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Conceptual History [9,000 – 10,000 words]

1. Introduction (c.500 words): w/ any basic definitions clarified

At the most basic level, conceptual history is the history of words. These words, called "concepts" are of a specific kind, semantically richer, more ambiguous and thus more contested than those tasked with naming specific things in the physical world. The phrase itself is easily misunderstood, like other subgenres of historiography labelled in similar way. Just as there is nothing specifically "cultural" about cultural history, there is nothing particularly "conceptual" about "conceptual history" either. A more precise name would be "the history of concepts", since "concepts" refer to the object of study rather than a carefully crafted analytics. Furthermore, many will consider "conceptual history" to be the translation of the German *Begriffsgeschichte*, which is also clearly the dominant tradition in the field, although by no means the only one.

Thus, conceptual history has at least two meanings: in a more general sense, it studies how people have used words in changing historical contexts, with what meaning and purpose, drawing on a wide range of traditions, theories and methods, from etymology to text-mining; in a more specific sense, it refers to a set of theories and methods originating in post-war Germany at the interface between social history and intellectual history, and between hermeneutics and historicism, as well as to its main founder Reinhart Koselleck and the most decisive scholarly manifestation, the eight-volume lexicon *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, published between 1972 and 1992. Though there are numerous scholars working specifically in the Koselleckian tradition, albeit also by expanding and criticizing it, such as Willibald Steinmetz, Stefan-Ludwig Hoffman, and Margrit Pernau, conceptual history has its most profound impact as an eclectic assemblage of approaches, originating in different disciplines and traditions. In order to separate the first from the second, scholars have advocated to use the term "historical semantics" for the more wide-ranging approach, where concepts might be replaced by more complex objects like fields, networks, clusters, or terminologies (Busse 1987; Konersmann 1994; Müller and Schmieder 2016).

Another way to carve up the field of conceptual history is along the lines suggested by Koselleck in a 1972 essay: either conceptual history is an end in itself, a theoretical framework and a research design, even a discipline in its own right, like in the case of the German lexicon, or it is a method, a set of procedures and tools, that can be used alongside other methods in order to complete a specific scholarly task, mostly, but not limited to a piece of history writing or political analysis (Koselleck 2004: 75–92). In both cases, however, conceptual history strives to understand language and history, concepts and historical processes in their mutual and reciprocal references, without giving epistemological or ontological priority to one or the other. According to Koselleck, conceptual history "sets out to interpret history through its basic concepts, and it understands such concepts historically". And he concludes: "Its principal theme, in other words, is the convergence of concepts and history" (Koselleck 2011: 21)

At present, conceptual history covers a wide field of theories, traditions, and disciplines, with global reach. Among the keystones, alongside Koselleck and German *Begriffsgeschichte*, are French discourse analysis, especially the works of Michel Foucault, as well as the so-called "Cambridge School" of intellectual history, spearheaded by Quentin Skinner and J.G.A Pocock. Other landmark contributions include the *Handbuch politisch-sozialer Grundbegriffe in Frankreich 1680-1820*, edited by German historian Rolf Reichardt, the works of Finnish political scientist Kari Palonen, British political theorist Michael Freeden, and Spanish intellectual historian Javier Fernández Sebastián. Of

crucial importance are also on-going collective endeavors like the online *Forum Interdisziplinare Begriffsgeschichte*, edited by Ernst Müller and others at Zentrum für Literaturwissenschaft in Berlin, the Conceptual History of Emotions, led by Margrit Pernau at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, also in Berlin, and the project Ottoman Conceptual History, headed by Einar Wigen and Alp Eren Topal at the University of Oslo. Further institutionalization of the field has taken place by means of the journal *Contributions to the History of Concepts,* now in its fifteenth year, and an academic society, the *History of Concepts Group*, running annual conferences as well as research training and summer schools. Parallel to this steps of institutionalization, conceptual history has become part of the methodological toolbox of historians and social scientists, often in combination with other forms of discourse analysis (for conceptual history in International Relations, see Berenskoetter 2016).

2. Background/Context (3,000 words): When did this become an important topic/approach/method and why? What influenced its development initially?

In their encyclopedic *tour de force Begriffsgeschichte und historische Semantik* (2016), subtitled "a critical compendium", Ernst Müller and Falko Schmieder lay out the innumerous trajectories, the pre-histories and the histories, of conceptual history, mainly in the gravitational field of the German tradition. They split their account into six parts, of which five correspond more or less to disciplines, or at least traditions and fields of knowledge: philosophy; history and social science; linguistics, philology and communication science; history of science and history of knowledge, cultural history and cultural studies. Although most of the trajectories start around 1900 and rarely stray far from German university campuses, with some important exceptions, the book succeeds in mapping out the scope of influences channeling into conceptual history. As already indicated, the 1992 completion of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* gave the starting shot for a stunning rise and proliferation of the field, beginning in Northern Europe but soon spreading to other countries and continents, including India, Korea, and Latin and South America. At present, methodological and theoretical innovation is as likely to take place in Mexico as in Germany. To avoid getting lost in the woods, the most efficient way to tell the background story of conceptual history is to start with the breakthrough of German *Begriffsgeschichte* in the late 1960s, and then to expand from there, both diachronically and synchronically.

In 1967, the journal *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* published two programmatic articles in the same volume, even on successive pages, announcing the start of two equally ambitious projects in conceptual history. In one, Joachim Ritter, professor of philosophy in Münster, student of both Martin Heidegger and Ernst Cassirer, and now proponent of a liberal Hegelianism, laid out his main ideas and principles for what was to become the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, published in thirteen volumes between 1971 and 2007 (Ritter 1967). In the other, Reinhart Koselleck, the newly appointed professor for modern history at the University of Heidelberg, announced the inauguration of another project, less recognizably disciplinary, but growing out what was then known as German *Sozialgeschichte* (Koselleck,1967). The editors were, in addition to Koselleck himself, his former habilitation supervisor, Werner Conze, and the Austrian medievalist Otto Brunner, both of whom had supported Nazi racist policies in Eastern Europa during the Third Reich and now were looking to reboot their careers in post-war Germany (Van Horn Melton, 1996). Both of them died before the work was completed; Koselleck, on the other hand, spent the most part of his academic career soliciting authors, writing and editing articles for the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. The theoretical and methodological reflections he made while doing this, published in a series of trenchant essays, is by far the most significant body of work for making sense of conceptual history as an intellectual and academic endeavor.

At the same time, the two programmatic articles presented two very different ideas for writing conceptual history. Both of them acknowledged the need for a break with the traditional Cartesian theory and history of concepts, in which the goal was to arrive at a precise and absolute definition, which could then serve as guiding light through the backroads of history, without itself ever changing. Both Ritter and Koselleck saw concepts as subject to historical change. But whereas *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* never ventured beyond the philosophical canon and a more or less given set of eternal philosophical questions, to which concepts could give varying answers, Koselleck and his co-editors conceived of a lexicon that was much more contextually oriented and directed toward use and users. Even more significantly, the goal of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* was not primarily to understand the concepts themselves, their contents, and definitions, but the historical process, to which they belonged. Concepts, Koselleck insists in the theoretical introduction, are at the same time "indicators" and "factors" of historical change (2011, 8) – in other word, they tell us something *about* historical processes, while being *part of* the same. The historical movement from the past, through the present, into the future is the main object of study.

What kind of historical process is it that Koselleck, his co-editors, and co-authors set out to understand? In the 1972 introduction Koselleck states the goal of the lexicon in the following way: "The central problematic […] is the dissolution of the old society of orders or estates, and the development of the modern world. These twin processes are studied by tracking the history of how they were conceptually registered" (2011, 8). In short, the self-ordained task of German *Begriffsgeschichte* in its most dominant iteration from the late 1960s onward is to study the process of "modernization", the emergence of the modern world, which is also the present world, at least when it comes to its basic conceptual architecture. As Koselleck puts it, "concepts have taken on meanings that may not need further explication to be directly intelligible to us", they no longer "require translation" (2011, 9). In this way, "the past was gradually transformed into the present" (ibid.). To drive this point home, and indeed, to give shape and cogency to the project, Koselleck invents a new, not immediately comprehensible term, *die Sattelzeit*, translated directly as "saddle period", to mark the rise of the modern world. Later he would become less convinced by his own terminology and suggest that *Schwellenzeit,* "threshold period", would have been a less ambiguous metaphor (Koselleck 1996, 69). Thus, since its conception, *Begriffsgeschichte*, in the Koselleckian sense, has been intrinsically linked to ideas about modernization and modernity unfolding in the Western Europe during a "threshold period" between 1750 and 1850, when this process suddenly accelerated. Less interested in the drivers of modernization, like technology, industrialization, and capitalist economies, Koselleck instead spells out implications on a phenomenological, semantic level. In this period, he argues, the key concepts of political and social language go through processes of temporalization, democratization, transformation into ideologies, and politicization (2011, 15) – which in the end turns them into concepts that he and his contemporaries can make use of in (re)building political culture.

In this sense, the self-proclaimed historicist project of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* always had a strongly presentist end: to rebuild German political language after it had been abused, and repurposed by the Nazi regime, as documented by one of the precursors of conceptual history, Viktor Klemperer, as Romanist and a Jew, who hid in plain sight in Berlin and observed how his mother tongue was transformed into LTI, *Lingua Tertii Imperii* (Klemperer 2000). In the 1967 article, Koselleck imagines what he calls a "semantological [*semantologische*] control of contemporary language". Definitions "must no longer remain unhistorical and abstract", in the way they are when their "historical emergence [*Herkunft*]" is unknown, but gain "the historical and semantic plenitude of concepts". As an indirect result, he concludes, this might bring about a "sharpening of the awareness [*Bewusstseinsschärfung*]", leading from "historical clarification [*Klarstellung*] to political

clarity [*Klärung*]" (1967, 83). In the eyes of Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht, on the other hand, renegade conceptual historian turned theorist of "presence", the multi-volume conceptual histories by Ritter and Koselleck did not succeed in confronting the traumas of the German past in the 20th century and "bringing them to rest" (2006, 30), but just in temporarily suppressing them by reintegrating German history and culture in the Western tradition, and thus "keeping them latent", as he puts it (ibid.).

There are many ways to contextualize the early development of conceptual history. In order to grasp some of the theoretical and philosophical traditions involved, one relevant context is undoubtedly the so-called "linguistic turn". In whatever way conceptual history is defined and understood, the attention to language, more specifically to words and their semantic contents, remains central. In the 1960s and 1970s, this increased attention to language itself, irreducible to mere representative functions, gained the momentum of a "turn". In German tradition, the "linguistic turn" was performed mainly in hermeneutical terms, in the way Hans-Georg Gadamer gave language ontological priority in human understanding and thus in human existence: *Sein, das verstanden werden kann, ist Sprache* (2010, 478). Later, Koselleck would make systematic efforts to push back against this primacy of language over history and thus restore the balance between historical processes and concepts (2018, 41–59). To him, they were convergent; the one could never be reducible to the other. Just as all historical processes contain non-linguistic elements, like hierarchies, spatial orders, and life-spans, language is never just a representation or an effect of the real. This also explains his scepticism toward "structural linguistics", which is spelled out in several of the prefaces to *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*: "Attention is concentrated on the relationship of *word* to *thing*; concepts are discussed according to their sociopolitical rather than their linguistic function" (2011, 18).

Other versions of the "linguistic turn" also had major impacts in the field of conceptual history. First phrased by Richard Rorty in an anthology with same name, collecting articles by Rudolf Carnap, Max Black, W.V.O. Quine, Stanley Cavell, and Peter F. Strawson, the "linguistic turn" ushered in what we today know as Anglophone or analytic philosophy of language (Rorty 1967). Turning the attention to language, meant reducing time-honoured philosophical questions to questions of linguistic precision. In the broader field of critical theory, however, the "linguistic turn" was associated with the 1911-1913 lectures by the Swiss linguist Fernand de Saussure, in which he introduced the language system, synchronic and based on differences, as the object of science (Saussure 1967). Whereas Saussure had oral language in mind, his structuralist and post-structuralist successors like Roman Jakobson, Roland Barthes, and Jacques Derrida, transferred his theory to written text, and thus launched the French version of the "linguistic turn", focusing on language as system and structure (De Man 1993). Both these "turns" gave rise to singular forms of conceptual history, as linguistically and philosophically distinct as the "turns" themselves, which have grown to become important strands and traditions in the field. The two figures who stand out are Quentin Skinner and Michel Foucault.

Among the first to point out the obvious similarities between German *Begriffsgeschichte* and the so-called "Cambridge school" of intellectual history, spearheaded by luminaries like John Dunne, Quentin Skinner, and J.G.A. Pocock, was the American intellectual historian Melvin Richter in his 1995 book on *The History of Social and Political Concepts* (Richter 1995,) – not entirely to the liking of Koselleck's Anglophone counterparts, who remained sceptical toward the somewhat one-eyed interest in concepts, rather than larger linguistic units, like texts or languages (Skinner and Sebastián, 2007). Another point of contention was the idea of a "threshold" to modernity that all Western European traditions had in common (Pocock 1996). Additionally, there were striking cultural and linguistic echo chambers that prevented scholars in the two traditions from getting acquainted with

each other's works, at least until the *lingua franca* of English was firmly established in conceptual history. What Koselleck, Skinner and Pocock had in common was their dissatisfaction with contemporary history of ideas, *Ideengeschichte*, *histoire des idées*, which ignored both the linguistic and the historical specificity of the texts they were studying. Skinner mounted the most path-breaking and effective attack in his 1969 article "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas", in which he in the spirit of Francis Bacon clears away the "idols" of the discipline, which he calls "mythologies": the mythologies of doctrines, coherence, prolepsis, and parochialism (Skinner 1969). Thus, Skinner clears the way for another set of entities to emerge, which are fundamentally historical and linguistic, based on his philosophical engagements with key figures in the Anglophone and analytic version of the "linguistic turn", mainly Peter Strawson, Paul Grice, and John Searle (Skinner 1970 and 1971). In spite of being one of the most influential figures in conceptual history, or historical semantics, broadly speaking, Skinner was never interested in concepts *per se*, but only their use in language, more specifically their ability to perform certain "speech acts". Putting actions performed in texts front and centre of his theory, Skinner mobilized a kind of historical pragmatics, which also involved author's intentions, linguistic conventions, and not least the element that will come to be most closely associated with both his and Pocock's work: the context (Pocock 1985; Skinner 1988). Both in Skinner and in Pocock, conceptual history amounts to a strategy for returning texts to their historical contexts, analysing what they were intended to do, and what existing linguistic conventions they made use of to achieve it. In later works, Skinner would give less attention to particular speech acts and instead turn to rhetoric as a historical system for using language to achieve certain goals, closer to Pocock's Wittgensteinian idea of "language games", but also to the Foucauldian idea of "discourse". The most ambitious and systematic attempt at bringing together *Begriffsgeschichte* and Cambridge School, most prominently the works of Koselleck and Skinner, has been undertaken by Finnish political scientist Kari Palonen, emphasising strongly the rhetorical and political element, as well as the Weberian nominalism, in both thinkers (Palonen 2004).

Thus, we have arrived at the third version of the "linguistic turn" that is highly relevant for understanding the rise of conceptual history in the 1970s, in addition to the hermeneutic and the analytic: discourse analysis, or more precisely discourse history, as it was developed by another philosopher-historian, namely Michel Foucault. Whereas the hermeneutic and the analytic versions of the "turn" targeted historical semantics and historical pragmatics respectively, Foucauldian discourse analysis foregrounded the third dimension of language, as laid out in the triad by American semiotician Charles W. Morris: syntax, in other words, language as structure and system (Morris 1938). To the extent that concepts are perceived as relatively stable semantic units that can be traced through history, or as a set of tools, used by singular individuals to achieve certain goals, conceptual history and discourse analysis appear to be at loggerheads with each other. As long as discourse is perceived as a rule-based system, in which meaning is nothing but the product of differential relations between systemic elements, writing a history of concepts seems all but impossible. Nevertheless, the connections merit some further attention.

As in the case of Skinner and the Cambridge school, the overlaps between French-inspired discourse analysis and German *Begriffsgeschichte* can both be overstated and understated. On a theoretical and philosophical level, the differences are the most striking, since Foucault bases his discourse analysis on a form of structural linguistics, applied to history and society, associated with structuralism and post-structuralism (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982). In Foucault's work, or at least parts of it, history [*Geschichte*] and experience [*Erfahrung*], keystones of Koselleck's interest in conceptual history, are bracketed, in order to get to the larger structures of thought and the regimes of knowledge that dominate human cognition (Foucault 1970, 1972) . The same happens with intentions and actions, the main units in Skinner's historiography. Discourse analysis, pioneered in

The Order of Things (1966) and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), then given a Nietzschean and genealogical twist in *Discipline and Punish* (1975) as well as in Foucault's subsequent work on biopolitics and governmentality, moves beyond the level of individual events, people, and action, to expose the rules and practices operating in institutions of knowledge, including prisons, hospitals, asylums, and schools. Whereas both Koselleck and Skinner reproduce old canons of intellectual history, from Luther to Weber, from Machiavelli to Isaiah Berlin, Foucault follows institutional discourse and practices, in which individuals only appear in specific "subject positions", defined by the rules of discourse – or as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe puts it, in their post-Marxist, Gramscian adaptation of discourse analysis, they are "interpellated" (1985: 115) .

In a less theoretical, more practical-historiographical vein, however, the differences between Foucault, Skinner, and Koselleck are less striking and the overlaps become clearer. Indeed, in more general textbook literature, discourse analysis, in terms of an approach to get at the interplay between language and power, and as opposed to more realist, positivist, and event-driven approaches, can be said to apply to all three. More specific overlaps are to be found in Michel Foucault's genealogical approach as well as in Laclau and Mouffe's theory of the "nodal points" of discourse (1985: 112). To start with the latter: In their book on *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, originally a kind of manual for Socialist critique, inspired by the Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci, Laclau and Mouffe describe how discourses form when "elements" in a discursive field are turned into "moments" of discourse (1985: 105). When a discourse "closes" as a result of political struggle "nodal points" emerge, around which others discursive elements organize themselves, become meaningful and effective. In political discourse, typical nodal points might be state, or democracy; in medical discourse, it might be the body. Thus, the dynamic relationship between discursive fields, elements, moments, and nodal points might very well be seen as an integral part of conceptual history.

Among the most forceful interventions into the field of conceptual history and discourse analysis is the already mentioned *Handbuch politisch-sozialer Grundbegriffe in Frankreich 1680-1820*, in 20 volumes by Rolf Reichhardt, in which he sets out to combine the French tradition of *lexicométrie*, based on word frequency analysis, with German *Begriffsgeschichte*. From the French tradition, Reichardt adopted the focus on *mentalités*, as opposed to what he perceived to be Koselleck's lopsided interest in great thinkers and writers, his *Gipfelwanderung*; from the German tradition, he took aboard the theoretical ambition to analyse the collapse of the old and the beginning of the modern world, only with a much shorter time frame, 1680-1820, and centring on the French Revolution (cf. Reichardt 1998). Most striking in Reichhardt's project, however, is the richness of sources, which by far surpasses *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* and includes not just literary texts, pamphlets, and journals, but also non-written, oral and visual material, like songs and drawings. Together they form what Reichardt calls "semantic networks" [*semantische Netze*], in which singular words, concepts, speech acts, and other elements, find their place and gain their historical meaning and function (Reichardt 2000). In this way Reichardt was not just instrumental in brokering between the French and German traditions, but also in finding a middle ground between conceptual history and discourse analysis more broadly. In this he was followed by Hans Erich Bödeker, who in similar ways worked incessantly to establish connection between fields and disciplines, turning conceptual history into a prolific contributor to a more general cultural history of French and German publics, especially in the 18th century (Bödeker 2002).

Another place of convergence is "genealogy", in the historiographical sense, the study if how the present came into being. Foucault adopts his concept of genealogy from Friedrich Nietzsche, who is also enrolled by Koselleck as one of the godfathers of *Begriffsgeschichte* (Koselleck 2011: 20). In his

essay on Nietzsche and genealogy, Foucault insists that the what he is interested in, is not the search for origins [*Ursprung*], but the reconstruction of processes of genesis [*Entstehung*], especially how modern so-called enlightened and humanistic practices for dealing with criminality and sexuality have emerged from other, much darker and less enlightened discourses (Foucault 1977). In order to trace these diachronic connections, Foucault analyses semantic elements, not unlike concepts, lingering on in institutions and practices. An attempt at doing conceptual history as Foucauldian genealogy can be found in Skinner's 2008 British Academy Lecture "A Genealogy of the Modern State", in which he opens with a programmatic statement that might as well have originated in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*: "When we trace the genealogy of a concept, we uncover the different ways in which it may have been used in earlier times. We thereby equip ourselves with a means of reflecting critically on how it is currently understood" (2008: 325). And he continues in the same vein:

> To investigate the genealogy of the state is to discover that there has never been any agreed concept to which the word state has answered. […] I would go so far as to suggest that any moral or political term that has become so deeply enmeshed in so many ideological disputes over such a long period of time is bound to resist any such efforts at definition. As the genealogy of the state unfolds, what it reveals is the contingent and contestable character of the concept, the impossibility of showing that it has any essence or natural boundaries (2008: 326).

As we shall see shortly, exactly the question of whether there can be something like a conceptual "essence", a concept not yet realized as a word, an utterance, or a speech act, remains a at core of the many-layered onion that is conceptual history, to use Henrik Ibsen's phrase.

3. Importance Today (5,000 words): Importance of theme/approach/school of thought for history today and how it evolved to this point, key examples of major historians or works of history taking this topic/approach/method. Are there any limitations and/or challenges to it?

In the late 1960s and 1970s, conceptual history started out in part as a protest against other forms of historiography, social history, history of ideas, event history, spurred by the increased attention to language brought about by various "linguistic turns". Today, the importance of conceptual history in the broader field of historiography can be analyzed according to three key elements: *genre, method,* and *theory*.

That conceptual history is linked to a specific historiographical genre, has already been a topic here. Both Ritter's *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* and Koselleck's *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* explicitly place themselves in the long-standing tradition of the "lexicon" or the "dictionary". In this genre, words are collected, described, and defined, mostly according to an alphabetical system, at least since the 18th century. A third possible genre label is "encyclopaedia", adhering to a slightly different ontology, in which words and things are presented alongside each other, often without any clear distinction between the two. In addition to the focus on singular words, documented in singular entries, the lexicon comes with an ambition of comprehensiveness, even completeness, already latent in the use of the alphabet as the structuring principle. In conceptual history, the alphabet serves as a "contingency generator", as Gumbrecht puts it (2006: 10), tempered by various criteria for relevance and delimitation, whether "the socio-political language in Germany" or simply "of philosophy". In hindsight, the choice of the lexicon as genre for shaping the historiography of concepts, both theoretically and materially, seems obvious, since it grants the opportunity to present several parallel trajectories, or indeed, conceptual narratives,

without necessarily forcing them to converge into one. Thus, language as a synchronic, distributed system is at least partially accounted for, at the same time as multiple diachronic histories are told. Koselleck's *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe,* Ritter's *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, and Reichardt's *Handbuch* are by no means the only examples. Keeping within the German language, there are at least two other lexicons that in major ways have contributed to the development of the field of conceptual history: *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe* (7 vols., 2000-2005), edited by Karlheinz Barck et al, and *Historische Wörterbuch der Rhetorik* (12 vols, 1992-2015), edited by Gerd Ueding. Designed more or less as reference books, these impressive, even slightly monstrous works have very different methodological and theoretical ambitions. Nevertheless, they all organize their historical narratives by means of concepts, or to it put another way, they let the alphabetical contingency principle offer the structure of their writing and thinking, synchronically and diachronically.

However, the "conceptual history movement" (Gumbrecht 2006, 10) did not stop at the German borders. Since the methodologically and theoretically most influential lexicon, *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, analyzed a national language, historians in other countries felt compelled to follow suit, not just by shifting the methodology into a new linguistic context, but also by adopting the genre. In 2003, a group of Finnish scholars, published a one-volume lexicon, entitled *Concepts in Motion* (Hyvärinen et al. 2003), in which they presented a small selection of "key concepts", *Grundbegriffe*, in the Koselleckian sense; and in 2009 a group of Spanish and South American scholars started the publication of the *Diccionario político y social del mundo iberoamericano*, edited by Javier Fernandéz-Sebastián, in nine volumes (cf. http://www.iberconceptos.net/en/). This last work illustrates how conceptual history is not geographically bound but can travel with concepts and their users between countries and continents.

In the case of the Iberoamerican world as well as other post-colonial settings, a monolingual approach can go a long way; at present, however, more and more studies follow the movements of concepts between languages, by means of transfers and translations, thus finding ways to free conceptual history from its monolingual and to a certain extent Eurocentric beginnings, as I shall return to later in this entry (cf. Pernau and Sachsenmaier 2016). Until now, this work on the history of translation has not made it into the genre of the lexicon, with one particularly important conception, namely Barbara Cassin's brilliant *Vocabulaire européen des philosophies*, published in 2004, subtitled "dictionary of untranslatables" (Cassin 2004). The goal of this lexicon is to map philosophical language, especially the kind of terminology where translation seems impossible or fruitless and concepts are kept in their original linguistic form. Classic examples are the German *Dasein* and *Lust*, the Greek *logos* and *kairos*, but the work also contains examples of Arabic, Danish, Dutch and Basque words that have entered into philosophical language untranslated and have become necessary parts of the philosophical idiom. At the same time, this work clearly illustrates the inherent problems of multi-language dictionaries, since to navigate the volume the reader must know French, or in the English translation, English. It is impossible to get to the German *Welt* without first locating the French *monde*. In the preface to the English translation of the lexicon, Emily Apter admits concerns about "the global hegemony of English", but expresses the hope that the translation will lead to "spin-off versions appropriate to different cultural sites and medial forms" as well as "models of comparativism that place renewed emphasis on the particularities of idiom" (Cassin, Apter, Lezra, Wood, eds. 2014: ix).

Whether or not the future of conceptual history will see more encyclopedic projects, enabled and promoted by new technological solutions and digital publications platforms, is an open question. In the meantime other genres, such as series of books dealing with singular concepts, liek the European Conceptual History book series at Berghahn Books, as well as single-authored monographs and articles, have taken over. Nevertheless, the dream of the lexicon lives on, and continue to have impact on how conceptual history is conceived. I have already mentioned the on-going and prolific

Forum Interdisziplinäre Begriffsgeschichte, which take the shape of a bottom-up lexicon, one concept at the time. In 2010, the German historian Christian Geulen made a convincing case for "a *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* for the 20th century" (Geulen 2010; see also Hoffman and Kollmeier, eds., 2012). Of course, both the methodological and theoretical set-up, as well as the selection of concepts, would need to be completely reworked, and so far no such project has materialized. But still the ghosts of these "pyramids of the spirit", as Gumbrecht ironically labelled the multi-volume dictionaries of the 1970s (2006, 10), continues to haunt the field. Even more ambitious than Geulen's plan, though less programmatic are Margrit Pernau's musings about a future "Globale Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe", in terms of a systematic exploration of the "entanglements and isomorphism" between concepts in different languages, in a way that would mirror Koselleck's original project (Pernau 2018: 13). Materially, this would amount to a different project, distributed across multiple books and editions, but still on an encyclopedic template.

That said, there is also no doubt that many of the most significant advances in conceptual history from the 1990s onward, have taken place outside of any project for a lexicon or a dictionary. In Bielefeld, Koselleck's student Willibald Steinmetz has in several book-length studies systematically probed the interactions between language use and political action in various institutional settings, from the 18th century onwards, thus substantially broadening the relevance of conceptual history for understanding politics (1993; 2011). Others scholars who have put conceptual history effectively to work for broader historical studies are Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann in his on-going work to write the global history of "human rights" (2010), and Jörn Leonhard, who has spearheaded comparative studies of modern European history through his works on liberalism and war (2001, 2008). Even more influential are Margrit Pernau's path-breaking studies of the global conceptual history of emotions, which will be discussed later.

In the next part of this entry I intend to discuss conceptual history as a method, which can be employed by any kind of historian interested in reading and understanding texts. As a series of methodological steps, conceptual history is neither very complex nor very original; on the contrary, it can be described as somewhat elaborated version of what in German historiography is known as *Quellenkritik*, "source criticism" – a set of historicist procedures to make sure that historical and textual sources are understood correctly, that is, in accordance with what is known about the use of language in the period in question, more specifically about the use and meaning of words that are particularly important for texts in question. These are the words that for some reason or other qualify as "concepts", or "key concepts".

How do we go about identifying the key concepts in a text, or a set of texts, a period or a discourse? In part, this depends on the research interest, or the broader topic of study. Whereas historians of politics will typically select concepts like "state", "democray", or "liberalism", historians of emotions are more likely to call attention to "nostalgia", "anger", or "happiness", and so on. Either the conceptual analysis will be part of a more comprehensive text or discourse analysis, alongside other semantic elements, like metaphors, rhetorical figures, and speech acts, or it will an end it itself. Either way, any conceptual history must have a justifiable and justified concept of what a concept is, a "concept of the concept" (Palti 2001). Indeed, there are no lack of high-level theoretical discussion of what the characteristic features of a concept might be, in the linguistic and the philosophical sense (cf. for example Busse 1987). Mostly, concepts are seen as corresponding to an abstract idea, or a mental representation. By contrast, in conceptual history most definitions operate on a methodological, rather than a theoretical level; concepts are not abstract ideas or mental objects, but words, linguistic units that can be studied in texts. Concepts, however, are words of a specific kind. Koselleck calls his distinction between word and concept "pragmatic", meaning that even though it might not stand up to philosophical scrutiny it has clear methodological implications (see also Ifversen 2011, 69). Both words and concepts, Koselleck argues, might have several meanings,

but whereas the meaning of a word can be determined with reference to the context, concepts are by necessity ambiguous. A word becomes a concept when "the full range of meanings derived from a given sociopolitical context [*die Fülle eines politisch-sozialen Bedeutungszusammenhanges*]", in which – and for which – the word is used, is contained in the word (2011: 19; see also Koselleck 1972: xxii). And he goes on:

> A word may have several possible meanings, but a concept combines in itself an abundance of meanings. Thus a concept may be clear, but it must be ambiguous. It bundles together the richness of historical experience and the sum of theoretical and practical lessons drawn from it in such a way that their relationship can be established and properly understood only through a concept. To put it most succinctly: the meaning of words can be defined exactly, but concepts can only be interpreted (2011: 20).

What is contained in a concept then, is not just a plurality of meanings, but also and even more importantly what Koselleck calls the "multifarious quality of historical reality" [*die Mannigfaltigkeit geschichtlicher Wirklichkeit*], "which enters into the ambiguity of a word in such
a manner that this reality can be understood and conceptualized only in that word" (2011: 20; see also Koselleck 1972: xxxii). For example, in the first decades of the 21st century, the concept "crisis" has gained an increasingly prominent position in political discourse, due both to the many meanings aggregated in the concept, illustrated by compound words like "climate crisis", "refugee crisis", and "health crisis", and to the increasingly complex historical reality that this concept is part of. All these meanings, or fields of discourse come with their own specific terminologies, designating temperature levels, migration patterns, and viral spread, but all of them enter into the concept "crisis". The same goes for the events that these terminologies refer to: the extreme weather, the mass death on the Mediterranean, or the incessant search for a vaccine to stop the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, the specific constellation of events that characterizes the beginning of the 21st century can thus be grasped by and in the concept of "crisis" (Jordheim, Wigen 2018).

If we for the moment stick to German *Begriffsgeschichte* as the most methodologically developed framework for doing conceptual history, there are a set of further analytical terms that can prove helpful in defining and approaching the object of study: "key concepts", "collective singulars", "counter-concepts", and "semantic fields". To begin with the first: Assembled in the eighth volumes of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* are not simply concepts, but so-called "key concepts" or "basic concepts", depending on how we choose to translate the German *Grund-*, meaning ground or base. Among the criteria for identifying these are, firstly, that they are "indispensable", in the sense that they are accepted and used by all participants and parties in an event, simply because without them there could be "neither conflict nor consensus" (Koselleck 2011, 30); secondly, that they are always "contested", that is, that meaning and use of key concept are objects of on-going discussions and conflicts (Koselleck 1996, 64). Indeed, in most countries across the world, there can be no discussion of political issues that does not involve in one way or another the concept of "democracy", but at the same time, the practical and institutional meanings of this concept as well as the possibilities for political action provided by it are by no means settled once and for all. (Schaffer 2000).

The analytical term that most clearly links the methodological procedures to the larger theoretical framework, is the *Kollektivsingular*, "collective singular" (Koselleck 2011, 13), a kind of key concept that more clearly than others mark the threshold to Western modernity. A "collective singular," according to Koselleck, can only be used in the singular form, but has a collective, even universal subject. Until the late 18th century, words like "progress" and "history" could still build plurals, and the singular forms were names only for particular phenomena. There could be

"progresses" in different fields, like medicine, art, or technology, as well as their "histories" (Koselleck 2004, 33–38). However, in the *Sattelzeit*, "progress" changes meaning from progress of something specific to progress of everything – another name for the movement of history itself (Koselleck, Meier 1975: 385–90). Progress, in singular, takes on the meaning of progress of mankind, of civilization, or simply of history – thus synchronizing and indeed integrating different types of progress into a singular historical movement (Jordheim, Wigen 2018). This concept of movement presupposes a goal. In epistemic communities like the medical profession, this goal might the product of inter-subjective agreement, but as soon as the community broadens to larger social groups or even a nation state, the directedness, or teleology inherent in concepts like progress or history turns political and potentially contested.

That concepts are part of conflicts and struggles, and thus fundamentally political, is highlighted by the existence of "counter-concepts" (Koselleck 2004, 155–191). They refer to constellations where one concept, such as "friend", "civilized", "Christian", or even "human", is used to qualify the one who speaks, whereas another, "enemy", "barbarian", "pagan", or "inhuman", is used to qualify the other, the counterpart, the stranger. Qualify in this case really means *dis*qualify, since the concept used to designate the other does not recognize her or him as an equal, possessing the same right to speak or even to exist. "Counter-concepts", Koselleck points out, are "asymmetrical", granting value and quality to one group, "we", while depriving another group, "them", of the same, in the end even their humanity (2004, 155–160).

The pairing of concepts with counter-concepts illustrates how conceptual history can be expanded to form synchronic structures that are embedded in and shape the socio-political context. Although conceptual history focuses on single words, rather than discourses, epistemes, or rhetorical structures, their semantic environments are not left out. Concepts are not like lonely ships sailing through history on an ocean of discourse. Among the most important insights from discourse analysis is to what extent concepts have innumerous complex ties with linguistic elements around them. To some of these elements, like the "counter-concepts", the ties are stronger. These interlinked words form "semantic fields", that is, clusters of words linked together by semantic overlaps, hierarchies, or contrasts (Steinmetz, Freeden 2017, 16-18). Thus, "crisis" might be linked to synonyms like "catastrophe", "disaster", "apocalypse", "emergency", and "turning point", but also to more field- or discourse-specific terms, like "state of exception" and "sovereignty", if we are occupied with political theory, "border control" and "human trafficking", if the topic is the migration and refugees. Doing conceptual history also involves mapping these "semantic fields" and study what holds them together.

Conceptual history as a method can be said to form a two-step procedure. The first step takes a *synchronic* view of history, and analyses the uses and meanings of a word within a specific context: Who uses the word? In what way? What does it mean? What does the user want to achieve? To answer these questions, the historian must establish a context of other texts using the same word, and explore whether it is used in the same way, and with same meaning, or not. A good place to start is in dictionaries and lexica, which aim to offer a standard definition of the concept in question, but which also lists examples that can point out other possible meanings than the ones we first identified. Other important sources are newspaper archives, or parliamentary debates. According to Koselleck, such studies can be either "semasiological" or "onomasiological", analyzing how concepts change their meanings, and how meanings change their linguistic representation, in other words, their concepts respectively (Koselleck 2011, 18-19). This raises the somewhat heretical question, yet to be met with a satisfactory answer, where and what concepts are when they are not instantiated in language, or when these instantiations are in the process of changing. As we shall see toward the end of the entry, these and similar questions are the ones guiding conceptual history into the future

What we have discussed so far pertains to conceptual history as a "historical-critical" method (Koselleck 2011, 16), which can be used by historians pursuing different interests and goals, but who are involved in reading and interpreting sources. In the second step, however, this synchronic perspective is expanded *diachronically*, when different meanings and uses are added together to form a history for the concept, as laid out by Koselleck in his introduction to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*:

> In this second stage of analysis […] concepts are removed from their original context, their meanings during successive periods of historical time are examined, and relationships among these meanings are then assigned.[…] Only in this way […] can we become aware of the social persistence of a meaning and the structures to which it corresponded. In and of itself, words' persistence over time is an insufficient index of their unchanging content. Only through a diachronic investigation of the layers of meaning contained in a concept can we uncover long-term structural transformations. (Koselleck 2011, 17-18)

At this point conceptual history shifts from a method that can be used for various research purposes to a form of historiography, even a discipline, comparable to cultural history or intellectual history, complete with a set of publication genres, most prominently the lexicon, as well as theoretical and institutional frameworks. In the following I will explore briefly the main theoretical contributions made by conceptual history, primarily German *Begriffsgeschichte*, to the broader field of history.

To understand where the gist of the theory of conceptual history lies we have to return to the concept of "genealogy", in the way it was originally developed by Nietzsche. In *On the Genealogy of Morality*, published in 1887, he produces the quote that is now included in any conceptual history catechism: "All concepts, in which an entire process summarizes itself semiotically eludes definition; only that which has no history can be defined" (Koselleck 1972: xxii, my translation; see also Koselleck 2011, 20). In different ways, all the historians who have contributed theoretically to the project of conceptual history, among them Koselleck, Skinner, and Foucault, have taken inspiration from this Nietzschean idea, in order to counteract anachronistic and ahistorical understandings of concepts and texts in the Western canon. The contrast between analytical definition and historical understanding is important, but not the most decisive element in this quote. What does it mean that "an entire process summarizes itself semiotically" in a concept [*in denen sich ein ganzer Prozeß semiotisch zusammenfaßt*]? Although disagreeing in many other aspects of conceptual history, Koselleck, Foucault, and Skinner all take for granted that concepts we use in the present come with historical baggage, which can be mobilized critically to deconstruct contemporary, presentist ideals, such as humanism (Foucault), but also productively to suggest alternative understandings of present-day politics, such as the Republican concept of liberty (Skinner). What Koselleck sets out to understand, in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, but also, and more intensely in his essays is exactly how this kind of baggage aggregates, or in Nietzschean terms, exactly how processes are summarized semiotically, in specific concepts. Furthermore, this question guides him into developing an entire theory of historical time, or rather, time*s* in plural, which at present emerges as the other most singular contribution from his work, in addition to *Begriffsgeschichte*, and which I will discuss in more depth in another entry (see also Jordheim 2012).

Again, we need to start with Koselleck's insistence that the full complexity of historical reality and experience enters into the concept. However, this complexity does not originate in one particular historical moment, or one synchronic context, but in a diachronic process moving from the past, through the present and into the future. It follows from Nietzsche's claim that concepts can 'have a history' in two different ways: on the one hand in how their meanings and uses change through the process of history; on the other hand in how they "summarize semiotically", or indeed,

conceptualize that same process. In order to make this argument, Koselleck has to revise the Saussurean dichotomy of the diachronic and the synchronic. In an essay from 1972, Koselleck pointed out how conceptual history "goes beyond the strict alternation of diachrony and synchrony" (2004, 90). For Saussure, insisting on the synchronic and structural aspects of language was a way of freeing the study of linguistic forms from the historical and diachronic approaches predominant in his own time; for Koselleck, however, the idea of "structure" does not come out of structural linguistics, but of German *Strukturgeschichte*, the way it was practiced before WWII, for example by his co-editor Ottor Brunner, and later by card-carrying social historians like Hans-Ulrich Wehler and Jürgen Kocka. Hence, in Koselleck's work "structure" applies to diachronic phenomena, most importantly to what he terms "structures of repetition [*Wiederholungsstrukturen*]" (see for example Koselleck 2018, 158-176), when history or at least historical experience seems to be repeating itself. Furthermore, whereas for Saussure the dichotomy of the diachronic and the synchronic was a question of method; for Koselleck, on the other hand, it is a question of historical time – how the long and the short, the rapid and the slow, the sudden and the continuous come together in concepts and processes.

"*Begriffsgeschichte*, the way we try to practice it," Koselleck contends, "cannot do without a theory of historical temporalities [*eine Theorie der historischen Zeiten*]" (Koselleck 2000: 302, my translation; for a discussion of the English translation in Koselleck 2002, see Jordheim 2012). At first glance the temporality at work in conceptual history seems relatively straightforward and homogenous. In *Geschichtliche Grunbegriffe,* all articles, on "progress", "future", "revolution", "state", and "work", to mention only a few, are structured in more or less the same way: starting in Antiquity – if the history of the concept in question actually goes this far back – and then tracing the concept through history, more or less up to our own time, with a clear emphasis on the period between 1750 and 1850, the *Sattelzeit*. So far the lexicon gives the impression of being a fairly traditional work of social or intellectual history, reconstructing the past as a linear chronological process. However, a closer look at any one of the articles in the encyclopaedia is enough to convince us that this can hardly be the case. For instance we could look up the concept of "democracy" and the period around 1780, when the notion of democratic government is going through major political and ideological changes (Conze, Meier, Koselleck, Maier, Reimann, 1972: 847–855). On the one hand, "democracy" is still a concept within constitutional law, in the same way as "aristocracy" and "oligarchy", going back to Aristotle's treaty on the different forms of government, and used primarily in scholarly debates on matters of law and government; on the other hand and at the same time, "democracy" is emerging as a much more general political concept, used by different members of the public sphere to express their hopes or fears for the future, independent of theoretical or philosophical debates on the advantages or disadvantages of various constitutional principles. According to chronological time, this would indicate that one meaning and use of the concept of "democracy" precedes or succeeds another; but in the relevant article in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* this is clearly not the only possibility. On the contrary, these meanings continue to exist alongside each other, simultaneously and in a sense as alternative potentials for meaning-making in a certain period. To be able to explore this historical simultaneity of different conceptual meanings, we obviously need a more sophisticated analytical tool than the traditional idea of chronological succession. Conceptual meanings do not only succeed each other chronologically, but are co-existing, overlapping or coming in conflict with each other and thus entering into a multi-layered and multi-faceted temporal structure. According to Koselleck, every concept has "its own internal temporal structure" (Koselleck 2011: 31), comprising all three dimensions of time: past, present and future. Put in semiotic terms, he argues that every political or social concept includes both a polemic element directed at the present, a prognostic element directed at the future, and a historical element directed at the past (Koselleck 2004: 79). Even though all concepts belong in a synchronically organized context, in a text, debate, or discourse, they still retain what Koselleck

refs to as their "Janus-faces" (Koselleck 2011: 9), one side facing backwards towards a historically reconstructed past, the other facing forwards towards a prognostically envisaged future.

These three semiotic elements – the pasts, presents, and futures – coexist in the concept and are actualized every time the concept is used. More precisely, they form semantic "layers" in the concepts, *Zeitschichten*, "layers of time", in Koselleck's own term, or, as recently suggested by Stefan-Ludwig Hoffman and Sean Franzel in an English edition of Koselleck's essays, "sediments" (Koselleck 2018). To have come up with a way to explore these processes of *conceptual sedimentation* can be characterized as Koselleck's most significant contribution to conceptual history. As concepts move through diachronic time, through an endless succession of synchronic contexts and moments, they simultaneously develop their own inherent temporal structures, their own pasts, presents, and futures. By consequence, any usage of a concept is at the same time a manifestation of what Koselleck has referred to as "the contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous" – *die Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen* (Koselleck 2011, 18) – where the past meets the future, in an attempt to intervene in, reform, even revolutionize the present.

4. In the Future (1,000 words): Related topics and how it might evolve as a topic/method in the future.

Since the breakthrough in the 1970s and 1980s, fueled in part by the "linguistic turn", conceptual history has spread rapidly, both to other fields and disciplines and to other places, cultures, and languages. By consequence, during the last 10-20 years a series of methodological and theoretical innovations have radically transformed both the theories and the practices of conceptual history, by taking up questions of transfer, translation, practices, as well as digital methods, just to mention the most important ones. To put another way: a series of other "turns" have caught up with conceptual history and supplanted the linguistic one, among them, the global turn, the practice turn, the material turn, and the digital turn.

In her programmatic article from 2012, "Whither Conceptual History? From National to Entangled Histories", Pernau begins by pointing out that "the last decade has witnessed a remarkable internationalization in conceptual history", both in research and research networks (2012: 1). To prove her point, she points to the major conceptual history projects are under way in Central and Eastern Europe, the Ibero-American world, China, Korea, and India (2012: 5). Though many of these new projects work within a national and monolingual framework, thus continuing the tradition from the lexica of key concepts in German, French, or Finnish, others – not least Pernau's own (2020) – recognize the need for theoretical and methodological innovation. Taking inspiration from the shift in general historiography from national to "entangled" histories, in which neither nations nor national languages can be treated as pre-given, quasi-natural entities, which unfold and develop through history (see also Marjanen 2009). Instead these studies, taking their key from new global and imperial history, take conceptual transfer and translation to be the norm, rather than the exception. Just as other parts of national history and identity, languages are constituted by processes of exchange and entanglement with other cultures. Although *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* was in no sense monolingual, but contained multiple references to for example Greek, Latin, English, French and Italian, processes of translation never came into view. Historians of concepts have argued that as long as there were no third language, serving as *tertium comparationis*, and thus guaranteeing the equivalence between the words in question, multilingual studies in conceptual history would always risk making false comparisons. One solution to this predicament has been to make the processes and practices of translation themselves the object of investigation in conceptual history, or as Einar Wigen puts in his aptly named book *State of Translation*, conceptual transfer from one language to

another is not an abstract, teleological process, but takes place one translation at the time (2018, 1-30).

A conceptual history that focuses not on singular concepts as self-contained units, but on the much more fluid and shifting processes of transfer and translation will also by necessity need to reconfigure the temporal and spatial frameworks. As is well known, colonialism and imperialism are invested with both spatial and temporal vectors: from the metropolitan centres in Western Europe to the colonial peripheries in Asia and Africa, as well as from the primitive, pre-modern pasts to the civilized, modern futures. In the tradition from *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, concepts are often taken to follow the same trajectory, enrolled in the processes of modernization and civilization, beginning and ending in Europe and the West. Rejecting this linear, homogenous directionality, global conceptual history studies transfers and exchanges that take place in a much more diversified global space, in which local, national, colonial, and imperial connections and entanglements contribute to the development of terminologies and concepts in and between languages (see Pernau, Jordheim et al. 2015).

The globalization of conceptual history has also put pressure on another of the more or less tacit doctrines of the field, namely the somewhat one-eyed focus on the written word. Koselleck's reluctance to define concepts in more theoretical terms liberated conceptual historians from philosophical and linguistic straightjackets, but also gave a strong primacy to language, mostly in its written form. At a close look, however, there can be no doubt that conceptual meaning-making, the aggregation of semantic content in a conceptual structures, which can then be applied to contemporary situations, is not reserved for linguistic expression. In his later work, Koselleck, an avid photographer, became increasingly aware of this and dedicated his time to studying visual forms of political communication, what he referred to as a "political iconology" (Locher, Markantonatos 2012). This strand of conceptual history was also picked up and developed by Reichardt in study of how written, oral, and visual elements came together in "semantic networks". More sophisticated approaches to these kinds of networks can be found in recent media history, especially in the German tradition, in which conceptuality emerge as the product of other media and sign systems than just and specifically language (Gießmann 2006). Not just the visual falls outside the scope of conceptual history when the distinction between word and concept is collapsed. The same goes for the body, the senses, as well as practices and technologies. In the last years, the history of emotions has taken the lead in bringing bodily practices back into conceptual history, by bridging the gap between terminologies of feeling and the ways in which these feelings are practiced in social communities (Pernau and Rajamani, 2016). An even more comprehensive take is found in the book *Conceptualizing the World*, in which this work of conceptualization is studied across a wide range of practices: linguistic, visual, technological, and social (Jordheim, Sandmo, 2018). For the future, we might expect to encounter even more intensive exchanges between conceptual history and history of science and knowledge, including Science-Technology Studies, in which concepts emerge a tools, technologies, and "epistemic objects" (Knorr Cetina 2001) in their own right, as part of "networks" and "assemblages" (Latour 2005).

A final way in which future conceptual history might probe deeper into the identity of the concept itself is through text-mining and computational methods. Indeed, in the introduction to their highly innovative and experimental article on "Distributional Concept Analysis", in which they propose a computational model for discerning the structure and history of concepts, Peter de Bolla et al. take it upon them to raise again the question, ignored and even ridiculed by many conceptual historians: "Are concepts the same as words?" (2019, 67) To the extent that computational methods have been used in conceptual history, the procedure had mostly been the one recently described by Neil Foxlee: "it combines quantitative and qualitative analyses using a corpus-based approach to identify salient items that are then placed in their discursive and sociopolitical contexts" (2018, 75; see also Ifversen 2011, 82). In this way, Koselleck's disinterest in the theoretical difference between

words and concept is carried forward and reinforced. Although problematic on many levels, the work of de Bolla et al., alongside Michael Gavin and his collaborators (Gavin et al 2019), opens another avenue for exploring concepts historically, by analysing co-occurrence of words in large data sets and thus identifying larger patterns, structures of conceptual operation that change over time.

5. Conclusion (500 words) – brief summing up of key points.

In the introduction to a previous collection of Koselleck's essay, translated into English, the editor Hayden White explains the lack of a sustained Anglophone reception of conceptual history by something "intimidatingly Hegelian" (Koselleck 2002: ix). Since then this fear of Hegelian contemination seems to have abated somewhat and been replaced by an active and animated discussion of German *Begriffsgeschichte* in general and Koselleck's work in particular, culminating in the recent publication of a landmark selection of his essays, *Sediments of Time* (2018). Today, conceptual history has clearly outgrown its German and European origins, as well as it reliance of multi-volume lexica and dictionaries, relying heavily on the alphabet, and become a multifarious set of methods and theories, to be used alone, in combination with each other, or with others. From being a concern of German, French, and British historians, mostly unaware and uninterested in each other, conceptual history is now practiced by Finnish political scientists, Spanish intellectual historians, South American political historians, Italian philosophers, Korean sociologists, German global historians, British linguists, Norwegian Arabists and Ottomanists, and many others. Due to these numerous exchanges and transfers, the set of relevant theories and methods have also opened up. Concepts now cover a wide range of semantic elements, patterns, and processes, which include the words themselves, as suggested by Koselleck, but also the visual, the sensory, bodily movements and practices, political actions, technologies, and scientific procedures. A similar fragmentation has affected the other side of the conceptual history equation, or rather convergence: the processes of historical change. Rather than the homogenous, linear time of Western modernity, punctuated by the *Sattelzeit*, conceptual history is exploring the multiple temporalities of global space. Teleologies of modernization and civilization are making way for much more heterogenous and local time frames, in which pasts, presents, and futures, or anthropologically speaking, experiences and expectations, give rise to a wide variety of temporal structures. The modernist fetish for the new, so central in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, is supplanted by other temporal affects, like mourning, the feeling of being haunted, and various forms of presentism (Hartog 2016). In this form, stripped of various conceptual and temporal Hegelianisms, the history of concepts is set to enter into fruitful and effective alliances with other fields, disciplines, methods, and theoretical frameworks, generated in very different academic contexts across the globe.

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