

Norbert Kis

Introductory Study – Scientia Intuitiva



“While science deals with reality, it, suddenly and unnoticed, escapes from its grasp, giving way to the realisation that it is no longer centred around reality but some dumb theory.”

(Béla Hamvas: Carnival)

The title of our volume compels the introductory study to formulate questions and hypotheses for the studies that follow. Connecting various historical eras and cultural spaces, the papers in this volume seek for the *patterns of state development*. Our hypotheses are drawn from the *evolutionist interpretation of state development*. The paradigm of evolution is apt to give common points of interpretation to the studies of this volume, theses that appear as research questions related to the pivotal points of state development. The authors of the studies do not necessarily confirm or refute those theories but provide overviews of legal and political history that can serve as bases for readers to further consider the possible patterns of state development. In recent decades, the *evolutionist theories of the birth and development of the state* have become points of reference in the discipline of state theory.¹ The task of that discipline is to explore and typologise the general patterns of state development.² The evolutionist paradigm *transposes the development concept of evolution into the interpretation of state development*. That is presented and evaluated in the studies of this volume, along with the further consideration of the evolutionist state theories.

In his work titled *Ethics*, Spinoza argues that the knowledge obtained by intuition is the most basic form of knowledge, as it is the observation of things *sub specie aeternitatis* (under the aspect of eternity). Accordingly, *scientia intuitiva* seeks for the laws and eternal aspects of phenomena. The hypothesis of the volume is that *state development is driven by political*

¹ SZILÁGYI 1998: 70. Szilágyi made a reference to SERVICE 1975.

² SZILÁGYI 1998: 70; see also, as an in-depth analysis of the task of the discipline of state theory, Cs. KISS 2022.



interests and actions. This “realpolitik” or “political realism” strives to explore the true *political interests* behind the history and existential changes of the states. This *realist approach* is objective and descriptive, less following the normative, often ideologising or utopian perception typically applied by the theory of the state, since the former is centred neither around the values of the state or the nation, nor the concept of the “ideal state”, which often occurs in the classical works of state theory, such as the *Republic* by Plato, the works of Thomas More, Francis Bacon, Campanella, or in the *Anti-Machiavel* of Frederick the Great.

The springboard of our analysis is the concept that in order to define the state, we must first define politics. There are certain persistent questions in the research of state history: What political interests can be identified behind the specific existential changes affecting the state(s)? Had there been any political interest group(s) behind the dominant state interest(s)? If there had, what kind of political interest prevailed in the activities of the interest group? Why and how did the given political interest and interest group become a public power that shaped the state?

According to our hypothesis assuming the existence of patterns, one or several *political interest groups, whose successful advocacy had directly or indirectly become a public power or state-shaping force, can be identified behind the existential changes of state development in every instant*. This concept is not contrary to the theory that seeks the political drive of state development in the so-called *state interest*. The idea of state interest is an abstraction, or, in a certain sense, a fiction, behind which we can find a group of people active in the physical reality, along with their collective interests. The world of political wills that define the reality of public power indicates the presence of even more diverse interest groups. Thus, the approach centred around *the competing plurality of political interests can be considered a realist approach*, while the concept that seeks for a *state interest – that is, a sovereign and legitimate government influence representing the national interest* – behind every change affecting the state system is more idealistic in nature. The theory arguing that the political drive of state development is the rivalry and enforcement of state interests is connected today mostly to the “offensive realism” formulated by John J. Mearsheimer.³ This “realism” is centred around the concept of the “sovereign self-interest of the state”, which, Mearsheimer argues, is the most reliable compass in the world’s chaotic system of interests.

³ MEARSHEIMER 2019.

Another tenet of realism connects state development to the advocacy of great powers, the USA in particular. Not disputing the fact that, both in the 20th century and today, world politics has been dominated and defined by the hegemonic aspirations of the United States, Mearsheimer applies a critical approach against the USA's foreign policy. The conflicts between the great powers spark wars that reshape the system of states (world wars). Out of economic interests, great powers colonised territories, abolished old states or created new ones. Further elements in this field are Pax Americana and the – sometimes violent – policy of the USA labelled democracy export.

However, the paradigm of state evolution followed by the studies of this volume takes the subject matter of the examination to the *level of political interest groups* from that of great power interests, state interests, or economic or ideological interests, and to the *level of physical reality and people from that of abstractions*. This is a more “realist” concept than political realism or realpolitik, as it presumes that *behind every interest or notion related to a social phenomenon, there is a group of people active in the physical reality and the collective interests of that group*. The economic, ideological or value content of the interests must also be considered real, but a political group can be identified as the primary stakeholder and advocate.

Of course, however, according to the value-based approach, the *ideal political formula of state development is the prevalence of state interest*, that is, sovereign national interests, preferably based on mutual benefits and in an amicable manner. Accordingly, our hypothesis can be refined by clarifying that the *power of state evolution does not appear exclusively at the level of state interests, but at the level of political interest groups functioning with efforts for public power*. The theory of state should strive to seek for political interest groups behind the various forms of state development, which, at a higher level of abstraction, can be considered national, economic or ideological interests. The first study of this volume seeks for the above patterns in the juristocratic reforms of the Roman Empire. The Middle Ages shall be examined through the system of benefices that shaped the development of the Hungarian state. The modern age shall be presented by analysing the alliance systems and conflict patterns of monarchies. The spheres of interest of the 20th century will be examined from the aspect of the sovereignty of Hungary, while the analysis of the first quarter of the 21st century is yet to be penned. The last study offers a frame of interpretation – that is, a possible paradigm – for that analysis

and all the historical periods, state configurations, and value systems missing from this volume: *the law of state evolution*. As the concluding remark of this introduction, we turn to the great Hungarian poet, Endre Ady, who would accept our wise thoughts with a stoic smile: “Holding a giant sieve / Time stands, for ever sifting, / Picking out and sifting whole worlds [...]. Whoever falls through the mesh deserves it. / Time has no pity for chaff. / The miasmal desires of senile nations, / Worlds that have lost their fire, broken lives [...]”⁴ (*In Time’s Sieve*)

References

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⁴ Ady’s poem translated by Michael Hamburger.