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Gemeinwohl und Eigeninteresse

Resonance

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A New Approach To the Old Problem of Self Interest vs. The Common Good

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Outline

I.) Preliminary: The Trouble with the Common Good

II.) Dynamic Stabilization and the Triple A Conception of the Good

III.) The Resonance Conception of the Good

IV.) The Common Good as the Realization of Social Resonance
I.) Preliminary: The Trouble with the Common Good:

- An Essentially Contested Concept (Gallie)

- *Politically* Contested: A defining element of the conception of Politics

- A Regulative Idea

- Three Dimensions of the CG: Social, Temporal, Spatial

→ My Claim: The Common Good should not be conceptualized as a *substance* (*input or output*), but as a mode of relationship/connection
II.) Dynamic Stabilization and the Triple A Approach

(Structural) Definition:
A society can be called *modern* when its *mode of stabilization and reproduction is dynamic*, i.e.: when it needs growth, acceleration and innovation to keep its form and structure, to maintain the status quo.
I.) Dynamic Stabilization and the Triple A Approach

(Cultural) Definition

A society can be called modern when it is driven by the aspiration to increase the horizon or scope of what is accessible, available and attainable (Triple-A)

The dominant conception of the good life (happiness, freedom, and the point of living)

The individual and collective attractiveness of

- Technology, Money, Knowledge, Cities, Relationships

→ Clash/Tension between self-interest (my scope of a/a/a) and the common good (the scope of others/ of society as a whole)
The structural flip side: Desynchronization

The cultural flip side: Alienation (A world gone deaf and silent)
Resonance and the Common Good

III.) An Alternative Conception of the Good

Resonance:

A specific form of being in and to the world, characterized by

1) Affection: Being touched, moved by something

2) Emotion,: Answering to the 'call'; experiencing self efficacy in reaching out.

3) Transformation: A mode of mutually transformative exchange.

4) Elusiveness: Resonance is not echo; i.e. both sides speak in their own key or voice. This implies an element of utter unavailability (non-appropriation) with respect to occurrence and outcome.

5) Self and world need to be open enough for affection and sufficiently closed for responding in their own key.

6) Resonance is not an emotional state, but a mode of relationship.
IV.) The Common Good as the Realization of Resonance?

1) The Social Dimension of Resonance:

a) Affection: A mode of *listening* and *answering* – presumption that the other has something meaningful to say

b) Self-Efficacy: Being willing and capable of making one’s voice heard, of genuine *response* (participation not as cost, but as benefit)

c) Transformation: Resonance is not consonance or harmony, and does not reify identity: It is about ongoing dialogical transformation (republican conception).

d) Elusiveness: Common Good a) cannot be guaranteed institutionally and b) cannot be defined in terms of substance/outcome
IV.) The Common Good as the Realization of Resonance?

2) The Temporal Dimension of Resonance:

a) Resonance towards the past: Answering the experiences and legacies of the past (A ‘call‘ without determination)

b) Resonance towards the future: Being in connection/dialogue with those who will come after us (‘The Future ‘s in the Air…‘)

c) Establishing an ‘Axis of Resonance‘ between past and future
IV.) The Common Good as the Realization of Resonance?

3) The Spatial Dimension of Resonance:

a) Being in resonance with the *institutional structures* of the life world: Institutions which 'speak to us', because we experience self-efficacy in co-constructing them (H. Arendt)

b) Being in resonance with the *material structures* of the life world/nature: Nature as a sphere of resonance; not just a resource or an object of manipulation

c) The problem of the borders: Resonance is a mode of *being in* and *relating to* the world; it requires a particular dispositional stance *towards the other* – even beyond borders.
Conclusion:

It is impossible to be in resonance on one’s own – resonance is a social form of connectivity, a collective condition.

→ The gap between self interest and the common good is a conceptual flaw resulting from the Triple A approach…

… This is overoptimistic?
Resonance and the Common Good

Well, but the World needs a little optimism!

Thanks for your resonance!