

ABSTRACTS

Ferenc Hörcher

■ ***Raymond Aron and the Moral and Realist Paradigm of the Concept of the “Political”: Reflections on the Application of the Concept of “the Political” to Modern Hungarian Political Thought***

Keywords: *moralism, realism, “the political”, Raymond Aron, Pierre Manent, Aristotle, prudence, Transylvania, Settlement with Austria*

Raymond Aron was one of the Western intellectuals who stood up for the revolution after the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. In fact, he was one of the French intellectuals who, even during the Cold War, were clearly anti-communist and critical of the Soviet totalitarian dictatorship. This clarity of his political vision was the “virtue” of a political thinker who considered it essential to base his thinking always on a sound analysis of the political situation.

In reconstructing this way of thought, the paper identifies three paradigms of beliefs about the nature of politics: one associated with Machiavelli and Schmitt, a moralising Kantian position, and a middle ground between the two paradigms, which can be traced back to Aristotle. Drawing on a late lecture by Aron, the paper shows that, according to the French thinker, practical reason can guide us in dealing with things subject to changing circumstances, and politics is of this nature. In this context, practical reason is identified by him as practical wisdom, what Aristotle called phronesis and the Romans identified as the virtue of prudence. In this interpretation of Aron, the paper follows Pierre Manent.

In the final part of the thesis, Aron’s analysis of the nature of “the political” is applied to two episodes in Hungarian history, the reign of

Gabriel Bethlen in Transylvania and the circumstances of the birth of the Settlement with Austria. This is to show how Aron’s political thought might be used to provide the methodological framework to interpret notions of “the political” in modern Hungarian political thought, the aim of the research K 143251 at RIPG, UPS, funded by the National Scientific Research Fund.

Ferenc Hörcher

■ ***Aurél Kolnai and the Phenomenology of “the Political”***

Keywords: *Aurél Kolnai, Carl Schmitt, Aristotle, the political, phenomenology, moralism, social cohesion*

There is no well-articulated and easily identifiable place in the philosophical canon for Aurél Kolnai, despite the fact that he has been championed by such luminaries of contemporary philosophy, who have written detailed essays on his thought, as Pierre Manent, Bernard Williams, David Wiggins, Dan Mahoney, John Haldane or Axel Honneth. When this paper examines his position on “the political”, what we are really looking at is his view of the relationship between politics and ethics, and between politics and philosophy.

This paper will focus on two texts by Kolnai. One is a relatively early German-language work entitled *What is Politics about?* This work was originally published in 1933, which, if you look at the political context, makes this debate with Carl Schmitt quite fascinating. The English title of the other paper is *The Moral Theme in Political Division*, originally published in 1960, three decades after the previous paper. In the analysis of these works, the contrast between the Machiavellian-Carl Schmitt-like conception of politics and a broader Aristotelian-communal approach will be in focus. While

the first paradigm relies on the conflictual nature of politics and takes political emergencies crucial, the second one emphasises the cohesive forces, coordination and cooperation of the community in the everyday life of politics. The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate that the author's position offers an alternative to the typical Schmitt-like position, without becoming naively moralistic. In this interpretation, Kolnai's phenomenological philosophy plays a major role, determining his understanding of the concept of "the political".

Eszter Kovács

■ **Győző Concha on Political Liberty**

Keywords: *Győző Concha, political liberty, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Kant*
The present article examines Győző Concha's (1846-1933) concept of political liberty and its contribution to the definition of the political in Hungarian political thought around 1895. The article focuses on a long essay by Concha published in the periodical *Budapesti Szemle* in 1894, entitled *Az emberi eszme mint szabadság* (The Idea of the Human as Liberty). Concha reused this text in 1895 in the first volume of his two-volume work entitled *Politika* as the chapter on political liberty.

According to Concha, individual freedom and collective freedom (or freedom of the community) have been in opposition or even in conflict throughout history. It should not have been the case, however. Some philosophers advocated individual freedom at the expense of the interest of the political community. Other thinkers, in contrast, advocated the interest of the community or that of the state at the expense of individual freedom. For Concha, since the human and the political, the individual and the public co-exist and interfere, freedom for the

individual and freedom for the community should be balanced. Montesquieu is one of the authors he appreciates the most on this question because Montesquieu recognised that liberty of the members of society must be limited for the sake of the others' liberty. Concha completes, however, Montesquieu's definition of freedom with a positive element, that of self-realization on and individual and collective level.

Béla Makkai

■ **Formation of a Positive Neighbor Image in the Hungarian Press of the Romanian Old Kingdom (1860-1918)**

Keywords: *Hungarian press of the Romanian Old Kingdom, positive neighbor image, conciliatory mission*
The origins of Hungarian journalism in Romania are linked to the political emigration of 1849. Following the intensely national/regional struggles that took on the character of a civil war, its actors endeavored to nurture within their readers a sense of love for the trampled homeland, while simultaneously fostering feelings of respect and gratitude towards the host country. This study examines the evolving mission of reconciliation and mediation undertaken by the Hungarian weekly newspapers in Romanian Old Kingdom throughout a span of over five decades, during which the relationship between the two nations was burdened by perceived and genuine grievances, leading to suspicion and animosity. The scheming of Viennese agents, the imposition of official censorship, the scarcity of literate readers, and the absence of the Hungarian character set represented minor obstacles. Despite the sensational and domineering expressions of the domestic press workers and the inundation of false anti-Hungarian accusations in the Romanian jour-

nalism that infected both national and European public opinion, the Hungarian press in the Romanian Old Kingdom presented examples of historical shared destiny in a measured and constructive tone, offering the singularly valid long-term recipe for reconciling the two neighbor peoples adrift in a Slavic and Germanic sea without companions.

Ágoston Nagy

■ ***The Limits of the Politics of the Estates: Lessons of a Debate on the Diet of 1825/27***

Keywords: *Hungarian politics, debate, estates, diet, law, argumentation, natural law*

On the diet of 1825-27, a heated argument erupted as for the census and taxation of – among others – those petty noblemen who had no choice but to sit on urbarial plots. Because of the discussion concerned the traditional rights and duties of the Hungarian nobility (and the fiction of the legal equality of the nobility), its significance pointed far beyond itself. Beyond the object level, the discussion was also moved on the meta level, to define the limits of the political debates on the diet, moreover, the estates' politics in general. The present case study aims to show what politics meant for contemporaries, by means of historical political epistemology. The debate was fought predominantly by means of the language of “ancient constitutionalism”, which drilled down on the old laws and customs of the country. It opened the discussion about the significance of laws, customs, and other sources of law, which touched immediately or directly upon the group of the petty nobility in question or generally the nobility. Not only the elements and their significance of the centuries-long legal-constitutional tradition became a matter of debate, but also

the validity of competing or complementary political languages and patterns of argumentation, like natural law, noble solidarity, political rationality, etc. were also discussed.

Tamás Nyirkos

■ ***“A Statesman of the Highest Caliber”: Joseph de Maistre in the Journal Religio (1841-1900)***

Keywords: *French conservatism, counterrevolution, Joseph de Maistre, Hungarian Catholicism, Catholic press, 19th century*

Joseph de Maistre (1753-1821) remains the most influential and at the same time most controversial author of the French Counterrevolution, whose work was widely cited in European conservative circles all through the 19th century. The paper examines the Hungarian reception of Maistre by a close reading of his mentions in *Religio*, the most popular Catholic journal of the time, giving an outline of their frequency in different decades, the change in the focus of citations, and the most important contexts in which he was cited. The overall picture may only be surprising for those who still regard Maistre as a fierce traditionalist or a spokesperson of the extreme right, for it is in fact well known from recent scholarly literature (and that is what the citations in *Religio* also confirm in the Hungarian case) that he was just as frequently referred to as an advocate of rights and liberties, the autonomy of the church, or a Christian form of social, political, and scientific progress. In other words, a rival form of modernity, who often ardently rejected its prevailing form but not modernity in general. The case of the *Religio* is also interesting because it sheds some light on the difficult position of Hungarian Catholics toward secular

authorities from the pre-revolutionary era to 1848, 1867, and beyond.

Gábor Petneházi

■ ***Unification and Division: Hungarian Political Thought at the Turn of the 16th and 17th Centuries in the Mirror of Two Unknown Documents***

Keywords: *political thought, proto-nationalism, confessionalism, early modern Hungary and Transylvania*

The paper attempts to shed light on the basic concepts of early modern Hungarian political thought through the analysis of two hitherto unknown documents: a comprehensive reform draft written around 1580 (*Libellus Paraeneticus*) and a political pamphlet written around 1625 (*Responsio*). The starting point is a 1995 study by Katalin Péter, who noted the slow divergence and fragmentation of the concepts of “homeland,” “country” and “nation” during the long period of the Ottoman occupation and threefold division of the former Kingdom of Hungary. The paper argues that this change occurred much more rapidly as a result of the long Turkish war (1591-1606) and the Bocskai uprising (1604-1606) in the early 17th century, and that it has also fundamentally determined and modified the modern understanding of the concept of Hungarian nation.

Ádám Smrcz

■ ***The Battle of Homo Oeconomicus and Homo Politicus in the 19th Century Hungarian Political Ideological History***

Keywords: *homo oeconomicus, homo politicus, Adam Smith, Hungarian culture, politics*

This paper argues that despite of the efforts of political economists like David Hume or Adam Smith, the moral evaluation of self-interested motives or acts was, in some places, controversial throughout the 18th and

19th centuries. Although the paper primarily focuses on Hungarian instances of the above-mentioned phenomenon, it also intends to place them in an international context. The ideas enumerated and partly elaborated here are taken from both works of philosophy and literature, and are intended to highlight the political concerns triggered by the sinister image of the unconstrained self-interestedness of individuals. As we shall see, a certain part of the literary and scientific public, both in Hungary and elsewhere held that political communities could not be maintained on purely Smithian grounds, and hence the utility function of classical political economists should be updated with a new variable, called “sense of community” by them.

Kálmán Tóth

■ ***The Influence of the Experience of Western-European Modernization on the Political Thought of István Gorove***

Keywords: *István Gorove, classical liberalism, modernization, progress, freedom, industrial capitalism, political thinking, common good, Great Britain, France, Hungary*

István Gorove (1818-1881) was a well-known and respected Hungarian politician, writer and political thinker of the 19th century. As a representative of the classical liberal paradigm, he believed in the idea of inevitable progress, but he was also aware of the danger of uncritical imitation of economic, social and political phenomena. In his book *Nyugot. Utazás külföldön* (West. A Journey Abroad, 1844) he recollected the experiences of his journey to Western Europe in 1842-43. In my study, I examine his reflections on some of his politically relevant experiences he presented in his book, and underline their influence

on key features of his political thought. The key reference point of his diagnostic analysis of British and French society and political culture is the concept of the common good with a special focus on their implications for the common good of the Hungarian political community. According to him, technological innovation and economic growth do not necessarily lead to a more just distribution of goods, and so he warned the political elites of the Habsburg Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary to learn from the situation in England, as from the perspective of the common good he

found it necessary to do everything possible to prevent mass poverty when industrial capitalism would inevitably reach this region in the upcoming decades. In his communitarian political thought the central value of classical liberalism, i.e. individual freedom, is closely intertwined with the freedom of a national community, based on mutual rights and obligations. In his view, individual freedom cannot be realized without the freedom of the community, the nation. The individual good of the citizens can only be developed on the ground of the common good of the national community.



SZÁMUNK SZERZŐI

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TÁMOGATÓK



„E két, vitatott, de általában sikeresnek tartott politikai pályafutás – Bethlen Gáboré és Deák Ferencé – sok tekintetben hasonló érték-szemponctokat követett ahhoz, amit arisztotelianus értékeknek nevezhetnénk: vagyis a haza javának szolgálatát, a béke és a belső stabilitás megteremtését s az ország (kétségtelenül mindkét esetben korlátozott) szuverenitásának megőrzését. Ezen értékek védelmében hajlandóak voltak nagyon elvszerűen és keményen is fellépni, de volt bennük kompromisszumkészség is, és az egyezség feltételeinek elfogadására, majd megtartására irányuló tudatos törekvés is.”

(Horkay Hörcher Ferenc)

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