

de Gruyter Studies on North America 4

Schabert, Boston Politics:

The Creativity of Power

de Gruyter Studies on North America

Politics, Government, Society, Economy, and History

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Tilo Schabert

Boston Politics: The Creativity of Power



Walter de Gruyter · Berlin · New York 1989

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Schabert, Tilo.
Boston politics.
(De Gruyter studies on North America ; 4)
Includes bibliographical references.
1. Boston (Mass.) – Politics and government.
2. Political leadership – Massachusetts – Boston. I. Title.
II. Series.
JS608.S33 1989 320.9744'61 89-23357
ISBN 0-89925-586-8 (U.S. : alk. paper)

Deutsche Bibliothek Cataloging in Publication Data

Schabert, Tilo:
Boston politics: the creativity of power / Tilo Schabert. – Berlin ;
New York : de Gruyter, 1989
(De Gruyter studies on North America ; 4)
ISBN 3-11-012102-6
NE: GT

∞ Printed on acid free paper

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Dir, Ina

Every limit is a beginning as well as an ending. For the fragment of a life, however typical, is not the sample of an even web.

George Eliot

Le seul plaisir est de trouver des résultats inattendus au bout d'une analyse rigoureuse.

Paul Valéry

Acknowledgments

The execution of this study would not have been possible without the assistance of a number of persons and institutions.

The award of a Heisenberg Senior Research Fellowship by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* enabled me for several years to devote myself entirely to research. Helmut Engelhard, administrator at the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, sustained my efforts with sympathy and challenge.

In 1980 and 1981 the Center for European Studies at Harvard University provided me with a temporary academic home whose special character proved to be quite supportive. I am grateful to Dr. Guido Goldman, Director of CES, for his generous invitation to be a Research Associate at the Center. During my stay at the Center, as well as afterwards, Ms. Abby Collins, Administrative Director of CES, contributed to the progress of my work in a good many ways. I thank her for having been an unfailing source of encouragement.

In 1980 and 1981 I could also enjoy the hospitality of the Joint Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Arthur P. Solomon, David T. Kresge, H. James Brown, then successively the Directors of the Joint Center, kindly extended to me the privilege to use the facilities of the Center. Jan Lent, secretary in the Director's Office, responded always to my many questions swiftly and efficiently.

Since 1980 I have been able at various times to work at the *Institut d'Études Politiques* in Paris. François Goguel, Head of the *Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques*, and Serge Hurtig, Secretary General of the *Fondation*, were so kind as to offer me the splendid opportunity for consulting the extraordinarily rich research collections of the *Institut*. Mlle. Thérèse Tournier was helpful to me, in a most gracious way, whenever I visited the Institute.

I was granted for the fall term 1983 a German Kennedy Memorial Fellowship by the Center for European Studies at Harvard University. Through this award I could complete my research in Boston.

The Boston Redevelopment Authority provided me with the base upon which I could rest and from which I could proceed while I pursued my inquiries into Boston politics. Robert J. Ryan, Director of the BRA, let me roam about the "Fifth Floor" in full liberty (and he did not seem to mind my roaming about the rest of City Hall). It was his trust that made Boston such a rich field for my scholarship. Susan Allen acted as my *amica curiae* in the BRA, sparing no effort in my behalf. Through her guidance I reached the ultimate point of my quest. I entered the institution I studied.

Rita Smith assisted me in using the Research Library of the BRA; Ian Menzies and Jennifer Chao helped me to gain access to the files of the *Boston Globe*.

I take pleasure in expressing my gratitude to two friends, Hella Mandt and Helmut Hasche, and to my sister, Eva-Maria Schabert, for not deserting me at a time of distress.

Hans Fromm, Professor Emeritus of Germanic Studies at the University of Munich, lent his support to the project of this study at a crucial juncture.

The book is dedicated to Ina Schabert, my wife.

Baierbrunn, December 1988

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List of Abbreviations

BG	=	Boston Globe
BH	=	Boston Herald
BHA	=	Boston Herald American
BM	=	Boston Magazine
BMRB	=	Boston Municipal Research Bureau
BO	=	Boston Observer
BPH	=	Boston Phoenix
BRA	=	Boston Redevelopment Authority
CR	=	City Record, City of Boston
CSM	=	The Christian Science Monitor
IHT	=	International Herald Tribune
NJ	=	National Journal
NYT	=	The New York Times
OPS	=	Office of Public Service, City of Boston

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Introduction

The Story of Politics

The Story to be Told

Human beings are creative beings, and politics is the principal mode of their creativity.

There are, of course, other endeavors which human beings as creative beings pursue. They draw pictures as painters, they make melodies as composers, they put on pieces of words as writers, they construct buildings as architects, they fabricate handicraft as artisans, they manufacture goods as workers. In the process of any of these pursuits they produce something tangible, something final: a portrait, for instance, or a still life, a song or a symphony, a poem or a scholar's book, a cottage or a church, a table or a vase, a machine or a garment.

It is in the pursuit of politics that human beings perpetually produce, and never produce anything tangible, anything final. Politics is pure creativity: it is a pursuit of creativity of which the "product" is the creativity that is pursued. Of all the modes of human creativeness, music is most comparable to politics. A musical composition, without being vocalized, is dead; it becomes actually a product of musical creativity only in the mode of its production: when it is performed and heard. Similarly, politics has no reality other than the process of politics being pursued; it occurs but through itself: in an act of politics. Once a musical composition is completed, however, the finished composition will remain, variations in the performance notwithstanding. Politics, in contrast, does not know finalized products; all that it yields is movement, a movement unto movements of creativity. The creation politics achieves is an unceasing creation. It is the human configuration of a *creatio continua*: the creative difference between form and confusion, duration and discontinuance, design and decomposition. Without politics, human beings would not exist. It is the "divine" creativity through which they exist.

This study proposes a portrayal of the process of creativity that politics is. It represents an inquiry into the *creatio continua* as which politics occurs. In view of its subject, the undertaking appears to be paradoxical. All things political are fluid things, the gist of the study goes. So what indeed is it that is suggested to be studied? What could the study have as a matter, if all that there is as its matter is perennially flowing away?

It is not possible to step into the same river twice. Yet, it is also possible each time to experience the flow of one and the same river. The paradox

stands and it casts the entire study. The inquiry that is proposed truly is a paradoxical undertaking; it cannot take form in any other way and still be the intended study, for its paradoxical nature derives from the paradoxical nature of its subject.

All things political are fluid things. Within its fluidity, however, politics tends to transcend its fluidity. It produces things and forms, not the least of which are its own things and forms, the governments and regimes through which it takes place. A political creation is politics' final cause; it occurs to occur as the form of a polis, for instance, or a state, of a commonwealth, or a nation. In the mode of a political creation, politics, it appears, could come to an end; it would seem that it has produced the "things political" for which it had been the production. Yet, everything produced by politics has to be sustained by politics, else it is soon about to vanish. As the cause of its own reality, politics' reality depends upon the cause: upon politics. All politics tends to transcend itself, to come to an end. Yet, all politics transcends any end — any political form, and political creation — into which it may have come. The process of politics continues, else there is no "end" of this process.

A study of politics, then, does not have as its subject anything that "is." Its subject happens and it happens beyond the forms through which it appears, if it is approached as a subject of study. The alternative is clear: either politics is studied through its forms or it is studied as it happens. The former choice is the traditional one, political science in the scholastic mode. The latter choice has rarely been taken; it is infinitely difficult. The reality of politics is endless, the fluid reality that it is, transcending forever the forms that it fleetingly takes. Why fathom the flux of politics, indeed, when there are the finite forms, however changeable they might be, by which politics traditionally has been assumed as a subject that is understood?

An infinitely fluid reality is no justification for a finalizing mode of learning. On the contrary, it is a challenge for the inquiring mind, regardless of the existent forms of knowledge. To be sure, it would not be possible to apprehend politics, if finite forms of apprehension were not applied in the act of apprehension. Infiniteness is not to be grasped through infiniteness. Fluidity is not a supposition of fluidity. Understanding politics is indeed and cannot be anything else than a "finalizing" act. Yet, understanding politics is also a perennial act, as perennial as its subject. Politics eludes continually the forms of its reality, and, consequently, the forms of its being apprehended. It is pure reality or, to be entirely precise, it is all movement: the movement from which the forms emerge through which this movement — the movement of politics — can be discerned and, as the movement that has occurred, be apperceived.

The challenge, to which this study forms a response, is politics, the movement. The study, to say it again, does not propose a depiction of politics

in the conventional modes. It proposes a story, the story of politics. It proposes a pursuit of politics, the pure reality that achieves all its reality only while it happens. The study of politics, as presented here, is the story of politics told by politics in the pursuit of this study.

The Places of the Story

In the course of the study the story of politics will be pursued at different places. The principal place will be a city: Boston. There were three reasons for this choice. A city was chosen because of the crucial advantage any city affords with regard to an inquiry into politics. In a city politics appears quintessentially. For one thing, the relevance of politics to every human concern is immediately evident, in view of the microcosm that each city forms. And then, the relevance of human relationships to the actual event of politics is equally manifest, in view of the proximity within which politics takes place in a city. Boston was chosen because of a classic and of a current feature in its existence. Politics in Boston has never been dull, uninspired, or unimaginative; all observers of Boston politics agree, beyond the considerable differences in their judgment, on the unique fascination which the Boston example of politics holds. And the fascination is compellingly enhanced by the recent *fortuna* of Boston. In the late 1950's the fate of Boston seemed to be sealed. It was a city in decay. Thirty years later, at the close of the 1980's, Boston shines in the realm of cities. It is a city in its full renaissance. And it is a city that documents, to an extent that could hardly be found elsewhere, the creativeness of politics. The new strength that Boston has gained has not been a result of pure luck. The wheel of the city's fortune turned primarily on account of the creative strength that politics lent to the life of the city. The improbable project of restoring the city to its former brilliance — it was politics that carried the project to success.

While Boston struggled with its fate, the position of Mayor of the city was assumed by a young politician who proved to be a most creative politician: Kevin H. White. Mayor White governed Boston for the unusually long period of 16 years, from 1968 to 1983. A close scrutiny of his administration provided the major amount of empirical material upon which this study is based. The search for politics, the quest for the reality of politics as creativity, did not stop there, however. Inquiries into the subject of Boston at large — its social, political, economic history, its people, its traditions, its architecture — expanded the foundation and the scope of the study. And then, a systematic exploration of politics as a field of study traced the texture of precedents and parallels within which the regime of Mayor White emerged as a paradigmatic example of creative politics, on the one hand, and through which the classic

tradition of creative politics shone forth, on the other. The theme of the study was politics, politics as the principal mode of human creativity. And in the pursuit of this theme, the study became a comparative exposition of creative politics. Mayor White as a creative politician could be compared to other creative politicians, to Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower, to Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and President François Mitterrand, in particular. And the personal regime which Mayor White built could be compared to the personal regimes that creative politicians always have built: in antiquity, in the Renaissance, in our time; at the local level or at the national level; in Europe as well as in America.

The Themes of the Story

If it is true that politics is the creativity through which human beings exist, the creation of human society is the theme that an inquiry into politics pursues. Accordingly, this study has been given the subtitle *The Creativity of Power*. Still, the empirical foundation as well as the scope of the study entailed a thematic plurality within the general theme. While politics remained the field of inquiry, the exploration of the field moved along these thematic threads:

- Boston politics
- The administration of Boston Mayor Kevin H. White
- The historiography of Boston
- City politics
- American politics
- Urban “planning”
- The renaissance of cities
- Political science and its methodology
- Government
- Political power
- Political institutions
- The comparative history of political parties
- The theory of political finance
- The pathology of politics
- Temporal modes of politics
- Friendship and politics
- Election campaigns
- The political character of space
- The spatial character of politics
- Spatial creativity
- Political creativity.

Writing the Story, Reading the Story

A story wants to be told. It requires its form: a narrative by which it unfolds its drama and its truth. The form of the story must produce, on the part of the audience, the experience of a story and it must make the audience witness to the story's authenticity. Through the way it is told the story must become the story actually happening; it must become the narrative of the audience.

In the composition of the study, therefore, certain rules have been followed.

- (a) To make the study as readable as possible, the material upon which it was built is only partly presented in the text. A presentation of all the material would have made the train of the text excessively cumbersome.
- (b) The material not presented in the text is laid out in the footnotes. To their larger extent, the footnotes represent, therefore, more than mere footnotes. They form the apparatus of scholarship that is an integral part of this study.
- (c) Throughout the study, very detailed analyses were combined with general thematic reflections. Each chapter and each paragraph within every chapter is introduced by a theoretical exposition of the next matter of inquiry. And at regular intervals a summary is given which formulates the generic relevance of the results drawn from the empirical analyses.
- (d) The path of the inquiry and the inquiry itself are not disjointed. The usual section "On Method," splendidly isolated from the actual inquiry, will not be found. Rather, the methodological routing of the study is explicitly discussed whenever the material imposes the problem of choosing a "method": a way to approach the material along the mode(s) in which it presents itself. The pitfall of method was avoided by the method to reflect methodically the method of the study.

The story that will be told can be read in different ways. The audience will have options of reading to choose from. It is possible to take up from the study a guide of governing, a manual to be used by the apprentice as well as the professional. The apprentice might wish to employ it for rehearsals of his lore. The professional might wish to adopt it as a mirror of reflection. The study can also, of course, be seized as a text on Boston. Through this reading the study will offer a work of historiography, in which Bostonians will recognize the configurations of people and events that have shaped their recent past, and in which others will discern the tectonics of local affairs at that special site that is Boston. In the vein of a predominantly academic reading, an introduction to the science of politics will emerge from the study. The reader will be invited to a practice of understanding politics that is both "philosophical" and "empirical." The study might be read, finally, just for entertainment. This reading experience will occur when the reader primarily

appreciates the detective train of research along which the study grew and took its form. A quest for knowledge, the reader will realize, has its own drift of drama.

These are some possibilities of reading this study. Each can be selected; or several can be chosen in a more complex act of reading. Other possibilities might be found. The study extends beyond its text. The text is given here. The extension is the product of an open process starting here. It is the product of the audience.

Chapter 1

The Autocracy, Condition of Creativity

τό τε γὰρ ἓν τὸ ὄν ἀεὶ ἴσχει καὶ τὸ ὄν τὸ ἓν·

For the One always holds What Is and What Is
holds the One.

Plato, *Parmenides* 143 a

1 Philosophical Argument: The Paradox of Liberty

Since a science of politics emerged, political liberty has been one of the principal problems, if not the primary problem of this science. All human beings aspire to a human existence fully achieved. They desire the freedom of being themselves. And all human beings exist but as social beings. Being themselves, for them, is being themselves in conjunction with each other. Society is the condition of freedom. Freedom, however, defies conditions. Human beings, then, face forever this paradox: to attain the freedom of being themselves, they must restrict the freedom of attaining it. To the degree that they seek the freedom wherein a truly human existence lies, they must keep the bonds within which alone they can have this freedom.

The whole political process arises from this paradox.¹ If it did not exist, politics would be unnecessary.² And a science of politics would be pointless. Yet, the paradox has remained and will remain, of course.³ “Il n’est pas de

¹ Cf. G. E. G. Catlin, *The Science and Method of Politics*, London – New York 1927, p. 237: “The whole political process arises from the paradox that, in order to gain assurance of freedom in one direction, we must submit to certain restrictions which curtail our sense of general freedom.” – Cf. also Catlin’s further reflections, p. 238 f.: “In Politics, this sense of being irked by restraint, even though the restraints be means to one’s own ends, is often termed the love of liberty, and is not infrequently coupled with a naive belief, characteristic of Whig England and of pioneer America, in the sufficiency of one’s individual powers to deal with the emergencies of the social situation. One often observes that the lover of liberty declines the end for fear of having his liberty restricted by the means; [...]. That he who wills the end, e. g. of a purity in local politics, must also will the means, by being prepared to undergo the heat and dust of voting and electioneering himself, is one of the most difficult of lessons for free human nature to learn. [...] The believers in liberty do not love to recognize that, when it comes to a fight, discipline must be the means if their cause is to triumph.”

² There have of course been attempts to overcome the paradox and hence to do away with politics, in order to achieve conditions of human community that would be “rational,” “efficient,” potentially “perfect.” Cf. Chapter III, 13.

³ The experience of politics as paradoxical is central to the political science of Plato, of course. “But this is the thing that has made me so long shrink from speaking out, because I saw that it would be a very paradoxical (*para doxan*) saying.” (*The Republic* 473 e.) ... “Unless, said I, either philosophers become kings in our states or those whom we now call our kings and rulers take to the pursuit of philosophy seriously and adequately, and there is a conjunction of these two things, political power and philosophic intelligence, [...] there can be no cessation of troubles, for our states, nor, I fancy, for the human race either.” (*The Republic* 473 d.) Cf. also p. 192 ff. and the Index of Subjects, “paradox.”

liberté, sans organisation de cette liberté. — There is no liberty without an organization of this liberty.”⁴

Quite appropriately, the science of politics has largely been, throughout its history, an inquiry into the “organization of liberty,” that is, into possibilities of founding and preserving “political liberty” — the freedom of human beings under the rule of freedom.⁵ The inquiry, as we know, did not bring forth flawless scenarios, nor did it produce infallible plans.⁶ Political science proved to be a science “in-between,” between notions of human perfection and the experiences of human frailty, between paradigms of order and the reality of disorder, between tenets of logical thought and the practical logic of prudence.⁷ In one of its veins, however, the science of politics gained upon

⁴ F. Mitterrand, Interview, in: *Libération*, nouv. sér., no. 923, May 10, 1984, p. 6.

⁵ Cf. Plato, *Laws* 693 b,d–e: “[...] a State ought to be free (*eleuthéran*) and wise and in friendship with itself [...]. There are two mother-forms of constitution, so to call them, from which one may truly say all the rest are derived. Of these the one is properly called monarchy (*monarchia*), the other democracy (*demokratia*), [...] the rest are practically all, as I said, modifications of these two. Now it is essential for a polity to partake of both these two forms, if it is to have freedom (*eleuthería*) and friendliness (*philia*) combined with wisdom (*phrónesis*). And that is what our argument intends to enjoin, when it declares that a State which does not partake of these can never be rightly constituted. — It could not. — Since the one embraced monarchy and the other freedom, unmixed and in excess [...]” — Cf. further: O. von Gierke, *Natural Law and the Theory of Society 1500–1800*, Cambridge 1934; A. Passerin d’Entrèves, *The Medieval Contribution to Political Thought — Thomas Aquinas, Marsilius of Padua, Richard Hooker*, Oxford 1939; F. Watkins, *The Political Tradition of the West: A Study in the Development of Modern Liberalism*, Cambridge, Mass. 1948; M. Pohlenz, *Griechische Freiheit. Wesen und Werden eines Lebensideals*, Heidelberg 1955; W. Suerbaum, *Vom antiken zum frühmittelalterlichen Staatsbegriff — Über Verwendung und Bedeutung von respublica, regnum, imperium und status von Cicero bis Jordanis*, Münster 1961; E. Berti, *Il de re publica di Cicerone e il pensiero politico classico*, Padua 1963; E. Voegelin, ed., *Zwischen Revolution und Restauration. Politisches Denken in England im 17. Jahrhundert*, München 1968; I. Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, Oxford 1969; R. D. Cumming, *Human Nature and History. A Study of the Development of Liberal Political Thought*, Chicago 1969; P. F. Moreau, *Les racines du libéralisme*, Paris 1978; A. Liebich, *Le libéralisme classique*, Sillery (Québec) 1985; P. Manent, *Les libéraux*, 2 vols., Paris 1986; idem, *Histoire intellectuelle du libéralisme*, Paris 1987.

⁶ The classic statement on flawless scenarios (Rousseau’s rule of the *volonté générale*, for example) and infallible plans (Montesquieu’s trust in the *nature des choses*, for example) is Plato’s: “[...] the probable outcome of too much freedom is only too much slavery in the individual and the state.” (*The Republic* 564 a.)

⁷ Plato and Aristotle, the founders, proceeded from this insight; in this century the insight has been restored by Eric Voegelin, Leo Strauss, and Hannah Arendt.

the paradox political liberty poses.⁸ Political science came close to mastering the contradictory task of “organizing” our “liberty.” It invented constitutional government.

Constitutional government is a “miraculous” mechanism. It produces political authority by denying it. It deliberately weakens the political executive and thereby compels him to seek the authority which he needs. Government is constitutionally shattered into pieces and he who wants to wield power in the welter of these pieces must, first of all, build up his own authority. In the mode of constitutional government power is but a fluid phenomenon to be seized in a continuous quest for power.

But how does the head of a constitutional government, from whom power has deliberately been withheld, gain the power to govern and still remain the head of a constitutional government?

In the practice of constitutional government the paradox of liberty poses itself as the paradox of power. A constitutional government, on the one hand, is a government “whose powers have been adapted to [...] the maintenance of individual liberty.”⁹ On the other hand, it is a government, and in a government “leadership and control must be lodged somewhere; the whole art of statesmanship is the art of bringing the several parts of government into effective cooperation for the accomplishment of particular common objects.”¹⁰ Constitutional government cannot do without power; political power is necessary. Yet, it should be the power of liberty – the power of that liberty that negates power.

What, then, should the head of a constitutional government do? Should he still seek power, the power that liberty appears to deny? Should he, in other words, be prepared to violate the law, the constitution?

The truth of constitutional government, however, is indivisible. There is no exception to the rule of law, for the commoner and for the prince alike. Constitutional government was founded not in defense of efficiency,

⁸ “Science of politics” is meant here to denote political wisdom in general (hence the “science” every good politician knows) and not only the academic discipline called political science.

⁹ W. Wilson, “Constitutional Government in the United States,” in: *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, ed. A. S. Link, Vol. 18 (1908–1909), Princeton 1974, p. 69 f.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 105. – The idea that “leadership and control must be lodged somewhere” – the notion of a political executive – has been formulated, as to its real significance and importance, only in the course of modern, if not contemporary political thought. Cf. H. C. Mansfield Jr., “The Absent Executive in Aristotle’s Politics,” in P. Schramm, T. Silver, eds., *Natural Right and Political Right*, Durham 1984, pp. 169–196; idem, “Gouvernement représentatif et pouvoir exécutif,” *Commentaire*, no. 36, 1986, pp. 664–672.

resolution, or competence but in defense of liberty. To violate laws, and be it just one, is to make the fatal switch from the rule of law to the capriciousness of man. However strong the head of a constitutional government must be in order to be able really to govern, he will never have a legitimate reason to forsake the sanctuary of liberty: the rule of law.

No, the power that liberty needs but appears to deny has to be found within the constitution of liberty. It cannot be obtained institutionally; the institutional frame, constitutional government, is an instrumentality for the maintenance of liberty, not for the acquisition of power.¹¹ The power to govern, institutionally dispersed, has to be sought through the institutional frame, in a para-institutional quest. "Leadership and control must be lodged somewhere." But somewhere is nowhere, until the head of the constitutional government has accumulated, there where he is, the power of the head of a constitutional government.

The paradox of power persists. It is the paradox of liberty, constitutionally transfigured. There is no solution to it, nor even a way to find a solution. But there is the art of gripping it: executive politics. In a continuous quest for power the political executive builds up a "system" of sources from which he can continuously draw *his* power. He masters the paradox of power by creating, within the framework of constitutional government, a para-institutional configuration of personal power. Against the shattered pieces of constitutional government he sets off monocratic powers – an autocracy.

2 Power and Architecture

The practitioners of the art of politics tend to take pleasure in the art of architecture; they view it as the perfect mode of symbolizing their might.¹²

¹¹ The definition of constitutional government as an "instrumentality for the maintenance of liberty" is Woodrow Wilson's. Cf. "Constitutional Government in the United States," op. cit., p. 72.

¹² Cf. H. G. Evers, *Tod, Macht und Raum als Bereiche der Architektur*, München 1970 (Reprint); A. Reinle, *Zeichensprache der Architektur. Symbol, Darstellung und Brauch in der Baukunst des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, Zürich – München 1976; M. Ragon, *L'Architecte, le prince et la démocratie*, Paris 1977; H. A. Millon, L. Nochlin, eds., *Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics*, Cambridge, Mass. 1978; T. Schabert, "Moderne Architektur – und die Hütten der Epigonen. Menschliches Bauen als politische Kunst der Vergangenheit," *Der Monat*, Jg. 30, H. 2, Dec. 1978, pp. 127 – 133; J. Trilling, "Paris: Architecture as Politics," *The Atlantic*, October 1983, pp. 26 – 35; M. Warnke, *Politische Architektur in Europa. Vom Mittelalter bis heute – Repräsentation und Gemeinschaft*, Köln 1984.

The passion of politicians for the plastic potency of architecture transcends the variegations of governments and rulers. It enraptures kings and sheiks, tyrants and warlords, presidents and senators, mayors and aldermen, the dignitaries of the court in an empire as well as the representatives of the people in a republic. The symbolic potential of buildings, monuments, cityscapes attracts political power whatever its form, enticing rulers and regimes to reveal in the language of architecture the truth of their power.

A civic journey to Boston's new City Hall (completed in 1969) provides an excellent example, for the design of the surroundings and that of the building itself are obviously intended to inject into such a journey a symbolic significance. Let us imagine we were visiting Boston and, induced by architectural as well as civic curiosity, we were allured into approaching the seat of Boston's government. To what experience would our journey lead?

As we emerge from one of the streets which open into City Hall Plaza, we go through a series of transitions. Entering the plaza spread out in front of City Hall, we are reminded of the *piazza della repubblica* in an Italian city. Passing from our previous hurried pace to a leisurely tempo of walking, we conform our movement to the design of the plaza. We join other people in a public arena. The perimeter of our movement — like that of our fellow citizens — shrinks to the radius of the pedestrian, and our awareness of the social life in the plaza becomes more acute. We have stopped to be absorbed in private thoughts and instead feel a growing desire for the experience of civic community. An almost imperceptible influence steers us towards the entrances to City Hall. The slight slope of the plaza converging on the building infuses in all movements on the plaza a sense of direction; it seems to be natural that they gravitate towards the ground floors of City Hall. There, we can hardly fail to notice all the signs and communications telling us that the building serves the functions of public administration. Considering the design of the entrance hall and observing the activity which takes place in it, we discern, however, a larger purpose of the hall's architecture. By its design and the material used for its construction the hall forms a continuation of the plaza from where we came. The City Hall appears to be as much a public arena as City Hall Plaza; the symbolism of its architecture yields the perception of an open, transparent relationship between the people of Boston and their representatives in City Hall; architecture emphasizes the principle of democracy: there is but one sovereign "outside" and "inside" City Hall.

Indeed, considerable efforts are made to welcome everyone who visits this civic home. An information officer is seated behind a widely visible desk in the entrance hall and directs people to whatever counter or office they want to go. The spatial organization of offices is, in many parts of the building, by no means intimidating but permits visitors to see city employees working at their desks or to hear a group of them in a meeting room deliberate on

some public agenda. At several key points in the building numerous pamphlets and brochures are displayed reporting upon the projects and achievements of this city's government. Browsing among them, we chance upon a booklet which arouses our particular interest, since it describes the place of our visit. As we read the short text, we understand that we are certainly welcome to cover the final stretch of our passage to the seat of Boston's government. For we are told that "[...] the Mayor's Office and the City Council Chamber [are] visible to all and directly accessible by a large stairway [from the entrance hall]." ¹³

In accordance with the hierarchy of representative government, we turn first towards the Chamber of the City Council. Having climbed up the stairway, as directed, we easily find the doors to the Chamber. They are broad and well marked and – as we note by observing the people around us – they evidently represent the entrance to a place of civic congregation. The Council is in session and, by listening to its debate, we avail ourselves of this opportunity to obtain a lesson in civic instruction. At first, our perception is not sharp enough to pierce through the complex language of the debate and to grasp the real instruction which it conveys. For it is carried on by a body of people who obviously are seasoned politicians, steeped in the traditions of Boston, knowledgeable about the affairs and interests of her people, skilled in the procedures of the political process. And yet, as we gradually realize, they behave as if they were thrown into a kafkaesque dilemma being summoned to collaboration with a master who never appears but shrouds himself in elusion and secrecy. Can it be true? Is the transparent architecture of Boston's City Hall an illusion? Why does the Council despair of cooperating with the Mayor of Boston? Is the Mayor's Office perhaps not "visible to all and directly accessible"? Where actually is it?

Spurred by the sensational ring of this seemingly trivial question, we immediately decide to complete our civic journey by having a look at the Mayor's chambers. Back on the stairway which is supposed to lead not only to the City Council Chamber but to the Mayor's Office as well, we are at a loss as to where we should go. This time, architecture gives us no guidance. Making inquiries among passersby, we are directed towards the corner where

¹³ BRA, *Government Center*, s. l., s. d. [p. 3]. Cf. also "Boston City Hall," CR, Vol. 75, No. 1, Jan. 3, 1983, pp. 4–5. This brief description includes the following statement: "The bricks of the plaza flow right into the South Entry Hall to tie the world inside the building to the world outside, and continue across the Hall and up the stairs, creating a 'path' to the floors above." – Boston's new City Hall was designed in 1961 and built between 1961–69. The design is not wholly original; it is inspired by Le Corbusier's design for the monastery of La Tourette (near Lyon) in France which was built between 1956–60.

the lifts are installed. Should the office of Boston's Mayor be there, tucked away in the elevator's corner? There are just walls of concrete and the lifts, and – indeed – deeper in the corner there is an opening protected by a desk behind which a policeman is sitting. He is eyeing us with a guarded look but lets us pass and venture further. Presently, another desk impedes our civic journey. A secretary, barely concealing her view of us as intruders, makes us explain the reason for our sudden appearance. Glancing around while thinking of an answer – what we say eventually about our civic curiosity proves to be totally inadequate, of course –, we discern a small room whose design suggests that it is meant to shield whatever lies beyond. There are a few chairs, but if anyone sat down, this person could not help being clearly a stranger. There are a few doors, but they carry neither a sign nor a mark and they are closed. Architecture is used to protect the office of Boston's Mayor against the public's view and to make it inaccessible. An architectural shield separates the people of Boston and their Mayor – who, on the other hand, can sneak in and out of his office by a private elevator linked directly to his car's garage. Our civic journey in Boston must remain incomplete, for the last part of the path to civic power is the Mayor's private way.¹⁴ Now we apprehend the symbolic meaning of the antechamber in the elevator's corner. It is not a vestibule of democracy but the guardroom of an unaccounted might. Pondering over this power behind the architectural screen, we set off to turn away.

3 The Potential of Power

The City Charter of Boston vests the Mayor with a great amount of institutional authority. Associates of Kevin White did not mistake this authority when they spelled out the “great power [concentrated] in the Office of the Mayor” or observed that the holder of the office was “uninhibited to do whatever he likes to do as long as he moves within the law.”¹⁵

The Mayor is the chief executive of the city government. He holds the prerogatives to appoint or to dismiss the heads of departments and to enlist the services of “secretaries” in his office to whom civil service laws do not apply – the latter prerogative was used by Kevin White several hundred

¹⁴ Under Mayor White the “private way” was by no means a free and open way. It was divided into several separate sections; to reach the Mayor one had to proceed through a series of doors of which each was guarded by a vigilant secretary.

¹⁵ Sources: Interviews.

times, the appointments of “secretaries” added up to a form of personal government, his “Court” (see Chapter 2).

The Charter also enables the Mayor to control the budgetary process. It is his privilege to initiate the annual budget of the City, to make all regular and supplementary appropriations, and to make transfers – “other than for personal service” – from any appropriation to any other. In contrast, the City Council can neither originate a budget nor “increase any item in, nor the total of, a budget, nor add any item thereto,” but is just given the right to reduce or reject any item.¹⁶

The Charter gives the City Council only very limited possibilities of checking the power of the chief executive. The Mayor, on the other hand, enjoys a position of predominance over the Council. Every order, ordinance, resolution, or vote of the Council – with few exceptions – must be approved by the Mayor. If the Mayor exercises the veto, the Council can override it only by two thirds of all the Councillors’ votes. Every order, ordinance, resolution, or vote concerning budgetary matters, however, will be void in consequence of a veto by the Mayor. The Council is empowered to change and to reorganize the structure of the city government, but by-laws or ordinances passed by the Council to that effect must again be approved by the Mayor. And not the Council but the Mayor will then have the prerogative to appoint – without confirmation by the Council – the head of every department or agency that is created as a result of such a reorganization.

The considerable power which the Mayor of Boston can wield by virtue of the legal authority vested in the office covers not only the city departments and agencies proper. It extends over the whole structure of local government in the Boston area. This extended power can be measured, for instance, by a simple numerical comparison on the basis of a table published in the *Municipal Register*. The table shows the procedures by which a number of positions are filled, by appointment or election, in the local government of the Boston area. Altogether, the positions of 153 public officials are specified. The Mayor of Boston clearly appears as the preeminent actor in the process of filling these positions – having the sole power to appoint no less than 113 of the 153 officials.¹⁷

In some cases the legal power vested in the office permits the Mayor to govern even in an absolutist way. The decision of Mayor White as regards

¹⁶ Cf. “Excerpts from the City Charter,” in: City of Boston, *Municipal Register for 1978 – 1979*, Boston 1979, p. 17 ff. and City of Boston Code [Statute, Ordinances, Regulations], [1975]. On city charters in general, cf. Ch. A. Adrian, *State and Local Government*, New York, 1976, 4th ed., pp. 89 – 97.

¹⁷ *Municipal Register for 1978 – 1979*, pp. 45 – 48.

the franchise for the construction and operation of cable TV in Boston represents a classic example. For the law empowered the Mayor to grant this franchise as a result of just his own resolve. Legally he was not required to let any other institution or any other public official participate in the process of selecting one of the companies which were competing for the Boston franchise. While he entrusted to a fluid configuration of advisers¹⁸ the task of preparing his selection, Mayor White fully maintained the absolute authority which he held in this particular case. The decision which he eventually reached was an *arcanum imperii* until he chose to make it known. And when he made it finally known, he phrased the announcement in the language of self-conscious power: "I am today announcing that I have chosen the Cablevision corporation to build and operate a citywide cable TV system for the City of Boston."¹⁹

4 The Construction of the Autocracy

The legal construction of the office enables the Mayor of Boston to enjoy and to exercise a formidable power. Any Mayor of Boston would attempt to avail himself of this power. So did Kevin White who was first elected Mayor of Boston in 1967 and held the office for 16 years from 1968 to 1983. And not only did he fully succeed. But he achieved much more: he amplified the mayoral authority to an extent that even a most liberal reading of the City Charter would not reveal.²⁰

¹⁸ "Fluid configurations of advisers" were principal instruments of governing in the administration of Mayor White. Cf. *infra*, p. 233 ff.

¹⁹ Cf. BG, Aug. 13, 1981. On the background inform: M. Harmonay, D. First, "Mayor White, Media Mogul: The Politics of Cable TV," *Boston Magazine*, Sept. 1980; Al Larkin, "Cable TV Comes To Boston ... and It's Kevin White's Show," *BG Magazine*, Sept. 7, 1980; BG, June 22, 1981; July 17, 1981; Aug. 10, 1980, Aug. 16, 1981.

²⁰ Basic information about the political career of Kevin White can be found in: City of Boston, *Boston's Forty-Five Mayors*, Boston 1979, 2nd ed., pp. 46–54; Th. H. O'Connor, *Bibles, Brahmins and Bosses. A Short History of Boston*, Boston 1976, pp. 146–156; Ph. Heymann, M. Wagner Weinberg, "The Paradox of Power: Mayoral Leadership on Charter Reform in Boston," in: W. Dean Burnham, M. Wagner Weinberg, eds., *American Politics and Public Policy*, Cambridge, Mass. 1978, pp. 280–306; M. Wagner Weinberg, "Boston's Kevin White: A Mayor Who Survives," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 96, No. 1, Spring 1981, pp. 87–106; B. Ferman, "Beating the Odds: Mayoral Leadership and the Acquisition of Power," *Policy Studies Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Aug. 1983, pp. 29–40; G. V. Higgins, *Style Versus Substance. Boston, Kevin White, and the Politics of Illusion*, New York 1984; J. A. Lukas, *Common Ground. A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families*, New York 1986, pp. 585–623.

Probably Kevin White would not have attained to such an amplified power if he had exploited only the prerogatives of his office. There were, in addition, external factors which furnished the material basis for the heightening of his legal power:

- (1) Considerable amounts of federal funds had to be allocated to neighborhoods, civic organizations, and public institutions in the city;
- (2) a large number of urban renewal and redevelopment projects required political guidance and resolution;
- (3) a growing clientele of developers and entrepreneurs wanting to invest in Boston's economic future looked on him as the principal in City Hall who negotiated and acted on behalf of the city.²¹

By seizing these opportunities, Mayor White considerably expanded the field of political activity in which his power could grow.

Finally, in addition to the legal power vested in his office and the heightened power derived from favorable external circumstances, he acquired a third source from which he could draw political power. Kevin White set up his own "political system,"²² a configuration of associates, companions, and allies which served only *his* political purposes.²³

From Kevin White's progress as Mayor of Boston emerged quite a remarkable phenomenon. It inserted an autocracy into the texture of the American republic.²⁴

²¹ Cf. B. Ferman, "Beating the Odds ...," *op. cit.*; J. H. Mollenkopf, *The Contested City*, Princeton 1983, pp. 3–11, 188–212.

²² The members of Mayor White's administration used the term "political system" to draw a distinction between themselves and the formal structure of Boston's government.

²³ Cf. *infra*, p. 127 ff.

²⁴ The term "autocracy" may sound severe as definition of a mayoral regime in an American city. The founding of the American republic, after all, made the word "autocrat" a foreign notion – spelled George III. Still, there is no logical or any other reason to refrain from using the term "autocracy" if it denotes most accurately the reality of political power that is studied. Moreover, the method of looking for precedents helps to avoid the pitfalls of subjective judgement. (The test of truth is a lack of originality.) In his classic, *The American Commonwealth*, James Bryce characterized the municipal government in the United States by, among other things, the "vesting of almost autocratic executive power in the mayor," the "mayor's absolute power over all the agents of the city government." The "entire character of the city government, for the four years which constitutes a Mayor's term," Bryce writes, "depends upon the man chosen for the office of the Mayor." (*The American Commonwealth*, abr. ed., New York – London 1920, pp. 433, 443, 442.) Mayor White did not escape this perception of mayoral power. Referring to the Mayor's predominance over Boston's redevelopment, Ian Menzies, a leading editorialist of the *Boston Globe*, described him as "architectural autocrat" (*BG*, Feb. 24, 1983). In the context of this brief linguistic reflection it appears interesting to note,

This autocracy established by Mayor White can not be grasped by the conceptual apparatus of a political science of institutions or public administration.²⁵ The formula “strong Mayor – weak Council” hardly defines a mayoral regime that grew into an autocracy. Nor would an “empirical” analysis suffice which would follow the methods of orthodox social science. Presumably “realistic,” the analysis would presuppose a contrast between the “real” workings of Mayor White’s regime and its institutional “form.” Pursuing the logic implied by this presupposition, the analysis would become a probe into the “secrets” of the regime, its oligarchic structures, conspirational politics and, of course, corruption. Since its plausibility would apparently be augmented to the extent that “striking revelations” were made, the accomplishments of the analysis would be measured against sensationalist expectations rather than critical reflection. Progressively, the study of the regime would turn into a hunting for a limited set of “sensational” phenomena. Fascinating as it might be, however, this hunting would distort the view of the autocracy built by Mayor White. Yes, an autocracy is prone to corruption. But this is a piece of perennial wisdom which does not need to be proved once again – the pedantry of social science notwithstanding. And, besides, neither incidents of corruption nor one-sided allocations of public funds or other phenomena of this kind explain the existence of an autocracy in a democratic society. A study is needed which ascertains, first of all, the nature of its subject.

The autocracy built by Mayor White was the result of a progress in the aggregation of power.²⁶ The zero point of the progress was given by the

furthermore, that Mayor White actualized a regime quite congenial to the taste of other politicians in the Boston area. In a report of the *New York Times* (Dec. 10, 1983) the Massachusetts Legislature was called the “most autocratic in the country.” Mayors are perceived as “autocrats” in other democratic societies as well. Cf. J. Becquart-Leclercq, *Paradoxes du pouvoir local*, Paris 1976, p. 199 ff. (J. B.-L. uses the term “monocrate”); Th. Ellwein, R. Zoll, *Wertheim. Politik und Machtstruktur in einer deutschen Stadt*, München 1982, pp. 228 ff., 235 ff.

²⁵ Political actors in Boston barely conceal their contempt for “academics” who do not see the inadequacy of this approach as clearly as they do.

²⁶ On the dynamics of power in the process of its aggregation, cf. Th. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, X: “For the nature of Power, is in this point [considered as “Instrumentall Power”], like to Fame, increasing as it proceeds; or like the motion of heavy bodies, which the further they go, make still the more hast.” – The problem of “power” as a *continuing process of aggregating power* has not really been recognized in the literature on urban politics. In his study on New Haven Robert Dahl alludes to the problem but then deals with it by typically brief remarks: R. D. Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City*, New Haven 1961, pp. 308 – 309 (“The Art of Pyramiding”). In the literature on presidential leadership, however, the problem has become one of the central

formal position of being the Mayor of Boston. By using the possibilities of this position to the utmost extent, the Mayor amplified progressively the amount of his power. He “moved” in the actualization of his mayoral authority from the zero point – the legal authority vested in the office – to a position of aggregated power – an autocratic regime.²⁷ The progress he made in the course of this movement was the personal progress of Kevin White as Mayor of Boston. The power which he aggregated reflected *his* will, *his* aspirations, and *his* actions. It did not change the formal conditions of his authority but took place within the existent structures of governing in Boston.

A study of this autocracy has to be undertaken, therefore, as a simultaneous study of both its formal and its actual modality. Only then can the study be focused upon its true subject: the *movement* by which Kevin White acceded to the position of an autocrat within the constitutionally unchanged form of his mandate as the Mayor of an American city.

5 The Strategy of the Autocrat

A position of aggregated power can only be held if the aggregation of power is continuously sustained. Without incessant support the pile of power would quickly crumble and be reduced to the ground level of a purely formal authority. Any ruler who has built a regime emanating from an aggregation of power must, above all, be concerned with the continuing generation of power. For this ruler to govern means to struggle for power – and to struggle continuously. However constituted the regime may be, the search for sources of power and the need to preserve these to the extent that they are exploited are the paramount problems inherent in its composition.

Mayor White recognized the intrinsic problems of a powerful government, of course. And he knew the need to devise a strategy of governing by which he would be able to attain and – an objective of even greater importance – to reproduce continuously a position of aggregated power.

topics. This is largely due to Richard E. Neustadt's classic study: *Presidential Power. The Politics of Leadership with Reflections on Johnson and Nixon*, New York – Toronto 1960, 1976. A parallel classic dealing with the power problem of German Federal Chancellors is Wilhelm Hennis' study: *Richtlinienkompetenz und Regierungstechnik*, Tübingen 1964.

²⁷ Associates of Kevin White who have known him since his first term as Mayor of Boston refer vaguely to this “movement” in observing that during his later terms he displayed a governing behavior quite different from that of the earlier terms.

He contrived his strategy towards his ascendancy and he practiced it persistently while he was Mayor of Boston. However, the status of this strategy in relation to his rule has generally not been understood nor has it really been analyzed.

According to the common view, one can explain the strategy of Mayor White by an evocation of "similarities": a similarity between his government and the "administrative style" of President Franklin D. Roosevelt or a similarity between his rule and the "machine politics" of Richard Daley, Mayor of Chicago.²⁸ Implicitly, evocations of this kind attribute to Mayor White's strategy the status of an imitation. They suggest that all that is needed to understand it is a reference to the one or the other "model."²⁹

And one could indeed point out that Mayor White and his associates themselves seemed to have corroborated this view. Kevin White let it be known that he was familiar with some of the "models";³⁰ close associates told people from outside his administration that he had studied "FDR's administrative style"; and, truly, the Mayor's staff convened for several seminars of instruction in politics Daley-style.³¹

The demonstrations of Kevin White and his associates notwithstanding, evocations of similarities do not really help to fathom the Mayor's strategy of governing and, in particular, to comprehend the correlation between the

²⁸ Cf., for instance, BG, April 6, 1976: "Kevin White is impressed with Daley's use of power. He has studied Daley's methods. If national avenues were shut to White, he would not be unhappy at the prospect of becoming an institutional mayor in Boston — as Daley is in Chicago." — *Newsweek*, May 11, 1981: Mayor White "[...] has long entertained national ambitions and he has been building a political machine to go with them. Last year he had a historian brief his top aides on how Mayor Richard Daley ran Chicago." — "White is fond of quoting Mayor Daley to the effect that filling potholes are what kept the Chicago Mayor in office" (Interview, Senior aide, White administration). Cf. further BG, May 15, 1981; NYT, Dec. 26 and Dec. 30, 1982.

²⁹ The list of "models" includes: FDR, Daley, John V. Lindsay (Mayor of New York), the governing of Boston as described in: N. Matthews, *The City Government of Boston*, Boston 1895; the Mayors of Boston as depicted in: E. O'Connor, *The Last Hurrah*, Boston 1956.

³⁰ They were represented by three books: F. R. Kent, *The Great Game of Politics: An Effort to Present the Elementary Human Facts About Politics, Politicians, and Political Machines, Candidates and Their Ways, for the Benefit of the Average Citizen*, Garden City 1923, Reprint New York 1974; M. L. Rakove, *Don't Make No Waves, Don't Back No Losers. An Insider's Analysis of the Daley Machine*, Bloomington 1975; idem, *We Don't Want Nobody Nobody Sent. An Oral History of the Daley Years*, Bloomington 1979. — Kevin White consulted with Milton Rakove about machine politics (BPh, Nov. 18, 1980).

³¹ The instructor was Milton Rakove.

strategy and the nature of his rule. Their misleading tendency did not only discourage reasoned attempts to discern the political wisdom of the strategy. It fostered the easy excuse of cynical conclusions. Kevin White, it was held, had adopted the strategy on purely calculating grounds. He was portrayed as a schemer, plotting his ego trip to the excitement of power.³²

Thus, covered by the judgment of cynicism, the strategy of the autocracy remained unintelligible. And the judges did not apparently realize the irony of their position. For they did help the autocrat and his aides to ward off any too close a curiosity about the reasons why, in fact, they were capable of making and operating an autocracy. Every autocracy tends naturally to be secretive about its inner workings. Its guardians must rejoice if critics even maintain that there is not more about it than a reflection of classicism, an imitation of models. There is nothing to be learned from imitations, reason the critic and with him the guardian; whatever there is to be learned about them can be learned by the study of the classic examples. There is nothing to be learned from White's autocracy; however the latter worked, it were the ways of Daley, of Roosevelt that were aped by Kevin White.

Yet, the art of politics knows but imitations, or, to put it positively, politics is an art whose practitioners tend to attest the classicism of politics; it is an art of classicists.³³ Time and again, the problems of governing are solved, or at least dealt with, in "similar" ways: by different people in different times under different circumstances. Every practitioner strives for mastering the technique of the art, for learning the politician's lore — and mostly does this without knowing, or caring, very much about precursors or forerunners, masters of the recent or sages of the remotest past.

An innocent ignorance makes many politicians (and most of their critics) believe that their political pursuits have an "original" importance. This error of judgment should not be surprising. For politicians do not usually happen to be scholars or amateur historians in the field of political studies. (In the course of longer careers, though, some few develop a strong interest in the field.) If they became more knowledgeable about the practice of their art at places and in times other than their own, however, they would soon "discover" what they would perceive to be "astonishing" parallels and precedents of their own pursuits. They would find "models" — extraneous as well as earlier "models" of their own present rule and of this rule's intrinsic strategy of governing.

³² Conclusions of this kind present: F. Butterfield, "Troubles of Boston's Mayor Are Tied to Political Machine," *NYT*, Dec. 26, 1982; D. Clendinen, "Profile in Politics: Boston Mayor's Reformist Style Faded With His Fortunes," *NYT*, Dec. 30, 1982.

³³ Cf. *infra*, pp. 41, 168, 213–217.

Being the politicians that they are, they would very likely exploit their find. They would be drawing prestige and authority from those “models” *des autres lieux* and *des autres temps* which they appeared to “emulate.” And they would of course not neglect to tend the fame and the aura of these “models.” They were not afraid of imitations, certainly not. For they had then tasted the advantages of practicing the art of politics as classicists. The more their own rule resembled a “model,” the less it would need its own *raison d’être*; the more they would appear to be emulating a “classical model,” the more they were able to govern as they pleased – the mystique of the model would cushion the brute reality of their power. They would not reject but would embrace the knowledge of “famous” politicians and of “classic” ways to govern and to rule, “similar” to theirs. For their love of politics, they would want to actualize “imitations” – imitations that gave the originality of their political pursuits the resemblance of classicism.

Mayor White built an autocracy and he built the autocracy by a strategy of governing that resembled the strategies followed by other and indeed famous politicians. He emulated models and he emulated those models because this “emulating” gave the originality of his political achievements the resemblance of classic politics. The similarity between his strategy of governing and the classic strategies of politicians such as Roosevelt and Daley palliated the apparent *skandalon* of his autocracy: it traversed the texture of the American republic and yet it embraced a classic vein of American politics. It embodied the paradox of liberty: a politician’s governing between power denied and power assumed.

Nevertheless, the Mayor could not help being original if he wanted really to govern. Pursuing the vision of being a politician of creative strength, he aimed at expanding as much as he could the authority vested in his office; he assumed autocratic powers – and he could not cease from seeking more power, and more power again and again, or else he would have betrayed his vision of political creativity. It was this inherent dynamics of his autocracy, balanced precariously between creative strength and flat authority, that made him apply a specific strategy of governing – that made him choose *his* approach to the problem of governing.

For the greatest danger to the autocracy was the autocracy itself. Being sustained by a continuing accumulation of power, it could not last unless it was organized in quite a certain way. To exist, the autocracy needed an organization through which it soaked up incessantly an uninterrupted flow of power that continuously reproduced all the power from which it emerged. Hence, Mayor White’s autocracy was by necessity the principal concern of Mayor White’s autocracy.³⁴ Its essence, an assumption of autocratic powers,

³⁴ Cf. W. Hennis, *Richtlinienkompetenz und Regierungstechnik*, op. cit., p. 39: “Not the least part of a political leader’s attention must be paid not only to his politics but also to its conditions, to the preservation of his power above all.” (My translation, T. S.)

depended upon its form — upon an organization of the Mayor's government that was the catalyst of the Mayor's autocratic powers.

The Mayor had therefore to apply his political skills also to the *conditions* for governing and not only to the *tasks* of governing. In a sense, organizing a creative government — and that meant a powerful government — was of greater importance than the process of governing itself. If the Mayor had considered governing merely as a matter of “public administration” or “policy management,” he would have belittled the original moment of politics: creativity. Yet he recognized the secret of power: he who knows that power is an unsteady companion, the gift of circumstances, also knows how to hold on to it. As the conditions from which power grows change continually, the structures of political organization by which it is drawn from these conditions have continuously to be changed accordingly. A politician who is forming a government and who wants to use this government creatively, must build a government that itself is a product of creativity — a government whose “organization” is as fluid, as flexible, as variable as possible. In politics, a chaotic government is the catalyst of creativity.

This is the logic of political creativity, the path of power pursued by Mayor White when he built his autocracy. He “emulated” Roosevelt, of course, and many other politicians, all those who had understood and seized upon this logic.³⁵ But, again, it was an emulation through originality. Everybody can apprehend the logic, at any time, without any knowledge of precedents or precursors. However, not all politicians have indeed found this path of power, and most of those who did find it were either not capable or

³⁵ On Roosevelt, cf.: F. Perkins, *The Roosevelt I Knew*, New York 1946; R. Moley, “The Issue Is Administration,” *Newsweek*, Vol. 32, Aug. 30, 1948 and Sept. 6, 1948; H. A. Simon, D. W. Smithburg, V. A. Thompson, *Public Administration*, New York 1950; S. J. Rosenman, *Working With Roosevelt*, New York 1952; A. M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt*, Vol. I, *The Coming of the New Deal*, Boston 1958 (in particular, pp. 519–552); A. J. Wann, *The President as Chief Administrator. A Study of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, Washington, D. C. 1968; R. E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power*, op. cit., in particular, pp. 225–231. — Contrary to earlier studies on Eisenhower as president, Fred J. Greenstein has convincingly demonstrated the “creativity” of Eisenhower's presidency. Cf. F. J. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency. Eisenhower as Leader*, New York 1982, esp. p. 244 ff. — A German counterpart of Roosevelt was Konrad Adenauer, the first chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. On the extraordinary achievements of his political leadership, cf. A. Baring, *Im Anfang war Adenauer. Die Entstehung der Kanzlerdemokratie*, München 1982, 2nd ed., esp. pp. 19–30; A. Poppinga, *Meine Erinnerungen an Adenauer*, München 1972, esp. pp. 26–33; idem, *Konrad Adenauer. Geschichtsverständnis, Weltanschauung und politische Praxis*, Stuttgart 1975, esp. pp. 22–23. — As to my knowledge, a comparative study of “creative” political leadership does not exist.

daring enough to travel the path for some distance. If a few have reached or are presently reaching the final destination, we may think that they are “similar.” And indeed: they made the voyage to the fruition of power, every politician’s fulfillment. But each made the voyage through himself alone. Kevin White emulated classic politicians. And thereby he became Kevin White, the classic politician.

6 The Principles of the Autocracy

Whatever relates to the process of governing and this process itself as well has to be regarded as a potential source of power.

This was the first and foremost principle of the autocracy.

From the first one several other principles followed.

- (1) The field of politics where the power of the autocrat can grow must be expanded to the largest possible extent; whoever joins the autocracy in whatever capacity has above all to be concerned with locating and exploiting new sources of power.
- (2) All the power harvested in the field has to be absorbed by an “organization” which transports the new power to the sanctuary of the autocracy. Inversely, a system of exploitation must be established that spreads over the whole field extracting actually from it all the power which it yields.
- (3) In the pursuit of power competitors can hardly be tolerated; and separate nuclei of power will be bypassed if the principals do not accept the offer of being coopted.
- (4) As a government the autocracy cannot be “neutral”; its continual search for power consumes the process of politics, or conversely, politics is the aggregation of power. To govern means to appraise everything in terms of power: every event, every transaction, every fact and every idea, every person, every group.

These principles of the autocracy made politics the affair of all people whose life was in one way or the other affected by the government of the autocrat. They imposed a sharp alternative upon each of them. One could either participate actively in the intense politics stirred and stoked by the “government of Boston.” Or one could resign to being a quiescent subject of the whips and whirls of Mayor White’s politics.³⁶

³⁶ That everything that happens under Boston’s sun is “political” – this is a public truth in Boston, shared by everyone. And the truth stands up well in one’s daily civic experience in Boston. Most Bostonians are therefore inclined implicitly to assume that it reflects a “natural” state of affairs. The autocracy was built on fecund ground.