



Summer School in Modern Political Theory

Bourgeois and Citoyen: Political Aspects of Economy in Modernity

Croatia, Grožnjan, July 16th-21th, 2018

Deadline for application:
May 1st, 2018

The Summer School in modern political theory will be held in Croatia in the town of Grožnjan (Istria) from July 16th to 21st 2018. It is organized by the Faculty of Political Science (University of Zagreb) in cooperation with the International Cultural Centre from Grožnjan.

Summer school provides an opportunity for 14 graduate students, doctoral researchers and young researches working in the field of modern political theory to exchange research and teaching ideas and discuss relevant theoretical problems from the tradition of modern political thought. The lecturers will be distinguished scholars in the field, presenting their critical revaluation of the political aspects of economy in Modernity.



In contrast to Antiquity, in which economic life was *a priori* excluded from political constitution, and the Middle Ages, in which personal political (coercive) power and property (over land and people alike) were seamlessly interwoven, Modernity recognized the importance of a new and distinctive sphere of economic relations in the structure of community. This was the result of the profound political and economic transformations that occurred on the path to Modernity. Parallel to the emergence of the sovereign State, which gradually monopolized coercive power, establishing itself as the exclusive political authority

on its territory, a distinctively new, market economy was developed. The "civil society" – as the nascent socio-economic form based on market relations had soon begun to be designated – was seen not only as a privileged space of individual freedom, but as a birth place of particular, socio-economic type of intersubjectivity.

Already with Machiavelli we are faced with a new vision of a dynamic class society and the problem of simultaneously harnessing its blessings and evading its curses. With the further unfolding of the early modern political theory (Bodin, Hobbes, Locke) some of the fundamental politico-juridical pre-conditions and constitutive notions of the modern economy gradually became articulated (e.g. sovereignty, philosophical individualism, rule of law, labour, private property). However, it is only with Scottish Enlightenment that the economic functioning of "civil society" was brought to the center of theoretical investigations. Out of these, a new science of political economy was born. Built on the heritage of modern political thought and conceived as "a branch of the science of a statesman or legislator" (Smith), it related its analysis of prospering market economies to a broader moral and political outlook. In *Wealth of Nations* Smith thus depicted the "system of natural liberty" in which the pursuit of self-interest by each individual brings about social harmony and increases general opulence, which benefits all members of society. The realization of the common good, which was previously considered as resulting from the "visible hand" of a wise ruler or political activity of citizens, has now become the outcome of self-regulated market mechanisms.

However, the idea of a self-regulating market and its universal benefits for society was soon challenged. Already Scottish philosophers have stressed some harmful effects of modern economy – especially those stemming from the division of labour and professional specialization – on morality and on individual's physical and mental condition. The vision of a harmonious market society was additionally brought into question by the developing contrast between the accumulation of wealth and increase in productivity on the one hand, and the growing socio-economic inequalities on the other. The ambivalent nature of civil society soon became one of the central topics of political philosophy and social theory. Relying explicitly on the findings of classical British political economy, in his *Philosophy of Right* Hegel fully acknowledged the importance of civil society in the actualization of individual freedom and presented the "laws" of the market as productive of socio-economic "universality". But he equally emphasized its immanent disintegrating tendencies, due to which he found political oversight and regulation of market by the state indispensable.

Hegel's is the last philosophical and synthetic exposition of classical political economy on its own grounds. For Marx, on the other hand, the fundamental problems of civil society and political economy cannot be solved within the limits of their classical formulations. Although according to Marx they provide a proper theory of civil society, they are oblivious to its historical character, mistakenly taking its historical principles for "natural". As much as Marx extols capitalism for its progressive role in history, he finds its nature contradictory, for its essential principles and driving forces simultaneously prove to be its own limits, making the realization of its potentials and fulfillment of its promises impossible in the framework of its own historical mode of production and exchange.



The aim of this year's Summer School in Modern Political Theory is to reconsider the political aspects of economy in Modernity. Providing their mature systematic presentation, the tradition of political economy is understood not only as an economic analysis of modern market economy, but also as a theory of Modernity itself, for which that economy is constitutive. In this sense it is necessary to problematize the fundamental principles, intrinsic logic and historical transformations of modern economic form as well as its political

implications: from its impact on legal and political framework in which it develops, to its consequences for the modern understanding of politics and the question of possible modalities of relating socio-economic and political spheres, embodied in the figures of *bourgeois* and *citoyen*, of the modern *Commonwealth*.

Special attention will be given to three problem areas:

- I. Political and legal foundations of the modern market economy and treatment of economic themes in early modern political theory (from Machiavelli to Locke).
- II. Political economy as a theory of modern society and state (Scottish Enlightenment, British political economy and Hegel's philosophical reception of their findings).
- III. Marx' critical appropriation of classical politico-economic categories and his economic analysis of the mode of production and reproduction of modern society.



Participation fee: No fee

Costs: Complete costs are covered by organizers (full board accommodation, travel costs).

Grants: 7 students from abroad and 7 students from Croatia.

Conditions of eligibility: Applications are welcome from undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students as well as from young researchers in humanities and social sciences. Each participant is expected to present a short paper as a part of the discussion of the main topic of the summer school. The applicants must provide a CV and short summary of their paper (up to 250 words) by the deadline indicated above.

Guidelines for participants: Lectures should last 45 min and student presentations should not exceed 20 min of duration. The working language of the summer school is English.

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