Elsewhere I have argued that the Green phenomenon, according to Swedish data, has an elite character. Green attitudes are not particularly constrained (compared to left–right attitudes) among the Swedish public. We have to look at members of parliament or well-educated persons with a high interest in politics to find constrained attitudes on environmental matters (Bennulf & Holmberg 1990, 176–179).

I would argue that Green politics, with capital G, is not present to a large extent in public attitudes. Care for the environment, or environmentalism, however, is. Almost everyone is concerned about the environment and wants it to be better. Without the ideology that comes with Ecologism it is hard to imagine that a new cleavage is present in Western European party systems. Voters from all parties care for the environment and agree on many environmental policies.

With this view in mind it is quite easy to understand the failure of Die Grünen in the 1990 German election. There is no new cleavage in the party systems, only environmentally concerned voters. Support for Green parties are better understood as a function of how 'hot' the environmental issues are. With a shifting political agenda support will tend to flow away from the Green parties.

The concept of Green politics, and its opposite, the defenders of modern industrial society, is better reserved for elite groups like members of Green parties and other Green movements. The ideology of ecologism is not well known to ordinary people – for the time being they are only concerned about the environment. The long-term survival of Green parties is probably dependent on the marketing of Ecologism. If the Greens can make Green politics part of political attitudes of the mass publics, then they have a safer future. Then the willingness to vote Green, or support other Green movements, will be less determined by short-term changes in the political agenda.

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Jonathan Wolff: *Robert Nozick. Property, Justice and the Minimal State*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991, 168 pp.

Since 1974, when Robert Nozick published his book *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, many political philosophers have tried to show where Nozick and the libertarian theory go wrong. In 1982, the critiques by different writers were assembled in the volume *Reading Nozick*, edited by Jeffrey Paul. It seemed that Nozick's theory had been exposed from every possible angle. However, libertarianism has continued to

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occupy a dominating place in political philosophy. The most recent contribution is by Jonathan Wolff.

Wolff intends to subject all important parts of Nozick's philosophy to a rigorous examination, in order to see if it is well-founded and coherent. In addition, he wants to show that Nozick founds his philosophy not on liberty, as one might expect, but on absolute property rights.

Wolff begins by giving a short but accurate account of the ideas in *Anarchy, State and Utopia*. Nozick's philosophy consists of three main parts. First, Nozick agrees with the individual anarchist that there are strong rights to life, liberty and property. Second, he argues that a state could evolve without violating anyone's rights. Third, Nozick's entitlement theory rejects any state more extensive than the night-watchman state, or the minimal state.

To start with, Wolff examines Nozick's claim that certain rights are inviolable; that they can never be overridden. Nozick supports this claim by saying that rights can only be of a negative character, they are side-constraints and exhaustive. Wolff points out that so far Nozick's rights theory is just one among many, and requires further argument.

Libertarian rights are also presented as natural. What grounds does Nozick have for this claim? He cannot gain support from Locke on this matter, Wolff argues. Locke rests his argument on the Bible, and that possibility is not open to Nozick. More important, since Locke's foundation for rights; the preservation of mankind, would generate *positive* rights to survival, Nozick could not accept Locke's argument. Instead, Nozick is inspired by Kant. Individuals are to be seen as ends, not merely as means. Why? Because people are capable of leading meaningful lives, argues Nozick. According to Wolff, Nozick means by a 'meaningful life' a 'self-shaping life'. To be able to lead a self-shaping life, Nozick claims that we need libertarian rights.

Even if Nozick is right in that a meaningful life is a self-shaping one, although there are different opinions on this matter, it is not clear that libertarian rights are the most appropriate. It depends on whether we mean 'best *chance* of leading a meaningful life' or 'chance to lead the *most meaningful* life'. In the former case we need welfare rights. In the latter case libertarian rights seem more appropriate. Wolff concludes that even if Nozick no doubt endorses the latter view, he cannot determine a single value theory of libertarian rights by claiming that people ought to have the opportunity to lead meaningful lives. However, Wolff might have missed one possibility to refute Nozick's view in favour of the most meaningful life. Would the contention that we ought to maximize the *most* meaningful life not lead to a sort of utilitarianism? It might be a point worth considering.

Having shown that Nozick can neither establish that libertarian rights are inviolable, nor that they are neutral, Wolff goes on to scrutinize the argument that a state can evolve without violating any rights. Nozick's invisible-hand explanation seems unnecessary to Wolff. It is merely an expression of Nozick's desire for elegance. In fact, Locke and the other social contract theorists had already proven that a state could evolve without violating rights.

Nozick's attempt to describe how the voluntary protection agencies evolve into a state generates severe problems, argues Wolff. Nozick must show that the agency offers protection to everyone within its borders, to be able to claim it is a state. He must show that an individual, in the book called John Wayne, although he does not want to be protected by the agency, will be so all the same. The argument is that the protection agency will forbid John Wayne to punish its members when these have offended his rights. The members of the protection agency have so-

called procedural rights, that is rights to a fair judgement and a fair punishment. Wayne cannot be trusted to be fair, so he will be forbidden to punish. However, the agency must compensate Wayne for this. The most efficient compensation is to offer protection for free. Thus, we have a state, says Nozick. There are several problems with this explanation, argues Wolff. If libertarian rights are absolute, as Nozick maintained earlier, a clash of rights would be impossible. But here it seems that John Wayne's right to punish the offenders does clash with the procedural rights of the accused. If there is no clash – if we view the right to punish already limited by procedural rights – there is no need for compensation. If Wayne is not compensated, Nozick is unable to move from the ultra-minimal state to the minimal, where everyone in the area is protected. On the other hand, if there is a clash of rights, why should it be John Wayne who has to give way? Since Nozick does not admit any hierarchy of rights, we have a serious flaw in the theory. The cost of the attractive simplicity in Nozick's theory is insoluble political problems, Wolff contends. In addition to this, Nozick's principle of compensation will produce unacceptable consequences in that it is not able to distinguish between the compensation claims of, for example, a drunk driver and an epileptic, both forbidden to drive. To do that we need to consider such notions as need and desert, which are closed options for the libertarian.

What about the third part of Nozick's philosophy, that the entitlement theory rejects any more extensive state than the minimal one? Wolff argues that the entitlement theory has a weak foundation. The entitlement theory is based on the claim that liberty upsets patterns. This is to say that we cannot both have liberty and distribute goods according to a pattern, for example according to need. However, liberty seems to depend on what rights we have. Locke takes this position, and so does Nozick when he says 'My property rights in my knife allow me to leave it where I will, but not in your chest'. Wolff argues that with this conception it is possible to design a pattern which *is* compatible with liberty, contrary to Nozick's case. People can, as Wolff shows, have property which they have a right to possess and consume, without also having a right to transfer it. This would not be a restriction on the Nozickean rights-based liberty, argues Wolff. To answer that liberty must include a right to transfer property however one wishes would be circular. If liberty is based on what rights you have, you cannot defend those rights by arguing that liberty requires them. This and other objections lead Wolff to conclude that the entitlement theory remains substantially undefended.

What is Wolff's general opinion of Nozick's theory? Its attractiveness lies in its simplicity. But on a closer examination it is neither simple nor coherent. However, as Nozick himself has shown, other political philosophies are no more coherent. Wolff concludes that we cannot say that libertarianism is better or worse than any other philosophy. We should give Nozick credit, though, for bringing the concept of 'rights' back into the middle of the debate in political philosophy, says Wolff.

Wolff has made a competent analysis of Nozick's philosophy. To my knowledge, there is no other book that deals so thoroughly with Nozick as Wolff's. A minor remark is that Wolff could have been more precise in formulating the problem of his investigation. Possibly, his conclusions could have been more precise as a result. However, Wolff's analyses are very elegant. He labours to set out Nozick's argument as fairly as possible, reconstructing it when weak. Then he reveals logically where Nozick is mistaken. It should also be mentioned that Wolff is an excellent stylist, the text runs very smoothly. It is a book well worth reading.

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