

Republicanism in the History of Political Philosophy and Today

3rd Biennial *Ideas in Politics* Conference

Prague: November 3rd-4th, 2017

Panel 1.2 Abstracts

The Republicanism of the Polish Solidarity Movement and the Challenges of Today

Elżbieta Cizewska-Martyńska

University of Warsaw (Poland)

Contact: e.cizewska@uw.edu.pl

Republicanism is present in at least three ways in the debate on the Eastern European dissident movement and its legacy: firstly, as a direct inspiration of Hannah Arendt's view of political community, secondly, as a revival of local political traditions, and, thirdly, in relation to the contemporary republican theory and political projects of state building as developed by Quentin Skinner and Philip Pettit. In my paper I am going to refer to these interpretations and discuss some republican threads within the Polish Solidarity movement. Particularly I will focus on the understanding of freedom and solidarity, and their actual and possible implications for the state order. Paul Blokker has already pointed out the impact of the ideas of local self-government and direct democracy on Czech, Polish and Hungarian constitutions (2011). Still, there are other issues that remain to be discussed, such as the above mentioned. As "Solidarity" became the "origin myth" of the Polish Third Republic, and continues to be a point of reference in the debate on public issues in Poland, the proper understanding of its public philosophy and its roots does not lose its importance. In my paper I will also show the similarities and differences between the experiences of "Solidarity" and the republican tradition. By placing "Solidarity" in a broader Euro-Atlantic republican context, its universal as well as original characteristics can be revealed.

Republicanism in the History of Political Philosophy and Today

3rd Biennial *Ideas in Politics* Conference

Prague: November 3rd-4th, 2017

Panel 1.2 Abstracts

The Republican Tradition and Its Influence on the Polish Soul

Agata Czarnecka

Nicolaus Copernicus University (Poland)

Contact: hegezasz@gmail.com

Political history of Poland, different from most European countries, has influenced its intellectual tradition. On the one hand, Poland avoided times of absolute monarchy and eventually absolutism did not influence us at all. On the other hand, Polish history is a long sinusoid, and years of freedom were always followed by years of captivity. Poles spent so many years under the oppression that they have learnt that freedom is never taken for granted. All these had been influencing the way the people of Poland managed the country during the times of freedom and peace. And I believe that most of all this heritage is still influencing Polish political scene, it can be found in Polish constitution, and it is still affecting Polish soul.

In my paper I would like to consider how this unique history influenced Polish democracy nowadays. I would like to take a close look at the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1997 since in the current Polish constitutional debate, which is called "crisis" by one side of the debate, its other side refers to republicanism and republican values as opposite to liberal ones which are identified with Western democracies. I would like to answer the question if there really are any republican ideas in the Polish Constitution or is it just a rhetoric argument? The latter hypothesis is also very interesting because it would mean that in the political debate "republican" is identified with the whole Polish tradition whereas "liberal" is equal to "strange, foreign".

I am not only interested in the influence of the ideas on the legal conception of state but I am also interested in the social dimension. I would like to consider how this specific history, which has resulted in the Constitution, affects Polish society. Is it a source of the specific sense of freedom that seems to be common to Polish citizens? According to most social research Poles are very traditional and they respect traditional values, they have a strong national identity, and at the same time, the same people in the same country cannot develop legal and political culture and are far from the participation in state matters. I believe that all those problems have the same source. They are all the result of those times of captivity and oppression that taught the people that the real freedom can only be found in spheres that are not regulated by state at all. This means that there are some legal and therefore public duties that are commonly ignored since any kind of state, even if democratic, is always perceived as constraining.

Republicanism in the History of Political Philosophy and Today

3rd Biennial *Ideas in Politics* Conference

Prague: November 3rd-4th, 2017

Panel 1.2 Abstracts

Revolution as Republican Moment: The Case of Hungary

Milán Pap

National University of Public Service (Hungary)

Contact: pap.milan@uni-nke.hu

In my paper, I discuss the republican character of the anti-communist insurgency of Hungary in 1956. Doing this, I will assess the political thoughts of revolutionaries of 1956 and the discourses on 1956 in the time of the formation of Republic of Hungary in 1989-1990, respectively. In the first case, the political efforts of independence from the Soviet rule and national self-determination carried a republican argumentation on the community of free people. According to this position, freedom was essentially defined as non-domination, not only in the international context of the Cold War, but as home affairs and local politics as well. Latter is the more important component of the republican interpretation of 1956, since local and workers councils were freely constituted throughout the country. The dominant historical experience of the revolution was the fora of local affaires and common people constituted spontaneously. To understand this phenomenon of 1956 we need to theorize its events by the concepts of republican tradition: republican liberty, the citizen as virtuous and free agent of his political community, the consciousness of the glory of fight for independence as well as the faith of destiny and the right of violence against tyranny. In the second case, I will discuss the return of the revolution of 1956 as the memory of freedom and independence at the declaration and founding of post-communist Hungarian republic. For the political thinkers and intellectuals of post-Cold War regime change in Hungary, the values and thoughts of the failed revolution provided the foundations for the making of a political community. According to political discourses that time, a new political community, after long decades of communist repression and dependency from a quasi-imperialist world power, would have need a self-constitution by 1956's political norms. This kind of political thinking can be considered as the return of the republican moment and assess its discourses in continuum with one-time revolutionaries, demands of the revolution and the idea of a free and independent political community. In my paper, I will present the republican ideas of the two afore-mentioned historical events in their details. I also make an attempt to theorize this "embedded republicanism" by contemporary republican theories.

Republicanism in the History of Political Philosophy and Today

3rd Biennial *Ideas in Politics* Conference

Prague: November 3rd-4th, 2017

Panel 1.2 Abstracts

Silent Citizenship in V4 Countries

Jaroslava Pospíšilová

Czech Academy of Sciences (Czech Republic)

Contact: jaroslava.pospisilova@soc.cas.cz

Modern democracy is representative democracy with universal suffrage, which endows an important element of political equality (Urbinati and Warren 2008). The concept of democratic government „of the people, by the people, and for the people“ presuppose evidence of active citizens. However, one of the words connected with current democracy is apathy and disaffection (Gray 2015; Karp and Milazzo 2015; Linek 2016). Growing rates of dissatisfied citizens and lower voter turnouts are no more associated only with the new democracies. Some scholars speak of the rise of critical citizens, changing their habits in political participation from electoral participation to other nonconventional forms (Norris 1999; Vráblíková 2017). Some speak of a new phenomenon of silent citizens (Gray 2015), lack of political interest is perceived as a kind of abdication (Lupia and McCubbins 2000). Other scholars argue, that nonparticipation might be rational choice as well (Hansen, Palfrey, and Rosenthal 1987). With increasing levels of silent citizens equality of political representation comes into question. In this paper I will search for the motivations of silent citizens in the Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia). The postcommunist countries are still in the ongoing process of democratization which is accompanied by low levels of specific support for the democratic régime and weak civil society structures. Postcommunist citizens often lack the feeling of political efficiency and represent prevailing attitudes of „post-totalitarian syndrome“ (Klicperová-Baker 1999). In my research I will test the concept of various degrees of silent citizenship and their prevalence in the postcommunist societies of Visegrad countries. Who are silent citizens in these countries? As expected silent citizens are more often women than men, young than old. According to previous studies the results support essential role of political interest as a general participatory motivation (cf. Vráblíková 2017). Czech silent citizens are close to the Slovaks in lowest levels of political interest, nevertheless the highest levels were found in Poland. Based on the European Social Survey data we can find evidence of a relationship between stressing the values of social equality and silent citizenship in these countries.

Republicanism in the History of Political Philosophy and Today

3rd Biennial *Ideas in Politics* Conference

Prague: November 3rd-4th, 2017

Panel 1.2 Abstracts

Republicanism, Free Labour, and Precarious Work

James Hickson

University of York (United Kingdom)

Contact: jh2034@york.ac.uk

In the nineteenth century a group of American thinkers were engaged in a debate about the meaning of free labour. This debate, as well as the unique political philosophy offered by these so-called 'labor republicans' has recently been excavated by Alex Gourevitch (2015). In this paper, I will reassess the value of Gourevitch's labor republicanism, and its potential role in contemporary political philosophy, with specific reference to the phenomenon of precarity within the twenty-first century labour market. Sova Näsström and Sara Kalm deVne such precarity as a term that describes the various forms of "material and psychological vulnerability" arising from the increasing pressure, insecurity, and eexibility of employment conditions in the contemporary labour market (2015, pp.556-557). Here I will argue that, whilst both the traditional liberal notion of freedom as non-interference and Philip Pettit's ineuential neo-republican deVnition of freedom as non-domination contain insukcient resources for conceptualising precarious forms of work as unfree labour, the labor republican conception revived by Gourevitch is much more successful. I will show this is because of a crucial conceptual shift between the labor republican understanding of domination and that offered by mainstream contemporary republican political philosophers such as Pettit. Whilst Pettit describes domination as a strictly interpersonal phenomenon that can be enabled by particular social structures (e.g. 2012, p.63), the multi-layered labor republican conception of domination also focuses on the way agents can contribute to dominating forms of structural constraint (Gourevitch, 2013, p.602; 2015, p.108). This difference suggests that labor republicanism contains important, and unique, conceptual resources that can allow republican political philosophers to recognise the often impersonal or anonymous forms of unfreedom that individuals face within the precarious labour market. This paper therefore concludes by encouraging contemporary republicans to both contribute loudly and critically to the debate about the meaning of free labour in the contemporary labour market, as well as to explore the concept of structural domination yet further. Gourevitch, A. 2013. 'Labor Republicanism and the Transformation of Work', *Political Theory* 41, no. 4, pp. 591-617. Gourevitch, A. 2015. *From Slavery to the Cooperative Commonwealth: Labor and Republican Liberty in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge Pettit, P. 2012. *On the People's Terms*. Cambridge