

Reaktion, Restauration

Reaction, Restoration

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1. Introduction. II. 1. The origins of ‘reaction’ and ‘restoration’ and their encounter in revolutionary times. a) ‘Reaction’. b) ‘Restoration’.

I. Introduction

If one keeps in mind (an eye on, beholds, follows) the pre-revolutionary [[i.e. before 1789]] history of “reaction” and “restoration”, which no doubt from the point of view of the question / problem formulation of this lexicon must be characterised as their pre-history, thus, a simultaneous handling, treatment of both can hardly be justified. Here we are, namely, dealing with two concepts which appear, pop/crop up, arise at different points in time / periods and in completely, entirely different, various contexts, interrelations, in order to exist next to / alongside / beside each other in the age, epoch of the [[French]] Revolution [[1789 onwards]] and without any contact (without the one traversing / touching the other). The Revolution intensified their politicisation already begun earlier, and effected, caused, brought about, provoked, moreover, a semasiological (meaning-related) widening, broadening, extension, expansion of both, which first of all lead to their approximation (the lessening of

their distance) and finally led to their fusion, merging, amalgamation, i.e. led to their synonymy (becoming synonymous) — at least in so far that today both concepts can mean / signify the striving for / after the restoration, reestablishment, rebuilding, renewal, recovery of outdated, obsolete, antiquated, archaic, outmoded views and arrangements (institutions, establishments, facilities), even though the keeping to / insistence upon / persistence with existing states of affairs vis-à-vis progress [[as an ideological concept]] is characterised / described exclusively by ‘reaction’. Only the revolutionary turn makes possible / enables, in fact demands, requires the pursuit, pursuance, tracking, trailing of the fate, destiny as regards conceptual history of ‘reaction’ and ‘revolution’. The positive and negative mutual, reciprocal influences of both concepts are carried out/executed, take place, in the course of this, both at the political level in the narrower sense, as well as at the world-theoretical level and level pertaining to the philosophy of history.

II.

I. The origin(s), provenance, origination, emanation, descent, pedigree, background of ‘reaction’ and ‘restoration’ and their encounter, meeting in the time(s) of [[the French]] revolution / Revolution (revolutionary times)

a) ‘Reaction’. The word ‘reactio’ is a learned, scholarly, lettered neologism which was formed, constituted in the discussion of aspects of the Aristotelian teaching, doctrine, theory of nature and motion (movement) during the time(s), epoch, era of the Renaissance¹.

Reagere, resistere agenti, describes VOSSIUS the concept and admits its suitability for the ends, goals, purposes of natural philosophy, although / even though he himself preferred *vicissim agere*². In any case, it seems that the new term at the beginning of the 17th century

¹ PETRUS POMPONATIUS MANTUANUS, *Tractatus acutissimi, utilissimi et mere peripatetici: De intentione et remissione formarum ac de parvitate et magnitudine. De reactione etc.* (Venice 1525), also for earlier, older discussions of the problem. Following on from / Tying onto / In connection with this, JACOBUS ZABARELIUS PATAVINUS, *De rebus naturalibus libri XXX* (1589; Frankfurt 1654), 425Dff.: *liber de reactione*; for the definition of ‘reactio’ *ibid.*, 426E. 435D. *Reagere* stems from the school(-related) Latin of the 3rd century, *réagir* appears as the alchemistic term in the 14th century, cf. FEW 3. Aufl. / 3rd ed., Bd. 10 / vol. 10 (1962), 132, s. v. (see versus/towards/in the direction of / lexical entry (item)) *reagere*. For the meaning of ‘the mutual effect / reciprocal influence of natural elements / the elements of nature’ in the 15th century: JEAN STAROBINSKI, *La vie et les aventures du mot ‘réaction’* [the life and the adventures of the word ‘reaction’], *Modern Language Rev.* 70 (1975), XXII, footnote 6; cf. *ibid.*, footnote 4 for the gradual reception, intake, inclusion, entry of ‘réaction’ in the/a French dictionaries, lexica of the 17th and 18th century.

² GERHARDUS JOH. VOSSIUS, *De vitiis sermonis et glossematis latino-barbaris* 4,20 (Amsterdam 1645), 733 f.

has become common enough because GOCCLENIUS registers, records and explains, explicates it³. The new natural science / science of nature as well as authors who dealt with it philosophically⁴, used it all the more frequently/often(,) until it was solemnly (festively, ceremoniously) established by the formulation of the third Newtonian law: *Actioni contrarium semper et aequalem esse reactionem: sive corporum duorum actiones in se mutuo semper esse aequales et in partes contrarias dirigi*⁵. Now it is (well-)known that an important concomitant (ramification, side effect) of Newton's apotheosis in the age of the Enlightenment was the transfer(ence) / transmission of (reinterpreted) basic / fundamental concepts of his natural science to the fields of biology, of anthropology and of politics. With 'reaction', in the course of this, it similarly occurred – albeit to a lesser / slighter extent – as with '(the force of) gravity / attraction'⁶. First of all, though, there was talk of it (i.e. reaction) only in connection with the – on each and every respective occasion – corresponding action. When Diderot wrote: *je vois tout en action et en réaction*⁷, he meant with that that action and reaction were both unavoidable, essential elements/moments of a dynamic equilibrium, i.e. of the/a world situated/found unceasingly / constantly in motion and yet remaining, pausing in/with / retaining certain basic/fundamental structures. The same conception, notion, idea was the basis of the contemporary introduction of the conceptual pair 'action'-'reaction' in the language of biology⁸ as well as the first transfer(ence) (transmission) of this mode / way / manner of expression pertaining to natural science to politics. MONTESQUIEU, following Machiavelli, saw / espied the inner force of the Roman republic in the mutual, reciprocal supplement(ation), complement(ing) of its constituent elements / parts (components) competing with one another, which he compared to the *parties de cet*

³ RUDOLPHUS GOCCLENIUS, *Lexicon philosophicum quo tanquam clave philosophiae fores aperiuntur* (Frankfurt 1613; Ndr. Hildesheim 1964), 960, s. v. *reactio*. STEPHANUS CHAUVIN, *Lexicon philosophicum*, 2 ed. (Leeuwarden 1713; Ndr. Düsseldorf 1967), 557, s. v. *reactio*.

⁴ KENELM DIGBY, *Two Treatises in the one of which the Nature of Bodies, in the other the Nature of Man's Soule is Looked into* . . . 16, 4f. (Paris 1644; Ndr. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1970), 139 ff.: *Of reaction*, HOBBS, *Elementarum philosophiae sectio prima de corpore* (1655), 3, § 19. *Opera*, t. 1 (1836; Ndr. 1961), 284. RALPH CUDWORTH, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe* (London 1678; Ndr. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1964), 731.

⁵ ISAAC NEWTON, *Philosophiae naturalis principia mathematica* (1687), ed. Alexandre Koyré and I. Bernard Cohen, vol. 1 (Cambridge 1972), 55. *Die Encyclopédie*, 3^e éd., t. 28 (1779), 419f., emphasises, stresses, accentuates, highlights the advantages of the Newtonian perception/view of reaction vis-à-vis the peripatetic perception/view. JOHNSON vol. 2 (1755; Ndr. 1967), s. v. (sub voce / in the entry of) *Reaction*, explains the concept of reaction with a passage from Newton's "Opticks" too/as well.

⁶ GEORGES GUSDORF, *Les sciences humaines et la pensée occidentale*, t. 4: *Les principes de la pensée au siècle des lumières* (Paris 1971), 180 ff..

⁷ DENIS DIDEROT, *Principes philosophiques sur la matière et le mouvement* (1770), *Oeuv. res compl.* éd. Jean Assézat, t. 2 (Paris 1875), 68.

⁸ Ders., *Le rêve de d'Alembert* (1769), *ibid.*, 139.

*univers, éternellement liées par l'action des unes et la réaction des autres*⁹. ROUSSEAU, again, did not describe with the help / on the basis of 'action' and 'reaction' the inner / internal circumstances, relations of a state, but the function(ing) of the European state system; since, however, in contrast to the / an uncertain, insecure peace, which this European state system could / was able to guarantee, he dreamt about / imagined a permanent peace,(;) thus for him 'action' and 'reaction' (rather) represented and constituted not so much complementary factors of (a) true harmony as (rather) the causes of a dangerous *agitation continue*¹⁰.

The French Revolution brought apart / asunder / separated / divided the conceptual pair 'action'- 'reaction'. Whilst at the linguistic, language level 'revolution' takes the place of 'action', with, from now on / henceforth, all the momentum, impetus inherent in this word (i.e. 'revolution'), at the same time the presuppositions for the politicisation of the concept of reaction were created. Because the linguistic, language saying farewell / goodbye to the concept of action and consequently to the imagery / metaphorical expressions of the natural sciences had exactly a real, historical-political reason. If in the concept(ual plan) of the natural sciences, action and reaction constituted, despite all opposition, forces ultimately having an effect inside of a more or less stable equilibrium, thus on historical-political terrain, revolutionary action and counterrevolutionary reaction collided with, crashed into each other with such force, impact, weight that a fruitful, fertile coexistence of both in the framework of a (still to be manufactured / restored / fabricated / produced) equilibrium could no longer be kept in mind / thought about / conceived / grasped. The parallel with the concept of natural science lost its justification when the age of the world civil war began.

However, during the outbreak of the Revolution it was still too early for the consolidation, fixing of the fronts and of the concepts. This indeed resulted in the at least implicit replacement of 'action' by 'revolution', but the with that incipient displacement of the mode / manner / way of expression of natural science by the political mode of expression was left in the middle / remained at the half-way point insofar as no immediate, instant(aneous) politicisation of the concept of reaction, in the sense of an unambiguous connection of the same (concept of reaction) with one single party or movement took place. Whilst the concept

⁹ MONTESQUIEU, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence* (1734), *Oeuvres compl.*, t. 2 (1951), 119. Cf. MACHIAVELLI, *Discorsi* 3, 4, 6. *Opere*, ed. Sergio Bertelli, t. 1 (Mailand 1960), 387f. 390ff..

¹⁰ ROUSSEAU, *Extrait du projet de paix perpétuelle de Monsieur l'Abbé de Saint Pierre* (1761), *Oeuvres compl.*, t. 3 (1964), 572.

of reaction remained true for the time being to its origins in natural science and continued to characterise / connote the each and every respective specific counteraction / countereffect / counter-impact on a previous specific action, effect, impact, it could be related / relate / refer to reactive actions, acts, kinds of acting of various groups or parties, but not exclusively to a certain group or party amongst these latter groups or parties. In the early phase of the Revolution, MIRABEAU could / was allowed hence to demand a *réaction* against (the) incorrigible clergy just as the bishope TORNÉ complained about / lamented / bemoaned the *complots combinés de réaction violente*¹¹. The concept of reaction behaves / is here still neutral(ly) as regards political parties (party-neutrally), it points / alludes, namely to any *action politique opposée à une autre*¹², whereby / in relation to which the authors, originators, creators, organisers of this latter any kind of political action opposed to another must be named in every individual case¹³.

The later function of the concept of reaction was, accordingly, first of all fulfilled / suffused by / with the concept ‘counterrevolution’¹⁴, which continued frequently to be used synonymously too / as well. Already etymological associations (counter-, re-) suggested, though, an identification of both, and even the course of the French events (incidents, occurrences, happenings), at the latest after 1792, pushed towards the (said) / that (such an) identification¹⁵. It / The said identification could, however, irrevocably, irreversibly become a reality / be realised (fulfilled) only after 1815 when the defeat of the Revolution let its opponents (temporarily) seize, grasp, grab the initiative,(;) something which gave, bestowed / conferred upon the concept of reaction (a) particular intensity and conciseness, succinctness. It ceased then to relate / refer primarily, mainly to reactive kinds of acting, actions, acts of various parties (factions) and consequently it (itself / even) ceased to be party-neutral (i.e. neutral as regards parties and factions), in order to henceforth / from that/this time on

¹¹ Quoted in BRUNOT t. 9/2 (1967), 843, (foot)note 8.

¹² Quoted in FEW 3rd ed., vol. 10, 132, s. v. reagere.

¹³ Cf. propositions / sentences like *le caractère royal de la réaction* or *la réaction de ceux qu'on appelait aristocrates*, cited in FREY (1925), 103f.; BRUNOT t. 9/2, 844, (foot)note 1.

¹⁴ Already at the beginning of 1790 ‘contre-révolution’ seems to have been common: PHILIPPE JOSEPH BENJAMIN BUCHEZ/PROSPER CHARLES ROUX, *Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution Française, ou Journal des Assemblées Nationales*, after 1789 until 1815, t. 5 (Paris 1834), 143,145. The initial enforcement / establishment / predominance of the term ‘contre-révolution’ brought with it / about / meant that ‘réactionnaire’ was constituted/formed analogously (in regard) to(wards) ‘(contre)-révolutionnaire’. Before / Prior to that / Previously / Beforehand, ‘réagisseur’ and above all ‘réacteur’ were used, BRUNOT t. 9/2, 837, (foot)note 1.

¹⁵ Around / About 1796 the connection of/between ‘réacteur’ with/and ‘royal’ and ‘royalisme’ became all the (more and) more frequent, BRUNOT t. 9/2, 844, (foot)note 2; cf. FELDMANN (1911/12), 276, s. v. Reaktion.

characterise a completely, entirely, totally particular party or else movement, whose actions, acts, kinds of acting did not merely stand up (/ were not merely defensive counteractions) to each and every respective proceeding, procedure (/ the respective actions) of the attacking, invasive, aggressive Revolution, but were supposed to make up / constitute a conscious and cohesive, united, closed in toto directed strategy against the temporarily / for the time being defeated, but by no means eradicated, extirpated, wiped (stamped) out, destroyed, uprooted, killed off Revolution. To the extent that the individual counterrevolutionary act(ion)s, kinds of acting seemed to be condensed in a counterrevolutionary strategy founded in terms of a world view, the reactions thereof were (also) t h e (*the*) reaction. After ‘History’ and ‘Progress’, accordingly, a (wider/broader meaning) collective (an important succinct, concise, comprehensive) singular / name (with a wider meaning) arrived / came on the scene / appeared (in the foreground) of political grammar, which was of course narrowly, tightly interrelated, interconnected with the previous ones/names¹⁶. In CONSTANT’S example, the steps towards the threshold of eventual, finite singularisation (/ the final formation of this important succinct, concise, comprehensive name) can be followed well. In his pamphlet appearing in 1797 “Des réactions politiques”, he (Constant) regrets, deplores, is sorry for / sad about the excesses which necessarily / must entail (bring with them) exaggerated / over-the-top “reactions”. These appear as the opposite of *modération* and can come from all participants, although Constant assumes that reactions would come into being through (the) endeavour(s) to delimit, circumscribe, narrow down again a *hors de ses bornes* [beyond its bounds] runaway Revolution (/ which has gone beyond its bounds, limits)¹⁷. In the course of this, he undoubtedly is thinking of the *réaction thermidorienne*¹⁸, yet the in principle connection with a certain, particular, specific party (faction) still remains absent / fails to materialise¹⁹. It (i.e. the said connection with a certain party) is still not directly made in Constant’s private notes from the years 1814—1816²⁰, but this time, however, it is obvious (close (by), near, just around the corner). Because if here the talk continues to be of political

¹⁶ See sec. II, 2, below.

¹⁷ BENJAMIN CONSTANT, *Des réactions politiques* (1797), *Écrits et discours politiques*, éd. O. Pozzo di Borgo, t. (vol.) 1 (o. O. (with no place of publication) 1964), 21ff., esp. 28. Also, for other / (some of) his contemporaries, ‘réaction’ just as much means ‘malveillance’ or ‘intolérance’: cf. BRUNOT t. [vol.] 9/2, 844, (foot)note 1.

¹⁸ Cf. ALBERT MATHIEZ, *La réaction thermidorienne* (Paris 1929).

¹⁹ Party-neutral / Neutral in terms of party politics [is] also the definition of the Dic. Ac. franç [Dictionary of the French Academy]., 5e éd., t. [vol.] 2 (1798), 426, s. v. réaction : *Il se dit figurément d’un parti opprimé qui se venge et agit à son tour*.

²⁰ B. CONSTANT, *Notiz v. 5. 5. 1814, 14. 8. 1815, 16. 1. 1816*, *Oeuvres*, éd. Alfred Roulin (Paris 1957), 731, 791, 807. Also in the English [language], the concept of reaction in the modern political sense first appears in 1816 as the *French use of the word*, cit. OED vol. 8 (1933), 192, s. v. [see the entry] Reaction.

act(ion)s, kinds of acting and not of political actors, thus the former nevertheless are comprehended as components of an organised activity (wherefore / for that reason Constant also, in contrast to 1797, uses the singular *réaction*), which always aims in the same direction and hence must have not interchangeable / exchangeable, and unmistakable, distinctive bearers. If now the relation between reactive activity and certain, always equal, the same bearers of the same reactive activity is determined to be / stands as (/ given and) necessary²¹, thus the next step can then also (effortlessly, casually) occur/take place/ensue/arise (in a free and easy manner), namely, the politically or even in terms of the philosophy of history meant hypostatisation of reaction, which for its part, as we are still to see / shall see below, was bound / supposed to reach, attain, achieve different degrees, grades of intensity.

b) **‘Restauration’**. ‘Restaurare’ and ‘restauratio’ were in Latin indeed considerably older than ‘reagere’ and ‘reactio’, and also received / came into at a much earlier (point in) time political meaning / significance, yet / nevertheless, it was likewise after 1815 that they were granted, given, imparted that particular, special (content as to) meaning (sense-content), which secured (for) them a firm, fixed, stable place in modern political language and simultaneously made their lasting connection with the concept of reaction unavoidable, inevitable.

²¹ Already NAPOLEON equated ‘réacteurs’, ‘contre-révolution’ and ‘vieux féodalistes’, Notiz v. 9.—10. 4. 1816, in : *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* par le Comte de Las Cases, éd. Gérard Walter, t. 1 (Paris 1956), 470.