

SUMMARIES

On the methodological decisions in comparative political analysis

By Hannu Nurmi

By the concept »methodology» is meant the decision rules governing research operations and the analysis of those rules. As such methodology is closely connected with research strategy, i.e. the general formulation of research problems. Evaluation of various decision rules is, of course, pointless without knowledge of the goals of the inquiry. When the goal is to reveal invariances within political phenomena it is possible to discuss the relative merits and shortcomings of various methods in attaining this overall goal given various kinds of empirical material. The discussion of the relative merits of experimental, statistical and comparative (in the strict sense) methods centers around the question how we compare, because all the methods mentioned can be considered as comparative in the wide sense. It is easy to see that statistical and comparative methods are substitutes for the experimental method, to be applied instead of the latter in cases where the experimental manipulations turn out to be inapplicable. In the analogous sense the comparative method (in the strict meaning) is »weaker» than the statistical method.

In the analysis of methodological decisions it is necessary also to give explicit attention to research strategical considerations, that is, in addition to the question how we compare, also the question what we compare needs to be answered in order to give a picture of the determinants of methodology and strategy in comparative research. This the more so because the operating principles of the comparative method have been in the focus for centuries whereas research strategy seems to have been left out of general methodological discussion, perhaps because strategy can be analyzed only within a given substantial knowledge system. One basic ontological dimension is revealed when various conceptions of the level-structure of political phenomena are considered. The location on this dimension sets certain restrictions as to the »admissible» methods in inferential processes and the possible problem formulations. In an analogous way location on the epistemological (dynamic-static) dimension sets restrictions with respect to the choice of methods and problems. Finally, the methodological stand to the mechanism-finalism controversy is one of the determinants of research strategy and method-selection.

The most difficult problems in comparative political analysis are conceptual ones: how to find the »best» experience-ordering categories. Obviously no final solution to this problem can be given. Only the conditions for non-contradictory conceptualization can be given. These are necessary but

by no means sufficient conditions for useful factodering. The final goal will be to achieve conceptual systems that reflect the determination between events.

The International Organizations and the Finnish Security Policy

By Jaakko Kalela

Finland has been member in two international organizations intended directly to increase the security of their member states, the League of Nations and the United Nations. The two organizations have had quite similar aims and all the time Finland has formally pursued a policy of neutrality. Yet there are clear variations in the Finnish attitude toward the organizations and the expectations of the Finnish leadership have changed significantly over time.

To understand better the above changes it is necessary to analyse the general effects of multilateral security arrangements on the positions of the states participating in them. It is not sufficient to say that the arrangements are meaningful for the participants if they help these to defend themselves against outside aggression. The organizations have their own policies and they need not always be compatible with the policies of their members. To understand the attitudes of the member states toward the organization one has to take into account: 1) the degree of incompatibility in the objectives of the organization and the member state, 2) the capability of the organization to act and 3) the perceptions of threat by the national leadership.

There are four distinct phases in Finnish attitudes toward the two international organizations: 1920—33, 1935—39, 1955—61 and 1965—71. There are a few intermediate years between these periods, during which new policies have not yet become prevailing.

The bourgeois leaders of the newly independent Finland felt their position threatened by the new Soviet regime. The starting point of the Finnish security policy doctrine was that the Russians were prepared to take back by force all the areas that they had lost in the First World War. Since Finland was too small to resist Russia on her own she needed — according to the doctrine — outside assistance. Efforts to conclude military alliance with Germany, Sweden, France and Baltic states failed for different reasons. The doctrine was not, however, changed but remained basically the same in 1918—44. The Finnish defeat in the Second World War made it impossible to continue the same security policy, although its objectives, the maintenance of national sovereignty and capitalist social system, were not changed. The basic questions of security were solved by concluding the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union. The underlying principle of the Finnish security policy was isolation until 1961. In connection with the so-called note crisis the Finnish foreign policy leaders found that they could not be indifferent outsiders in conflicts affecting the security of the country,

that it was more rational to try to make the international environment more peaceful.

The League of Nations was established in connection with the Versailles Peace Conference and one of the primary aims of the organization was the maintenance of the post-war status quo. To that extent the objectives of the League and the Finnish government were fully compatible. Certain of the member states, e.g. England and the Scandinavian countries, pursued, however, an integrative and disarmament policy while Finland preferred the strengthening of security guarantees. This did not, however, make Finland's attitude less positive toward the League but made her more active in efforts to strengthen the European collective security system. The situation changed radically in 1933, although after the failure of the disarmament conference priority was clearly given to the collective security efforts. Germany withdrew from the League and the Soviet Union was invited to join. France and the Soviet Union formed an alliance and since the latter were the chief architects of the new security system, it was clearly incompatible with the Finnish foreign policy doctrine. In 1936 Finland joined the neutral »Oslo-group» and declared that she was not bound by article 16 and 17 of the Covenant.

Finland applied for UN membership as early as 1947 but due to the »Cold War» the application was accepted only in 1955. At that time the UN was largely a NATO-dominated tool of anti-communism. These experiences affected the Finnish attitude toward the world organization throughout the 1950's. A strong UN was not compatible with Finnish foreign policy. Membership obligations might have put Finland in awkward situations. Consequently, by her passive policy Finland in fact tried to restrain the effectiveness of the organization. In 1956—61 Finland e.g. abstained from voting more often than any other member state. The growth of »détente» in the great power relations changed the situation radically. The possibilities of »third parties» in international conflicts became better. The Afro-Asian majority completely changed the contents of the agenda, e.g. Cold War issues gradually disappeared. The Finnish foreign policy leaders identified their security interests largely with the strengthening of the UN conflict resolution machinery. After 1965 the Finnish representatives became more active, they were given more important tasks within the organization and in 1969 Finland was elected to the Security Council. In 1970 half the resolutions adopted by the Council were sponsored by Finland.