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### Biography

The author is finishing his joint PhD degree in Political Science at both the Université Libre de Bruxelles and the Université Paris Diderot. The PhD thesis focuses on civil disobedience. Mr. Cervera previously completed his master degree at Science Po Paris in 2010. He has published several scientific articles and two books including: *Miguel Abensour, critique de la domination, pensée de l'émancipation* (Paris, Sens et Tonka, 2013) and: *Désobéir en démocratie. La pensée désobéissante de Thoreau à Martin Luther King* (Paris, Forges de Vulcain, 2013).

### Title :

Toward the inclusion of political-philosophical articles in the *Revue Française de Science Politique*: Is a return possible? The problematic of finding space for this sub-field of French political science (1951-2010).

### Abstract :

Although political philosophy never reached the importance of that of electoral sociology or of international relations in the pages of political science journals, it has always been one of the sub-fields of French political science. Based on a longitudinal analysis of the *Revue Française de Science Politique*, this chapter is concerned with the 'welcome' French political science journals give to Anglo-American political philosophy in terms of numbers of pages dedicated to Anglo-American political thought. Our data invalidates two commonly held assumptions. One assumption concerns the existence of a fundamental hostility between political science and political philosophy and the other relates to an often-held view that French political philosophy tends to be closed to debates with its Anglo-Saxon counterparts.

Toward the inclusion of political-philosophical articles in the *Revue Française de Science Politique*: Is a return possible? The problematic of finding space for this sub-field of French political science (1951-2010).

Two specific concerns have guided this longitudinal analysis of the *Revue Française de Science Politique* (*RFSP*). Knowing that political philosophy is one of the four sub-fields of political science<sup>1</sup>, I first wanted to assess the importance of this sub-field within the discipline as a whole. Indeed, as Krystel Wanneau shows it in her chapter, these sub-disciplines can be analysed using Bourdieu's notion of "fields" (Bourdieu 1984). Each of them seeks to protect its autonomy with regard to the others. Their position in the general field of political science is a real matter of existence, in that each one does in fact exist independently of the others<sup>2</sup> (Leca 1982). While it seems obvious to us that electoral sociology has always been a major concern of French political scientists, it is difficult to get an idea of the position occupied by political philosophy and how this particular position has evolved over the past six decades. In order to obtain precise objective data on this matter, I have chosen to study the importance of political philosophy in the *RFSP* – this despite the fact that the *RFSP* is not identified with by French political science in its entirety<sup>3</sup>. However, given the superior quality of its writing, and the fact that it has long been on the French social science scene, this review can legitimately claim some degree of representativeness<sup>4</sup> of the discipline which it is named after. As it is shown in Lorenzo Angelini's chapter, studying the scientific journal recognized as the most influential in its discipline provides fruitful information about the evolution of the discipline itself. This chapter is then a continuation of several studies carried out on the evolution of French political science (Favre 1981, Leca 1991, Daguerre 2004, Billordo 2005).

Our second concern relates to the thematic and ideological path taken by political philosophy, irregardless of its importance to the field of political science as a whole. Through the prism of the *RFSP* I would like, on the one hand, to provide a reliable overview of the changing role of political philosophy in the post war French political science scene and examine how this role has played out even into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I will then seek to draw several conclusions about the internal developments in French political philosophy (by examining the subjects studied, the approaches taken, and the authors published).

Jointly considering these two issues gives us the main focus of this chapter and provides us with our principal thesis question: Does political philosophy in French political science – particularly in its principal organ of publication, the *RFSP* – focus on issues similar to those Anglo-Saxon political philosophy holds dear? And is the liveliness of Anglo-Saxon

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<sup>1</sup> According to Philippe Braud (2012 : 8-9) political science covers four areas: political theory, international relations, political sociology and administrative science. One could also add comparative politics and the study of public policy.

<sup>2</sup> This competition between sub-fields of a discipline is evidenced for example by power struggles to place "representatives" of "your" field in instances of recruitment of new researchers and teachers. Indeed, these places of renewal of the body of political scientists are a key issue for the defense of the autonomy of each sub-discipline.

<sup>3</sup> Because there are several important journals like *Le Mouvement Social*, the *Revue française d'administration publique*, *Raisons politiques*, *Critique internationale* and *Le Débat*.

<sup>4</sup> The generalization of the results obtained from the *RFSP* to the entire French political science scene must be undertaken with extreme caution; as we are careful in any sort of intellectual endeavour. However, this generalization is legitimate insofar as the *RFSP* combines a set of features that make it clear that what is true for it is also true beyond it. Indeed, the *RFSP* is the oldest and most consulted political science journal in France. It is the main organ of the French Association of Political Scientists and it was founded with the support of the National Foundation of Political Sciences, which manages the number one educational and research political science institution in France: the Institut d'Etudes Politiques of Paris. Finally, the *RFSP* is one of the few journals which covers all objects and research areas of political science.

philosophical debates and its restitution by French researchers likely to increase the importance of political philosophy in the *RFSP*? Whereas *a priori* there was no indication of the existence of any link between the two dimensions of external and internal evolution, inductive analysis tells us that the changes specific to political philosophy and the place allotted to it by the French political science field are ultimately intertwined.

Founded in 1951 by Jean Maynaud, the French Journal of Political Science (*RFSP*) is now in its 62nd year of publication. It has published six issues per year since 1963 and has been available in English since 2010. This review is without a doubt the main French publication in the field of political science. Currently headed by Yves Déloye and published by the Presses de Sciences Po, the journal is fully available on the portals *Persée*<sup>5</sup> and *Cairn*<sup>6</sup>.

At this point, it is important to clearly define terms for the reader. Political philosophy can be referred to using the following variations: political thought, political theory, or, more rarely, history of political ideas. These four terms are not synonymous and preferring one of them is never neutral. Therefore, I should not neglect to keep in mind the depth of thinking that led Hannah Arendt to claim the term "political theory" or Claude Lefort that of "political thought". Nor should one too quickly assimilate the terms "political philosophy" and "history of political ideas" (Philp 2008). However, the purpose of this work is not to reproduce the entire content of these - exciting - terminological discussions. Moreover, even those who argue to determine the most appropriate designation mutually agree that these four expressions cover roughly the same reality. Because you have to decide - and because my view is that "political thought" and "political theory" are too broad, while "the history of political ideas" is too restrictive<sup>7</sup> - I will use the expression "political philosophy."

The results of my study contradict two fairly commonly held ideas. The first one claims that there is fundamental opposition between political philosophy and political science. Readers of Claude Lefort recognize here the thesis he developed in a famous text on "The permanence of the theological-political" (Lefort 2001). According to this scholar of Machiavelli, there are two distinct views most seekers of knowledge ascribe to. While a political scientist would approach his subject in order to extract objective knowledge of the workings of political reality, political philosophy considers politics to be a problematic that furthers basically endless questioning. Such questioning and reflection inherent in philosophical 'uncertainty' seem incompatible with certainty in scientific knowledge. Thus, Lefort criticizes the positivist approach - in its Marxist, structuralist and behaviourist variants - an approach which dominated political science from 1950 to 1970. More generally, I note that the alleged opposition between philosophy and political science is based on the idea that philosophy deals with the normative and that political science - guided by ethical neutrality - would be of the order of a neutral and purely objective knowledge. From my data, I will show that throughout its sixty years of existence, *RFSP* has given a regular and often times significant place to political philosophy in the articles it chose to publish. This fact does much to discredit the idea that a fundamental hostility exists between these two fields of research.

The second idea that I would like to question claims that French political philosophy is hermetic to the debates of its Anglo-Saxon counterparts. François Cusset taught us that

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<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.persee.fr>

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.cairn.info>

<sup>7</sup> Every piece of political science research is a work of thought and is elaborated through a theorization of social reality, so we can say that it is political science as a whole which constitutes a "political thought" or "political theory". Thus, I prefer to use the term "political philosophy" which is more precise. In that sense, the history of political ideas is both a sub-category of political philosophy and a discipline used by political philosophers to address new debates in light of the past. The term "political theory" is generally used to describe contemporary Anglo-Saxon political philosophy (especially Rawlsian studies).

thinkers such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Gilles Deleuze have had a paramount influence on the American intellectual field<sup>8</sup> (Cusset 2003). And though the deconstructionist, post-positivist and post-structuralist “French theory” saw its heyday in 1960-1980, I should not believe that the French influence on the American scene has declined. Nowadays, thinkers such as Jacques Rancière, Etienne Balibar, Alain Badiou, Pierre Manent and Bruno Latour are widely translated and commented in English and regularly lecture in Anglo-Saxon universities<sup>9</sup>. That said, it is common to hear that the relationship between France and the Anglo-Saxon world is one way<sup>10</sup>, and that because of this, French political philosophy remains impervious to themes developed on the other side of the Channel and the Atlantic<sup>11</sup>. Concerns about distributive justice and deliberative democracy would remain foreign to French-centered discussions. The French debates would be orientated towards very specific topics such as the role of human rights, the future of the nation, the status of the event or the fate of criticism. Is this really so? Does the famous “French exception” - so often mentioned when describing its culture – also hold true for the field of political philosophy? If one examines the articles published in the *RFSP*, it seems evident that the affirmation whereby French political philosophy is closed to Anglo-Saxon debates is more of a myth than a reality<sup>12</sup>.

The place of political philosophy in the *RFSP* has undergone significant changes during the sixty years of the journal. Following a methodological description of how this longitudinal study was conducted, the second part of this paper will report on the changing role of political philosophy in the pages of the *RFSP*. Then, while focusing on the internal developments of political philosophy as it can be seen in the articles of the *RFSP*, I will, in the third part, examine the dominance of liberal thinking over conservative thought and critical thought. In the fourth part of the paper, I will highlight the strong receptivity of French political philosophy to issues of Anglo-Saxon origin. Finally, I will conclude by trying to answer the central question of this chapter: does the importance of political philosophy in French political science – particularly in its principal organ of publication, the *RFSP* - depend

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<sup>8</sup> In the article by Loïc Blondiaux concerning “The historical turn of American political science” (1997) we will also find valuable information about reciprocal influences between French and American political science. Jean Leca also mentions world-renowned (including in the U.S.) aspects of the French history of political ideas (1982: 655).

<sup>9</sup> For example Pierre Manent is visiting teacher in the department of political science at Boston College and Bernard Manin is professor at New York University.

<sup>10</sup> All the articles of the folder “American Theory: French receptions” of No. 126 (2010/4) of the Journal of American Studies in French give an illustration. In the introduction of the issue (“The reversal of flow theory : towards an intellectual gulf stream”), François Cusset opposes “isolationism” of the French intellectual field to American “openness”. He writes that « On en voudra pour preuves l’importance des lacunes américaines en traduction française, le délai plus important que dans les autres grandes langues européennes pour la traduction en français de classiques américains en philosophie et en sciences sociales, la résistance de l’espace intellectuel hexagonal aux champs d’études critiques interdisciplinaires élaborés outre-Atlantique depuis quarante ans (Cultural Studies, Minority Studies, Postcolonial Studies…), et en face, le zèle avec lequel éditeurs et médiateurs nord-américains font passer aux États-Unis la pensée française dans toute sa diversité – de Pierre Lévy ou même Pierre Teilhard de Chardin à Michel Foucault ou Jacques Derrida, ces derniers disposant tous deux sous leur nom d’un plus grand nombre de titres au catalogue américain des titres disponibles (*Books in Print 2009*) que dans son équivalent français (la base Electre) » (pp. 5-6).

<sup>11</sup> In his article mentioned above, Loïc Blondiaux does very explicitly note the reluctance of French political science to open up to U.S. influence. In particular, he writes that “for a long time French political science has ceased to confuse itself with the history of American political science, and has found its own roots”. The price of this “intellectual emancipation”, he adds, is “a growing indifference to debates and controversies which interest our American colleagues” (Blondiaux, 1997: 8).

<sup>12</sup> In this regard one can consult Bourdieu's study on nationalization and denationalization of concepts (2002 : 3-8).

on the questions that drive Anglo-Saxon political philosophy? In other words, is the liveliness of the Anglo-Saxon philosophical debates and its restitution by French researchers likely to increase the importance of political philosophy in the *RFSP*?

## 1. Methodological precisions

In this work I analyse the 334 issues of the journal published between 1951 and 2010, equivalent to 1988 articles. The minutes of work, research notes and book reviews have not been taken into account. Only the items in their strictest sense have been analysed.

The first task was to select and count the items pertaining to the field of political philosophy. To do this, the title of the articles served as the main criteria. When a title was ambiguous, I read the introduction, headings and conclusion. 106 articles were identified. One aspect of my categorization could be contested: should field articles such as "The neo-liberal moment of the RPR: an intent of interpretation" be considered as being within the realm of political philosophy? Five articles of this type render the political ideas of a political organisation, a national community or a social movement. These types of articles which belong more or less to the realm of 'the sociology of ideas' have not been integrated into the analysis (I did not integrate for instance: "Political ideas of the ecologist movement" (1979/2). In fact, these five articles aim to benefit a political collectivity rather than delve into the internal consistency and the systematicity of philosophy in the strict sense. If the ideology of a party is obviously related to political philosophy, one cannot equate one with the other.

Then, the 106 articles selected were classified according to three criteria: their ideological tendency, the thematic content of the article and the geographic origin of the issue at hand.

Concerning the ideological bent<sup>13</sup> of the article, I have adopted a tripartite typology inspired by Jean-Fabien Spitz's preface of *The Machiavelian Moment* of JGA Pocock (1997 : V-XLV)<sup>14</sup>. This typology distinguishes articles as belonging to the following categories: liberal (eg, "The justification of liberalism by F. Von Hayek", 1989/2), conservative (eg "Leo Strauss, neoconservative affiliation or philosophical conservatism?", 2009/5) critical (eg "War and revolution in Lenin's thought," 1971/2). Some articles (about 10%) develop one approach which they severely criticize. For example, "The Return of Enlightenment" by Pierre Clastres (1977/1) is an attack on liberal thought<sup>15</sup>. Within liberalism, I distinguished articles belonging to classical liberalism (Kant, Locke, Tocqueville, Constant, etc.) from those belonging to modern liberal thought (Berlin, Rawls, Popper, etc.). I also distinguished between aristocratic liberalism (Tocqueville, Constant), democratic liberalism (Rawls, Habermas, Bobbio), libertarianism (Hayek, Nozick, Popper) and communitarian liberalism (Charles Taylor). Within the realm of critical thought I distinguished between articles pertaining to Marxism (eg "Gramsci in France," 1979/1), anarchist thought (eg articles by Jacques Ellul) and new

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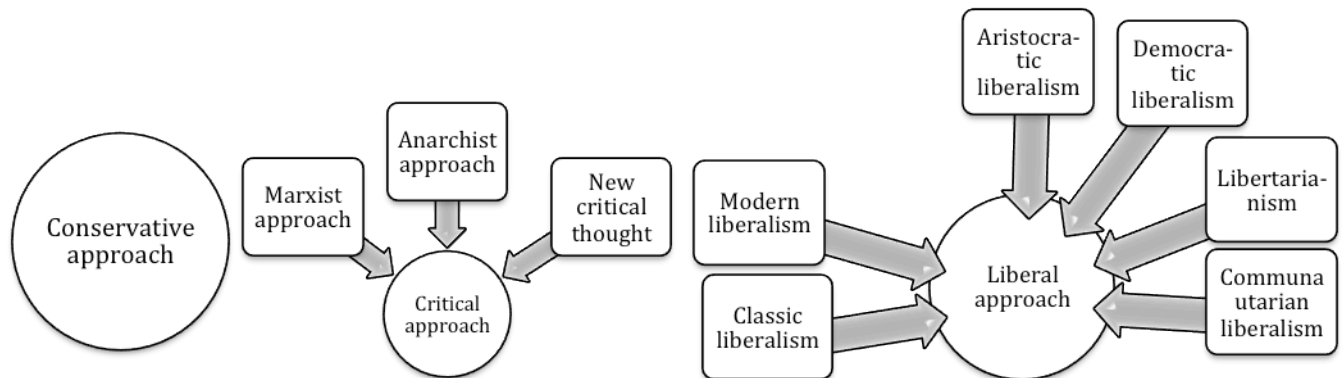
<sup>13</sup> I employ the concept of "ideology" without any negative connotation. For me, the term does not imply a wrong or distorted relation to reality. It simply helps in identifying various trends and schools of thought which coexist and sometimes compete in political philosophical discussions. In addition, I prefer to speak of "ideological tendency" rather than "ideology" insofar as many articles reviewed can not be locked into a systematic and fully coherent set of ideas and values. Finally, I might add that the notion of "ideological leaning" allows one to distinguish articles according to their normative orientations (those inherent in any piece of political philosophical writing).

<sup>14</sup> Spitz applies a typology similar to the one I am using here to his historiography of political ideas.

<sup>15</sup> In this case, and in much the same way as for other cases, I include the Clastres article in the category of articles dedicated to "the liberal approach." Then, for each of the three approaches, I made a subdivision between articles that defend the approach in question and those that criticize it. In this way, the resulting statistics leave no room for ambiguous interpretation.

critical thought (eg the Mouffe article: 1992/1).

### Ideological Leanings



A methodological problem has emerged: should an article written by a critical thinker but devoted to liberal democracy be placed within the "critical thought" category or into the "liberal" category of articles? Similarly, in which category should I place an article written by a liberal and dedicated to Carl Schmitt? In the "liberal approach" or in the "conservative approach"? I chose the second solution: 15% of the articles having this sort of ambiguity were not classified in the category corresponding to the views of the author but in that corresponding to the ideological tendency commented on and discussed in the article. This despite the fact that the author sought to refute this ideology<sup>16</sup>. One could argue that the fact that the *RFSP* chooses to publish more articles devoted to one of these three approaches rather than to the two others does not prove that the journal gives its preference to that thought since 90% of the articles devoted to this approach could feasibly aim to refute and denounce it. To address this problem, I identified the "negative" articles, the "neutral" articles and the "laudatory" articles for each of the three ideological tendencies.

In terms of thematic content, I made two sets of distinctions:

- a) Intellectual monographs / Conceptual articles: Intellectual monographs refer to articles whose title clearly indicates that they are devoted to the thought of a particular author (e.g. "Tocqueville facing the problem of the new aristocracy", 2006/6) ; Conceptual articles are those whose title suggests that they are dedicated to one of the major concepts of political philosophy (eg "Equality or priority ?", 1996/2) ; Some articles may fall under both categories (eg "Revolution and Democracy: Rosa Luxemburg", 1991/1)
- b) Classics in the history of political ideas / Theories of social contract / Political theology / In depth reflective articles : "Classics in the history of political ideas" refers to articles dedicated to authors such as Plato, Kant, Marx or Tocqueville (eg "For reading Marx", 1970/4) ; "Theories of social contract" concerns articles devoted to Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Rawls or Habermas (eg "Jean-Jacques Rousseau or the absolutism of general will", 1953/1) ; "Political theology" concerns the political philosophy of a specific religion (eg "The political philosophy of Muslim hellenism. The thought of Nasered-Din Tusi", 1977/2). Finally, the "reflective" articles intend to study political philosophy itself (eg "political philosophy, political theory", 1961/2).

Lastly, concerning the geographical origin of the topic addressed by the article, I have distinguished "Franco-French" articles - devoted to issues that have little resonance beyond

<sup>16</sup> Again, "ideology" has no negative connotation for me. The term is used as a synonym for "philosophical school", "school of thought" or "theoretical tradition".

the academic confines of the French University (ex: "The political philosophy of Eric Weil," 1958/2) – from articles directly influenced by Anglo-Saxon political philosophy (eg, "Rawls and political liberalism", 1996 / 2). This second, rather fuzzy category is exclusively geographical and does not pretend to measure or evaluate the Anglo-Saxon political philosophy at hand in either theoretical, or methodological terms. This expression only aims to designate articles written "by" or "about" thinkers who lived and taught in the United States or Great-Britain. In this sense, this second category is useful for measuring the openness of French political science to debates and ideas coming from elsewhere. It does not in any way deepen our knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon intellectual field.

For each of these 106 articles I read the abstract (when it was available), the introduction, conclusion, headings and introductions of each section of the article. I also tried, whenever possible, to obtain a maximum amount of information about the author of the article in terms of his or her nationality, university affiliation, academic discipline, research themes and ideological and philosophical commitment.

Let me remind the reader that I began this study with two questions in mind. The first concerns the changing role of political philosophy in the *RFSP* in particular, and in French political science in general. The second question concerns the internal thematic and ideological evolutions of French political philosophy<sup>17</sup>. After having established the different categorizations mentioned above (ideological, thematic and geographical) and following a comparison-analysis of the statistics and graphs obtained, three observations merit particular attention.

First, I note that during the sixty years of *RFSP* publications, political philosophy seems to exhibit three distinct phases. Further, I have observed that, excepting the 1970s and their Marxist orientation, liberal political philosophy has maintained a permanent superiority over its conservative and critical counterparts throughout the history of the journal. Finally, I see that during the first four decades, the number of articles directly influenced by Anglo-Saxon political philosophy is on par with the "Franco-French" articles. Nevertheless, since 1990, Anglo-Saxon themes are largely predominant in contrast to specifically French debates.

## **2. Political philosophy in the *RFSP*: subject to fluctuating tendencies**

### Proportion of political philosophy articles (%) in the *RFSP*

INSERT GRAPH 1

Political philosophy has never had a prominent place in the *RFSP*, since only 5.3% of articles published (or 106 of 1988) belong to this sub-discipline of political science. This rate confirms the observation made by Lilia Bollordo (2005: 183-186). In her study of the representation of the various sub-fields within the *RFSP*, her results show (as do mine) that "political theory" articles represent 5% of the total. In her typology, "political sociology" (29%), "comparative sociology" (15%) and "international relations" (14%) hold the top three positions. However, though the pages devoted to political philosophy may be few, there has always been space reserved for this discipline. We note that not more than three years could go by prior to the publication of another political philosophy article (1998 – 2000 for example) but there were often more frequent publications of such articles. On five occasions the *RFSP* reserved at least a fifth of its pages for political philosophy (1952, 1961, 1983, 1987 and 1991).

Concerning the role of political philosophy in the *RFSP*, three phases are clearly

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<sup>17</sup> For further details about the evolutions of a scientific discipline, one can refer to Camille Kelbel's chapter. She examines Thomas Kuhn, Karl Popper and Imre Lakatos points of view.

distinguished in the history of the journal: the slow decline of 1951-1974, the “glorious twenty (years)” 1975-1996 and the inexorable decline from 1997 -2010. During its first three years of publication, the journal devoted 15% of its articles to political philosophy. Yet from 1951 to 1974 the proportion of political philosophy articles dropped gradually to 2%. This drop is distorted on the graph by the peak of 1961 which shows a record of 27% of the articles as being devoted to political philosophy. This momentary burst is due to the publication of a thematic number (2/1961) entitled "Political Theory" which contains seven articles on political philosophy. Then comes a second phase that I call the "glorious twenty" (1975-1996). This heyday can be divided into two stages: a continuous increase in political philosophy articles between 1975 and 1982, followed by a decade of long apogee (1983-1996) during which the rate of articles in political philosophy remained securely around 9%, almost the double the average in the history of the journal. Finally comes the third and final phase (1997-2010). This phase can be clearly identified as signalling a decline in political philosophy in that between 1997 and 2007 only 7 articles out of 311 (2%) were devoted to political philosophy. The slight increase of 2008-2009 (6.5%, 5 articles) does not put a halt to this trend, given that in 2010 and 2011, political philosophy disappeared entirely from the pages of the journal.

How can these important changes be explained? The slow decline of 1951-1974 is understandable when considering the academic and intellectual context of the time. The post-war decades are characterized by the rise of the social sciences, especially the positivist schools which were already mentioned above. (These decades were trying ones for philosophers, Claude Lefort being one of them). As they sought to increase 'scientificity' and imitate the objectivity of the natural sciences (Rancière 1974), the social sciences were strongly refusing the inherently normative dimension of any philosophical enterprise. To be convinced of this, one has only to refer to the well-known Weberian principle of axiological neutrality and the Durkheimian injunction to take social facts "as things" (Weber 2003 ; Durkheim 2007). The lure of the social sciences on most intellectuals of the time significantly affected the interest and the resources devoted to philosophy in general and political philosophy in particular. Political science at this time was a hybrid discipline whose 'unified approach' was found not so much in the means of addressing the subject; whether the approach be either historical, sociological, economic, anthropological, legal or philosophical. But 'unity' was found in the study of the subject itself, namely political phenomena (Déloye and Voutat 2002). Consequently, this discipline was itself divided between the positivism of the social sciences and the normativism of philosophy (Breaud 2012 : 92). Therefore, the predominance of the first over the second also held true for political science. If one agrees on this analysis, one can then understand the slow disappearance of political philosophy in the *RFSP* (1951-1974) as being the result of a larger process, namely the decline of the old philosophical tradition (being replaced by the new social sciences).

Although I can explain that the decline of political philosophy in the *RFSP* (1951-1974) was due to the rise of positivist social science, I cannot say that the "glorious twenty" (1975-1996) was subsequently due to a so-called 'crisis of the social sciences' since no element corroborates the idea of such a crisis. Then, how can we understand the revival of political philosophy (1976-1996), and its sudden disappearance from the columns of the journal since 1997 ?

### **III. A preference for liberal political philosophy?**

While it is extremely difficult to determine the political views of an author writing on electoral sociology or the Cameroonian Constitution, the ideological leaning of a political



philosophy article is readily apparent, even often explicitly claimed by its author. For this study, it was thus necessary to adopt a typology that did not offend the positions of the authors concerned. That is to say that during classification it was important not to insert an author in a category where he would not recognize himself. But this typology also needed to be precise enough to be able to provide fruitful lessons about the philosophical and ideological orientation of the *RFSP*<sup>18</sup>. I believe that the tripartition conservative thought / liberal thought / critical thought is the best one for reconciling these two requirements of a categorization that is neither too narrow nor too broad.

The results are clear and leave little room for interpretation. Seven articles concern conservatism, 39 liberalism (including 14 for classical liberalism and 25 for modern liberalism) and 28 relate to critical thought (including 18 for Marxism). 28% of articles devoted to the conservative philosophy clearly intend to challenge it. This rate is 18% for critical thought (22% for the Marxist approach) but only 12% for liberal philosophy (and 0% seek to refute classical liberalism). So two aspects are noteworthy here. On the one hand, a large majority of articles is devoted to liberalism, which alone accounts for more articles than critical thought and conservative thought altogether. On the other hand, liberalism is challenged 50% less than are the conservative and critical philosophies. Considered together, these data lead me to conclude that the *RFSP* has some ideological and political preference for liberal philosophy, particularly for the classical liberalism of Constant or Tocqueville, since none of the 14 articles devoted to them is motivated by a desire to criticize. Moreover, I note that the only four authors who have written at least four articles concerning political philosophy for the journal are prominent representatives of French liberalism (Raymond Aron, Bertrand de Jouvenel, Pierre Hassner and Lucien Jaume).

The liberal leaning of the *RFSP* highlighted by the statistical data supplied above is corroborated by several elements in the history of the journal. Indeed, at its foundation, the journal developed out of an intellectual circle to whom Raymond Aron belongs. (Aron, a notable figure of French liberalism, wrote *L'opium des intellectuels* in 1955 wherein he sought to refute Marxist thinkers). Aron has, as have Bertrand de Jouvenel and Pierre Hassner, published many contributions in the pages of the journal. Furthermore, the role of the *National Foundation of Political Sciences* (NFPS) in the creation of the *RFSP* also partly explains the liberal tendencies of the journal (between 1945 and 1954, Jean Maynaud directed the Journal and the Foundation). As a private foundation created by a government statute in 1945, the NFPS' main missions involve: housing the *Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris*, working towards the formation of French political elites and developing and promoting liberal thought (Chapsal and Rain 1963). More recently, the journal has collaborated with authors like Lucien Jaume (*Les origines philosophiques du libéralisme*, Flammarion, 2009) or Bertrand Guillarme (member of the editorial board of the *RFSP* but also student, scholar and translator of John Rawls) shows the durability of the relationship between the *RFSP* and active members of the French liberal thought.

Nevertheless, this "preference" for liberalism must be doubly nuanced. On the one hand, although they are less present and more criticized, the two other forms of philosophy (critical and conservative) still represent 47% of the articles. Of these, more than two thirds of the cases are neutral or laudatory articles. So it is important to note that the *RFSP* stills guarantee a certain ideological pluralism<sup>19</sup>. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that there is a break of ten years in the reign of the liberal domination. Between 1965 and 1975, when no article was devoted to conservatism, critical philosophy – especially in its Marxist version – was four times more represented than was liberal philosophy. This loss of hegemony is

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<sup>18</sup> On how to develop a typology in political science see Seiler (1986) and Sartori (1976).

<sup>19</sup> Insofar as liberalism is characterized by the defense of value pluralism and the diversity of opinion which can be freely expressed.

probably linked to the social context of the time. Indeed, as suggested by Jean Leca, "the way in which a scientific discipline organizes and controls its sub-fields is largely determined by its social position, particularly its relationship to other key social fields" (Leca 1991: 323). Thus I can reasonably say that the political agitation of the May 1968 events had impacted the columns of the *RFSP*. The "1968 way of thinking" (Ferry and Renaut 1988) had permeated all the institutions in French society. The political agitation which began in March 1968 in the student community deeply affected the academic world. This is attested to by the creation of the University of Vincennes in the fall of 1969. All of the above then led to the provisional sagging of liberal philosophy in the *RFSP*.

#### Ideological bent of articles

#### INSERT GRAPH 2

The thesis of a *RFSP* "liberal preference" helps to understand the changes in the editorial policy of the journal. In the previous section, the chapter has pointed out the almost total disappearance of political philosophy in the *RFSP* between 1997 and 2011. No socio-political reason seems able to explain this occurrence. Indeed, it does not seem that the election of Jacques Chirac or the September 11 attacks could have had an impact on this matter. Therefore, possible reasons coming from the academic field of political thought should be examined. Indeed, it is clear that, for the last fifteen years, political philosophy, whether French or not, has been affected by a rise in what can be termed "new critical thought" (Keucheyan 2010). This phenomenon has been accompanied by a certain return of liberal thought. In France, one can refer to the writings of Jacques Rancière, Alain Badiou, Etienne Balibar and Miguel Abensour. The rise of critical thinkers abroad includes authors such as: Slavoj Žižek, Gayatri Spivak, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe and Axel Honneth. Nowadays, it seems that if you are interested in political philosophy you are obliged to make room for critical thought. This is not to say that liberal and conservative thought have disappeared, but to show that most academics are no longer interested in the Theory of Justice (Rawls 1971), the Machiavelian Moment (Pocock 1975) or the Theory of Communicative Action (Habermas 1986); those days are 'over'. In this new intellectual context of a rise in critical political philosophy (Abensour 2009), the "liberal preference" of the *RFSP* caused the journal to be confronted with a choice between: opening its doors to contemporary critical political philosophy *or* gradually abandoning articles of political philosophy. Not printing articles of political philosophy could be a temporary choice pending a hypothetical resurgence of liberal thought. If this were to happen, the *RFSP* would again allow political philosophy to regain its place of yesteryear. Moreover, if it were not for its liberal preference, how could one explain why the *RFSP* never published articles by Badiou, Rancière and Balibar, when one knows the international reputation of these philosophers. However, the full responsibility should not be attributed to the *RFSP*'s editorial policy. The fact that the journal did not publish any articles by Rancière or Badiou does not mean that it refused their potential articles. It is likely plausible that critical thinkers themselves chose to submit their articles to other journals. Thus, one must make the hypothesis that the editorial policy of the journal is conditioned by the proposals for articles that it receives.

The decline of the role of political philosophy in the *RFSP*<sup>20</sup> since 1991 can be partly explained by the gap between the "liberal preference" of the journal and the relative weakening of "liberal philosophy" since the 1990s. This inadequation created an unprecedented situation in which the editorial board of the journal was receiving fewer

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<sup>20</sup> It is important to note that the three main French journals specialized in political philosophy were created precisely during the decade in which this discipline disappears from the columns of the *RFSP*. Indeed, *Tumultes* was created in 1992, the *Revue Française d'Histoire des Idées Politiques* in 1995 and *Raisons Politiques* in 2000.

articles matching its “ideological” expectations. In other words, supply was not matching the demand for articles. But we should not give only a mono-causal explanation. A second element has probably contributed to the slow disappearance of political philosophy in the *RFSP*. This element concerns the evolution of “political science” itself. In France, the discipline gradually became institutionalized in the 1970s, notably through the creation of the ‘aggregation’ board exams and of a specific section within the faculty. In 1982 the discipline acquired its autonomy within the National Centre of Scientific Research /Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) with the creation of a “Political Science” section. In 1991, this became known as ‘section 40’: “Politics, Power, Organization”. In the early 1990s, after twenty years of progressive institutionalization, political science had become a fully autonomous discipline. At the same time, the *RFSP* was becoming more specialized between 1973 and 1990, under the direction of Georges Lavau. This ‘empowerment of political science’ as it has been interpreted by Pierre Favre (1981), Philippe Braud (1982) and Jean Leca (1982) – has logically led to a weaker dependence of the discipline – and “its” journal, the *RFSP* – on adjacent disciplines, including political philosophy. In 1990, there were over 200 political scientists (university professors and lecturers). To fill its columns, the journal no longer needs to appeal to philosophers (the same holds true for historians and lawyers). The journal ‘Raisons Politiques’ was established in 2001 and is specifically dedicated to “political theory and political thought”. The latter, directed by Jean-Marie Donegani, now welcomes political philosophy articles which, in the 1990s, seemed to have definitively disappeared from the *RFSP*.

#### 4. The myth of ethnocentrism

If French ethnocentrism – diagnosed by François Cusset as a form of “isolationism” (2010 : 5-6) – really exists, it cannot be attributed to the *RFSP*. While I identified 31 articles directly influenced by Anglo-Saxon political philosophy, only 16 are devoted to topics which are specifically French. It is noticeable that no article deals with “human rights” which in France was still a favorite subject leading to numerous theoretical contributions (Claude Lefort, Marcel Gauchet, Cornelius Castoriadis). Nothing more is said on the issue of the “event” which mobilized the intellectual energy of Gilles Deleuze, Alain Badiou or Daniel Bensaid. And several authors, such as Alain Renaut, Jacques Rancière and Pierre Manent, have never published in the *RFSP*<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, no article is dedicated to their thought. Excepting Raymond Aron (who published 5 articles; 3 more are comments on his ideas), everything seems to indicate that the *RFSP* has neglected the great figures of French political philosophy and specifically “Franco-French” debates.

One could say that this neglect does not matter if it also affects Anglo-Saxon political philosophy. However, and this is precisely my point, it is not the case. Indeed, Anglo-Saxon thought is twice as represented as is its French counterpart in the columns of the *RFSP*. The major Anglo-Saxon political philosophers have all been discussed in the journal, which is not the case for French thinkers<sup>22</sup>. At least one article has been dedicated to Rawls, Nozick,

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<sup>21</sup> The low occurrence of articles written by French political philosophers is partly explained by their tendency to write more for books and less in article form. Indeed, Jacques Rancière is the author of 32 books and Alain Badiou of 47, which is well above the average for political scientists.

<sup>22</sup> This is linked to the composition of the editorial board of the journal. The presence of Bertrand Guillarme, for example, has had an impact on the publication of articles devoted to the thought of John Rawls (Guillarme was his assistant and French translator).

Hayek, Popper, Schumpeter, Strauss, Arendt, MacIntyre, Berlin and Taylor<sup>23</sup>. One could certainly point out the absence of Pocock, Walzer, Dworkin, Sandel or Pettit and continue with a long list of representatives of Anglo-Saxon contemporary political philosophy. But this does not detract from the fact that generally speaking, these thinkers and the debates they are writing on (distributive justice, deliberative democracy, utilitarianism) were much better integrated by the *RFSP* than were their French counterparts.

#### Which Anglo-Saxon influence on the French political philosophy ?

#### INSERT GRAPH 3

After 1991 and Yolène Dilas-Rocherieux's study which was devoted to the communism of Etienne Cabet (1991/5), no more Franco-French articles appear in the *RFSP*. Over the same period, fifteen articles were related to Anglo-Saxon political philosophy. Given that 25 articles were published during this period, this means that from 1991 to 2010 Anglo-Saxon themes and philosophers directly influence exactly 60% of the articles on political philosophy in the *RFSP*. This rate is particularly high compared to the average of Anglo-Saxon articles (29%) observed during the whole period (1951-2010).

Finally, the "liberal preference" of the *RFSP* seems to be accompanied by an "Anglo-Saxon preference" However, this finding must be nuanced. First, 16 specifically French articles do exist. Moreover, while many articles are devoted to Anglo-Saxon philosophy, the *RFSP* did not open its pages to these authors and has not published nor translated their writings. Of the 79 political philosophers who wrote in the *RFSP*, the overwhelming majority (66) are French, 13 are foreigners, and only 5 are Anglo-Saxon (three British and two Americans). Thus it is more the exegesis of the Anglo-Saxon philosophy than this philosophy itself which can be read in the columns of the *RFSP*.

### **5. In conclusion: back to the “glorious twenty” years of political philosophy in the *RFSP***

I have been able to explain two of the three phases pertaining to the importance of political philosophy in the *RFSP*. The slow decline of 1951-1974 could be understood as a consequence of the rise of positivism in the social sciences. The second decline began in 1997 and continues today with the near disappearance of political philosophy in the journal. This seems to result from a combination of two phenomena: the liberal preference of the *RFSP* and the domination of the critical approach in contemporary political philosophy which caused the journal to neglect the emphasis it had previously placed on this discipline, as current theoretical pieces did not correspond to the *RFSP*'s ideological expectations. In other words, the mismatch between supply and demand is the cause of this decline. A second phenomenon caused the decline of the importance of philosophy articles in the *RFSP*: the empowerment and autonomization process of political science that began in the 1970s and reached its peak in 1990. In 1981, Pierre Favre relied on the evolution of journals, associations, seminars and lessons to take stock of "political science in France since 1945." It was with great historical accuracy that he described the quest of "disciplinary autonomy and scientificity" (1981: 95) at work in French political science. In 1982, Jean Leca drew a similar conclusion considering that political science and its institutions (including the CNRS, University departments, and political science journals) had become "an independent scientific subfield" (Leca 1982: 654).

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<sup>23</sup> That we include Arendt, Strauss, Schumpeter, Hayek and Popper as representatives of Anglo-Saxon philosophy is not contradicted by their German-Austrian origin since they have all emigrated to the United States, and most of them have acquired American nationality and ended their lives there.

Having reached their full autonomy, political science and the *RFSP* have been leaving an increasingly reduced place for political philosophy and related disciplines which were once accepted in the journal at a time when disciplinary boundaries remained almost non-existent.

I still need to understand why there is a transient but lasting phase – between two periods of decline, that is to say between 1975 and 1996 – during which political philosophy acquired a leading position within the *RFSP*. My explicative hypothesis is the following one: the renewal of Anglo-Saxon philosophy initiated in 1971 with the publication of the masterful work of John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*. The latter had a significant impact on the *RFSP* which was especially prepared to welcome the work of Rawls and his commentators. This in particular because of its double Anglo-Saxon and liberal preference. The new vitality of American political philosophy<sup>24</sup> could not remain without influence on a journal which had shown a special affinity for Anglo-Saxon theoretical articles throughout its history. So the *RFSP* took a particular interest in Rawlsian theory and criticism – whether it is libertarian, communitarian or republican. This interest then led to a rising proportion of political philosophy articles in the journal. It is symptomatic that these “glorious twenty” years began in 1975 with the publication of an article by Raymond Boudon "Social Justice and public interest : About the Theory of Justice of Rawls" (1975/2) and ended in 1996 with Bertrand Guillarme's article entitled "Rawls and political liberalism" (1996/2).

Influence of Anglo-Saxon articles on the place of political philosophy in the RFSP  
INSERT GRAPH 4

Influence of liberal approach on the place of political philosophy in the RFSP  
INSERT GRAPH 5

These two graphs corroborate the idea that it is the Anglo-Saxon liberal preferences of the *RFSP* – combined with the renewal of the Anglo-Saxon liberal philosophy initiated by Rawls – which are most able to account for the “glorious twenty” years. Indeed, throughout the history of the journal, three curves overlap almost perfectly and have almost identical time variations: the proportion of political philosophy articles in the *RFSP*, the number of articles devoted to liberal thought and the number of articles directly influenced by the Anglo-Saxon approach. None of the twelve other graphic curves I developed from my data correspond, even approximately, to the curve changes in the proportion of political philosophy articles. Why do these three tables have curves which overlap, yet the twelve others do not? Two explanations are possible. Either it is a coincidence – and one cannot logically exclude this hypothesis – but if it is so, this coincidence is particularly troubling. Or, as is my hypothesis, the number of articles stemming from a liberal approach and having an Anglo-Saxon theme is one of the explanations. I have again shown that there are other explanations as to the evolution of the place of political philosophy in the *RFSP*. It is thus the liberal/Anglo Saxon factor would be particularly useful for understanding the “glorious twenty” years (1975-1996) since other elements such as positivism in the social sciences, the rise of contemporary critical political philosophy etc. were already explaining the first phase (1951-1975) and the third phase (1997-2010).

I cannot complete this chapter without pleading the case for political philosophy. It is my hope that in the coming years the *RFSP* will again grant political philosophy the place that

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<sup>24</sup> This vitality is mainly due to the discussions prompted by the publication of two major works such as the Theory of Justice (Rawls 1971) and The Machiavellian moment (JGA Pocock 1975). Robert Nozick (1974), Stanley Cavell and many others are among their main commentators.

it legitimately deserves<sup>25</sup>. Whether or not such political philosophical articles are liberal, conservative or critical is of little importance. This sub-discipline of political science has the merit of introducing debate on normative concerns into the pages of the journal, and these have been too often lacking. The study of the social and political reality must of course be done with rigor and objectivity. We must not forget that reality is always closed in on itself, and that which is given to the political scientist to analyse is only one aspect of social-history. However, it does seem that how one “should be” is irriducible to the question of “being”. If this occurs, it is the link between democracy and political science that is endangered. Political science can always claim axiological neutrality and refuse to serve partisan causes – and it would be wrong to behave differently. Even so, political science should never forget that it has meaning only insofar as it contributes to the promotion of democracy. Political philosophy is needed to remind it of its *raison d'être*.

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<sup>25</sup> I agree with Jean Leca's plea wherein he asked political philosophy to rescue political science in order to make clear what political science can teach us. He also hopes political science will stimulate reflection on the meaning of the social sciences (their 'raison d'être').

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