

東洋大学長 殿
To the President of Toyo University

ストラスブール大学招聘教員 研究報告書
Research Report by Visiting Researcher from University of Strasbourg

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研究課題名 Research topic	History of economic thought: Rawls and the economists
研究期間 Research period	年 月 日～ 年 月 日 From 2024/10/7 to 2024/10/26
研究協力教員氏名（所属） Research partner (affiliation)	Prof. Hajime Imamura Faculty of Global and Regional Studies
研究成果発表 （予定も含む） Publication/Presentation (including future ones)	“Rawls and the economist: the (im)possible dialogue” October 18, 2024 – 1.30pm-3pm
研究成果の概要 Summary of your research achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pursuit of my research program on Rawls and the economists.- Submission for the 2025 Japanese Society for the History of Economic Thought conference (Hirosaki University, May 2025) “Between economics and philosophy: a reappraisal of the Rawls-Harsanyi debate”- Submission for the 2025 Public Choice Conference (Louisville, March 2025): “The different paths of Public Choice and Social Choice Theory. Gordon Tullock’s crusade against Arrow’s ‘phantom’”- Final revision for the paper “Bonheur et liberté chez Rawls et Sismondi”, with Rodolphe Dos Santos Ferreira and Ragip Ege, to be published by <i>Cahiers d’Economie Politique</i> in their next issue

Herrade Igersheim
Toyo University, October 7-26, 2024

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During my stay at Toyo, I started two papers (submitted for presentation at two conferences in March and May 2025) and finished revising a paper on Rawls and Harsanyi.

- 1) Submission for the 2025 Japanese Society for the History of Economic Thought conference (Hirosaki University, May 2025) “Between economics and philosophy: a reappraisal of the Rawls-Harsanyi debate”

Abstract. On the one hand, John Harsanyi, both economist and philosopher, was born in Budapest in 1920, obtained a PhD in philosophy in the same city in 1947 and moved to Australia in 1950. In 1956, Harsanyi switched to economics and obtained a PhD at Stanford, continuing his academic career at Berkeley from 1964. In 1994, John Harsanyi was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics, together with Reinhard Selten and John Nash, for their pioneering work on equilibrium in non-cooperative game theory. On the other hand, John Rawls, the most famous political philosopher of the 20th century, was born in Baltimore in 1921 and studied philosophy at Princeton, where he obtained his doctorate in 1950. Rawls went on to teach at prestigious institutions such as Oxford, Cornell and MIT, before moving to Harvard in 1962. In 1971, John Rawls published his major work, *A Theory of Justice*, which marked a real turning point for political and moral philosophy. Even if Harsanyian and Rawlsian theories demonstrate a similar initial ambition, i.e. to found a rule of justice on the basis of rational choice theory, the debate that pitted the two authors against each other over the choice of decision criterion under uncertainty in the mid-1970s was nonetheless very virulent. This debate is well known and has been addressed by secondary literature both from the side of the history of economic thought (Duhamel (2006 and 2012), Dumitru (2006), Kandil (2001 and 2014), Hawi (2016), Igersheim (2022)) and by social choice theorists (Diamond (1967), Sen (1974), Mongin (1994), Weymark (2005), Fleurbaey, Salles and Weymark (2008)). The aim of our article is to examine the relationship between Rawls and Harsanyi in the light of the archives (Rawls - Harvard and Harsanyi - Berkeley). Over and above this close, one-off debate between our two authors, we show that a more nuanced, longer history is emerging. This can be broken down into 3 main moments: 1) the meeting in 1964 at the 2nd meeting of the Committee for Non-Market Decision Making; 2) the Rawls-Harsanyi analytical debate in 1973/1975; 3) the development of Harsanyi's more assertive philosophical critique of Rawlsian theory from the 1980s onwards. Thus, revisiting the Rawls-Harsanyi debate in the light of the archives enables us to better understand the nuances and philosophical implications of each thinker's positions. Far from the literature's focus on the 1973-1975 analytical debate, an examination of the archives of these two authors teaches us that Harsanyi's criticism of Rawls spans more than 30 years and addresses various fundamental aspects of their work. While it is true that a central aspect of the (narrow) debate between Rawls and Harsanyi concerns the opposition between the maximin principle and that of maximizing expected utility, a broader philosophical debate emerges from Harsanyi's pen, raising profound ethical and moral questions as his theory of morality takes shape. From the mid-1980s onwards, Harsanyi's philosophical critique took place on two levels: on the one hand, his critique of the social contract called into question the very foundations of the social structure proposed by Rawls. Secondly, Harsanyi is highly critical of Rawls's non-compatibilist position, which, in his view, denies the effort that individuals can make to develop their talents for the benefit of society.

- 2) Submission for the 2025 Public Choice Conference (Louisville, March 2025): “The different paths of Public Choice and Social Choice Theory. Gordon Tullock’s crusade against Arrow’s ‘phantom’”

Abstract. In parallel of his much active way of the making of the Public choice Community, Tullock has never ceased to attack Arrow's theorems until the end of his life (1964, 1967, 1992, 2005). On the other hand, while seen as a founder of both public choice and social choice (Mueller 2015), Kenneth Arrow never took a prominent part in the activities or meetings of the Public Choice Society (Feiwel 1987), but has always been very involved in those of the Social Choice community (Salles 2005, 2014). As a matter of fact, the different paths taken by both fields in spite of their strong conceptual proximities is still lacking. The aim of this paper is precisely to examine this question under a historical perspective on the basis of Gordon Tullock's and Kenneth Arrow's papers.

- 3) Final revision for the paper "Bonheur et liberté chez Rawls et Sismondi", with Rodolphe Dos Santos Ferreira and Ragip Ege, to be published by *Cahiers d'Economie Politique* in their next issue.