

ABSTRACTS

Miklós Bakk

■ *Nation and History: István Bibó and the Perennialist Conception of Nation*

Keywords: *István Bibó, nationalism, perennialist theory of nation, modern history*

The examination of the oeuvre of István Bibó continues to be an exciting issue in the field of the history of ideas, and has led to several interpretations. Bibó's conception of nation and about the rising nationalism in modern history remains an important matter for the discipline of nationalism theory. According to many scholars, the characteristic schools of this discipline are: a) the constructivist (modernist) theory of nationalism (represented by Ernest Gellner and others); b) the primordialist theory (leading proponent: Clifford Geertz); c) the ethnosymbolist theory (Anthony D. Smith) and d) the perennialist theory (Liah Greenfeld and others). The study argues for a perennialist interpretation of Bibó's concept about the western type of nation-building. In his unfinished work *On European Equilibrium and Peace*, written during the World War II, Bibó argued that the emergence of the modern western nations (France, England, Spain) was prepared by a *longue durée* of the monarchic state with results taken over and assimilated by the bourgeoisie in the rising democracies of the 17-18th century. Bibó's starting point is in accordance with basic statements of the recent perennialist explanation.

Attila M. Demeter

■ *The Romanticism of the Sovereign People: István Bibó on Nationalism and the French Revolution*

Keywords: *István Bibó, nationalism, the French Revolution, democracy, national self-interpretation, lingual nationalism*

The thesis that modern nationalism in the historical sense of the word was born out of the political experiences and measures of the French Revolution wasn't quite original even in Bibó's own time. That's the reason why he wrote: "The major consequence of the French Revolution was the intensification and democratization of community affections, the birth of modern nationalism. This is where meaning is attached to the otherwise superficial statement that European nationalism emerged from the French Revolution." But no matter how

school-bookish the thesis may seem, the conclusions it allows are very productive, but also quite diverse. I think that the significance of Bibó's theory about the emergence of nationalism resides precisely in the fact that starting from this very school-bookish thesis, he reaches the right conclusions. In my paper I consider two of these conclusions. First, Bibó was convinced (and frequently emphasized) that: "democratism and nationalism are blood-brothers". That is to say: the introduction of the republican form of governance fuelled the emergence of the nation as a political community, and nationalism has a close ideological relation with Rousseau's demand for popular sovereignty. Second, Bibó was also convinced that the close relationship between the idea of nation and that of liberty, which is quite obvious in the philosophy of French Revolution, a few decades later, with the emergence of other types of national self-interpretation, became weaker and weaker, and in the second half of the 19th century we can witness in Eastern Europe the birth of a new type of nationalism: the "lingual nationalism". That is a type of national self-interpretation in which the case of nation separates from the universal case of liberty.

Zoltán Iván Dénes

■ *The Scholarly Reception of István's Bibó Work*

Keywords: *political changes, political culture, symbol systems, rehabilitation, exposition, revision, mediation*

István Bibó (1911-1979) was one of the classics of 20th century democratic political thought and conduct, the symbol of an independent, democratic and free Hungary as opposed to the dictatorship restored after 1956 and of the political changes in 1989/90. His reception at the time – his rehabilitation, the exposition of the oppressive regime under his influence, his "naiveté" and his role as a political therapist – was based on political interpretation, and was more about the interpreters than the interpreted. In the past two decades this gradually receded, and the works of scholarly reception, philological and history-of-ideas analyses and interpretations, came into being. His oeuvre has still not been incorporated into mainstream international scholarly discourse. This essay reviews the achievements of his Hungarian scholarly reception.

Gusztáv Molnár

■ **Foreword to a "New" Study of István Bibó**

Keywords: *István Bibó, Arab-Israeli conflict, peace conditions, conflict resolution*

István Bibó began to write his study concerning The Arab-Israeli Conflict in the aftermath of the Six-Day War of 1967 and finished it in the aftermath the Yom Kippur war in the autumn of 1973. In continuance with his study on the Cypriot question, his work served the purpose to advance a possible solution to the territorial questions discussed in his monograph entitled The Paralysis of International Institutions and its Remedies. A Study of Self-Determination, Concord among the Major Powers, and Political Arbitration. However, the author wished to publish this study also separately. According to Bibó, the successful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict depends upon two essential conditions. The first of these is the acceptance of the pre-1967-war borders or the so-called "green line" as the starting point for the definitive solution of the issue. The second condition consists in the detailed peace plan elaborated by the major powers on the international scene and imposed upon the conflicting parties in the form of the UN Security Council's binding resolution. Even today, the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict still requires the fulfillment of these two conditions.

Attila Varga

■ **Issues Concerning the Legal Interpretation of Human Dignity**

Keywords: *human dignity, law theory, constitutional theory, fundamental rights, the right to life*

The purpose of this paper is an analysis of the concept of human dignity from the perspective of law theory. Although human dignity is hardly accessible in law theory because of its general and abstract nature, a deeper examination can be useful and necessary for both law theory and for legal practice. This paper presents human dignity as it is covered in international legal documents, as well as in the Constitution of Romania, and it presents a content analysis of the concept of human dignity in terms of constitutional theory and the theory of law. The study highlights the role of the Constitutional Court in interpreting and explaining the content of human dignity. At the same time, it appreciates that human dignity can be the foundation and source of several categories of fundamental rights, and can be the legal basis, in specific cases, of new rights not expressly stipulated in the Constitution. Thus, human dignity is closely related primarily to the right to life. Only by legally recognizing dignity, one can explain the prohibition of death penalty. Also, the conception of human dignity determines the legal regulations of early life, the legal protection of life, and the possibility of abortion. On the other hand, all those fundamental rights that relate to human personality may be based on human dignity. The paper also presents particular disputes and delays in the legal sphere, expressed by specialists. The conclusion is that, despite the difficulties of the regulatory approach to human dignity, it deserves serious consideration and further discussion that can provide explanations and solutions not only for constitutional theory and philosophy of law, but especially for the case of jurisprudence, in order to assert the fundamental rights.



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