of urban turn-of-the-century America, throw in some aggressive polemic against anything sociological, and you have *The Process of Government*. (p. 53)

This is nothing less than the transvaluation of the value of Bentley in the history of political science.

Easton gets credit, in Enroth’s estimation, for offering “the most explicit effort to thematize and theorize the problem of social order that the discipline has seen” (p. 107). Alongside his great conceptual innovation—namely, politics as the authoritative allocation of values—Easton offered political scientists “an empirical political system out there in the world and a theoretical system in here in the discipline” (p. 118f). However, the tensions and inconsistencies in the meanings of “system” made Easton’s particular solution to the problem of social order most problematic. The conceptual apparatus of the theoretical system overwhelmed the facticity of the empirical system that it was intended to explain. The construct of a system lifted off actual behavior, as it were, into its own abstract realm, taking on a life of its own. It made empirical reality in effect a product of its own abstraction. “With this move, the concrete political system did not look so concrete after all... it now seemed as if the access to and perhaps even the very existence of the thing itself were contingent on the concept of political system” (p. 117). Moreover, the abstraction evoked “a sense of *déjà vu*” “full circle back to the birth of modern political science.” “Once the systems theoretical palaver had blown over, it looked very much as if ‘political system’ was but another name for ‘state’” (p. 126).

Enroth notes Easton earlier when introducing his book’s scope and novelty, given everyone who has “failed to discuss the problem of social order” in the history of political science (p. 4). Easton is one of “two notable exceptions to this general rule ... [the other being Bartelson], *neither of which explicitly identifies the problem as such*” (p. 4, emphasis added). Overlooking the minor

matter that Easton is credited in Chapter 6 for being “the most explicit” about this, as quoted in the preceding text, it is worth wondering how *explicit* a problem must be to identify it, assess solutions, and trace its history. My wonder is informed by Karl Popper’s view of problem solving in science where “stating one’s problem clearly” is prerequisite to theorizing or proposing solutions. In particular, he prescribes in *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (1959): “a variant of the (at present unfashionable) historical method. It consists, simply, in trying to find out what other people have thought and said about the problem in hand: why they had to face it: how they formulated it: how they tried to solve it.”

My wonder is also informed by Quentin Skinner’s view in *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (1978) that “the clearest sign that a society has entered into the self-conscious possession of a new concept is . . . that a new vocabulary comes to be generated, in terms of which the concept is then articulated and discussed.” What’s good for a concept is good for a problem.

Alas, none of the figures in the book, it appears, explicitly referred to “social order” (unlike, say, “democracy”) as *the* or *their* problem, though it conceivably *lies behind* any problem (including democracy) that they explicitly identified as their own. Indeed, no one quoted even seems to have used the phrase “social order” except once by MacIver (p. 74) who also used it in the unmentioned *The Modern State* (1926). While I think these issues deserve further discussion—namely, what *kind* of problem is a heretofore unacknowledged problem and how does the problem of social order compare with, say, the problem of democracy in political science (cf. p. 8)—it does not detract from the importance of the book or the power of its narrative framework.

Political Science and the Problem of Social Order is an important, welcome addition to the still-growing literature on the history of political science and should soon find itself at the center of discussions about the discipline, its problems, and its competing or complementary histories.

Utopia in the Age of Survival: Between Myth and

Politics. By S. D. Chrostowska. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2021. 232p. \$80.00 cloth, \$24.00 paper.
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— Anita Chari, *University of Oregon*
anitac@uoregon.edu

Sylvia Chrostowska’s *Utopia in the Age of Survival* is a passionate defense of utopian thinking, exploring the question of utopia’s relevance in an era defined by the threat of climate crises, pandemics, and planetary extinction. Rejecting the notion that utopian thought is a lapse into idle speculation, detached from praxis, Chrostowska shows that utopia is the lifeblood of transformative

struggles, animating alternatives to late capitalist social and political relations. The book acknowledges utopia’s long struggle with a bad reputation for escapism, as well as its more recent commodification as neoliberal lifestyle branding that creates a veritable “cauldron for utopias” (p. 6). Yet her work deftly rescues utopian thinking from both of these pitfalls, arguing for its radical alterity to reformist thinking as a necessary dimension of disclosing alternative possibilities, on the one hand, and remaining vigilant about the neoliberal assimilation of utopia to commodity fetishism, on the other. In the process, she mobilizes the full resources of utopian thought—drawing on her vast knowledge of the genealogy of utopia, as well as a precisely articulated topography of utopian methodology. The goal of the book, far from a joyless scholarly analysis of utopia’s conceptual history, is to allow us, reader and author together, to exercise our muscles for utopian theory and praxis, and the ignition of the embodied desire that leads us toward a collective life worth living.

For Chrostowska, our present age of survival is the backdrop for a renewed urgency toward utopian thought. Facing the real possibility that living on earth may soon be impossible paradoxically thrusts us toward the necessity of utopian thought in the present moment, precisely because only a radical break with the existent could possibly begin to respond to the confluence of catastrophes we currently witness. Utopia is defined as, firstly, “any embodied desire, here and now, for a good society; a desire capable of giving form to individual and collective action and thus becoming prefigurative of such a society, which nonetheless remains latent and dynamic, rather than being elaborated as a social plan” (p. 22). Secondly, “utopia is a futureward myth that activates hope and orients, without purporting to normatively determine, action” (p. 22). Armed with this approach, both punctual and nondogmatic, Chrostowska engages in a series of attunements of utopian methodology: Like yoga postures, fluid interventions into constellations of thought and commitment, Chrostowska’s chapters stretch the parameters of contemporary debates about utopia as method.

The first chapter of the book delves into the question of how the impulses of critique and utopia can be linked. Indeed, one of the book’s major contributions is to resuscitate the profoundly utopian strain of critical social theory, tempering its emphasis on immanent critique and the journey of reason with the reach of utopian alterity and the affective propulsion necessary for alchemizing theory into praxis. When it fails to extend into utopian futurity, critique’s immanence renders it unable to awake us from inertia and inaction. As Chrostowska writes, “To prove its credentials as praxis, critique must do more than reach inside; it must also reach out, and far. That is not its job, but its true vocation” (p. 26).

Linking critique and utopia requires not only this projective quality but also a particular affective attunement