

## A DOCTORAL THESIS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEACE RESEARCH IN SCANDINAVIA

Helena Rytövuori-Apunen (1990): *Barefoot Research and Tribune of Reason*. Studia Politica Tamperensis, N:o 1, Tampere.

It is a singular honour to be asked to provide a report on the Doctoral Thesis of a foreign University. This is especially the case when the subject is that of peace research in Scandinavia, since the Scandinavian contribution in this area has been at the cutting edge of the field, internationally.

The candidate's topic is an important one. It is an analysis of the textual corpus of peace research in Scandinavia in the years 1959 to 1986. It has been widely acknowledged internationally that scholars in the Scandinavian region were highly instrumental in the intellectual development of peace research, particularly in the decades of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Scandinavian universities and research institutes have remained important centres in the field in more recent years as the subject has begun to develop a global dimension. It is therefore evident that an analysis of the textual corpus of peace research in Scandinavia during the period 1959—1986 is of great interest and relevance to the scholarly community, not only in Scandinavia, but further afield.

I have been extremely impressed by the structural logic of the dissertation. It is very competently and thoroughly thought through and makes a clear and substantive argument. Moreover, the empirical aspects of the thesis are founded on a splendid research base. There is ample evidence of a great deal of thorough and painstaking empirical research in the literature. Moreover, the reader is left in no doubt that the candidate knows what she is talking about, since she goes to great and helpful lengths to set out her definitions of the terms that she uses. Moreover, she follows these definitions in an admirably precise manner in the subsequent argument and research. In short, the candidate has given a great deal of hard, deep, careful and precise thought about her subject and her work is by no means lacking in imagination. It is a particular merit of her work that she asks the hard questions and endeavours always to come to grips with them. I was full of admiration of her work on this particular count.

The dissertation ranges widely in both the literature on peace research and also in its epistemological and methodological implications. The candidate has not restricted herself simply to Scandinavian literature, but has, where necessary, put it in a context of the literature elsewhere on some aspects of these subjects. Indeed, such are the merits of this dissertation, that it is an analysis, not only of peace research, but a very real contribution to the substance of that subject, particularly in its methodological and epistemological aspects, in its own right.

The candidate has written that Friedrich Schleiermacher has stated that the task was to »understand an author as well as or even better than he understands himself». It seems to me that much of this dissertation fulfills the task that Schleier-

macher set admirably and that the candidate has taken the Scandinavian literature and made, in many instances, more of it than the author saw him-or-herself. The Scandinavian literature on peace research has been significantly enriched by this dissertation. Moreover, in my view, this dissertation, while admirable in itself and complete in itself, contains the seeds for further intellectual development. On the basis of this dissertation the candidate is in an excellent position to be able to make an autonomous contribution to peace research, particularly from the theoretical point of view.

I have come to the conclusion that this thesis is an excellent piece of work for the following reasons:

- The question is a substantive question.
- The epistemological and methodological bases are clear.
- The data base is thoroughly researched.
- The presentation of the argument has a convincing overall logic.
- The definitions of terms are rigorous and they are dutifully followed.
- The summaries of arguments in the text and the formulation of questions for subsequent parts of the text are crisply put and to the point.
- The candidate is demanding of herself and of her reader. This is as it should be, but a little more literary licence would have been in order, especially in the final pages in order to ease the burden on the reader!

In reading this thesis, I was forced to reflect upon the question of language and at several levels. The standard of English is satisfactory throughout in the sense that it is written in an international form of English with Scandinavian variants. There was some variation between British and United States practice in spelling and the like, but the standard of English and presentation met functional requirements.

Besides being a medium of communication, the use of English for academic purposes can also constitute a barrier to communication. From my own experience of teaching in a foreign language in French and Swiss universities, I know full well that a foreign language imposes itself upon its user by its structure, its philosophy, its images, its phrases and its concepts. Of necessity, we cannot think freely, but only in a language. English is the language of this thesis. English is also the working language of Scandinavian peace researchers. However, English is not the predominant language of the candidate's analysis in the philosophical sense. By this I mean that, although the words may come from the English dictionary, the intellectual thrust of the candidate's analysis has strong Germanic influences. To this extent, the task is singularly difficult, because the English language and Scandinavian peace research on the one hand, and Germanic philosophy on the other hand are not always complementary. Nevertheless, I was very impressed by the way that the candidate has succeeded in marrying the two approaches. I do not think that complete success in such an attempt is possible, but the juxtaposition of the two intellectual traditions can be and, in this case, is insightful.

Normal science is always necessary. It is our bread and

---

better. It enables us to survive for the moment in a congenial manner in any but extraordinary circumstances. However, genuinely new and fruitful insights, concepts, frameworks of analysis, often germinate, not within the framework of normal science, but at the edge of existing frameworks where they rub uncomfortably against other such frameworks. This friction, uncomfortable though it may be, engenders thought and emancipates us from the shackles of normal science.

This thesis has an element of that potentiality. It brings the richness of the English language, itself of mixed origin, a German philosophical tradition and Scandinavian peace research into fruitful juxtaposition. Indeed, it should be noted that peace research itself is at the margins or at the interface of many areas of social science and from this great insights and new developments may well flow.

The candidate has succeeded in a difficult task with an enviable degree of intellectual insight. The thesis is a credit, above all, to her, but also to the University that nurtured her and, indeed, to the Scandinavian contribution to peace research. In short, the thesis is a welcome and an important contribution to the corpus of knowledge in peace research and social science.

A.J.R. GROOM

---