

Let me start with a contrast. In general terms, the social sciences can look back at a relatively long history. In handbooks, it is common to trace the origins of the social sciences back to the Enlightenment era. For example, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *On the Social Contract* (or in French: *Du contrat social; ou Principes du droit politique*), which first appeared in 1762, often figures prominently in handbooks on classical social theory. In this book, Rousseau theorized about the best way to establish a political community in the face of the problems and inequalities, characteristic of the 'commercial society' of his time. Alternatively, the origins of the social sciences can also be linked with the origins of early 'welfare' state regimes. In the era around 1800, problems about public health, such as mortality and morbidity rates in different segments of the population, or problems about pauperism, poverty, and indigence became an object of broader concern. At that time, individual scholars and state authorities also started to gather information about these problems by means of a variety of both systematic and unsystematic methods, including population censuses, household surveys, and vital statistics. Anyway, the origins and early history of the social sciences are closely connected with the ambitions of social reformers.

Despite these early origins, however, it took quite some time before the social sciences could establish themselves, next to the natural sciences and the humanities, as academic disciplines. For sociology, it took until the period around 1900. As we all know, this period is often identified with scholars such as Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Ferdinand Tönnies, Edward Westermarck, and others. To gain credit as an academic discipline, the so-called founding fathers clearly tried to stay away from the ideological conflicts, which played such a pervasive role in the period around 1900. They put much emphasis on the objectivity, impartiality or value-neutrality of their analyses. Much work of the founding fathers was published before the First World War, but the emphasis on 'value-neutral' analyses also remained strong during and after the Great War. Even the applied or policy-directed kinds of research that have been undertaken by academics during the twentieth or early twenty-first century have remained far from the interventionist ambitions of the 'enlightened' social reformers.

But let me now add a further observation. In the period after the Second World War, and as no other countries in the world, the Nordic or Scandinavian countries have been able to develop extensive welfare regimes. It is often said that the Nordic welfare model distinguishes itself from other types of welfare states by its emphasis on high labor force participation, gender equality, extensive social benefits, and fiscal policies focused upon income redistribution. It might also be said that the Nordic welfare model offers a clear example of how the social sciences have been able to change the principles or basic structures of modern welfare states. Despite all the problems with which they have to face, the Scandinavian welfare regimes are often admired by social scientists and social reformers for what they are able to accomplish. They constitute the place where one can see the social sciences at work, so to say. To a scale not elsewhere seen or dreamed of, they make use of the social sciences to identify, address and alleviate social problems.

Today we celebrate the work of Professor Pauli Kettunen from the University of Helsinki in Finland. He is not only a first-hand beneficiary of the Nordic welfare model. Pauli Kettunen has also pioneered social and historical research about the ways in which the social sciences have helped to constitute the welfare state regimes in the Nordic countries. Throughout a very productive career, which spans a period of four decades, he has covered much ground. His work has become highly visible. He was, for example, the principal investigator of the Nordic Center of Excellence *NordWel* (i.e. The Nordic Welfare State: Historical Foundations and Future Challenges). Within the Sino-Nordic Welfare

Research Network (SNoW), he has in recent years also started to conduct comparative research about social welfare regimes, especially by comparing regimes in Europe and Asia. Altogether, Pauli Kettunen has been able to open up a variety of new perspectives to write the history and sociology of the social sciences. His work has also stimulated research that moves beyond the founding fathers of academic sociology and looks at the broader history and sociology of the social sciences.

When George Sarton emigrated to the United States after the German invasion of Belgium during the Great War, he took the journal *Isis*, which he had founded and edited in Wondelgem-lez-Gand, with him. The second volume of his journal was published in the US in 1919. Beset by the devastations of the First World War, Sarton also used at that time a new subtitle: *Isis was An International Review Devoted to the History of Science and Civilization*. For Sarton, studies on the history of civilization could serve to shed light on the social benefits of the diffusion of scientific principles and scientific findings. When we celebrate today the work of Professor Pauli Kettunen, we also underline the value of this broader, civilizational ambition of George Sarton for us and for the social sciences today.

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