

# IDEA OF REPUBLIC

Book of Abstracts



Novi Sad  
2023

University of Novi Sad  
Faculty of Philosophy  
Department of Philosophy  
Center for the Studies of Idealism

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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## ***Editor's note:***

*From Plato's Politeia, through Aristotle's and Polibius' ideas on the nature of different political constitutions, to Augustine's Civitate Dei, More's Utopia, Bodin's Six books of the Republic, Hobbes Leviathan and Kant's text on Perpetual peace, up to the Hegel's philosophy of modern state and Marx's critique of it, and then to the big ideologies of XX century and their critique and downfall – the idea of political community has occupied a prominent place in the philosophical, historical, judicial, economical and social thought. Today, when the very existence of the political community as a public and common thing (res publica) is frequently called into question and when the fears of refeudalisation of the public sphere arise, when debates about “stakeholder” capitalism suggest a newly emergent clientelistic relationship between contemporary state and big corporations, when the so-called populist and hybrid regimes erode the very foundations of modern democratic societies – accordingly, today, in our contemporary situation in which idea of the republic undoubtedly lingers in crisis, pondering in the history of that idea as well as pinpointing of its relevance constitutes a necessary task. In that regard conference “Idea of Republic” gathers researchers from the field of humanities and social sciences and it aims to contribute to the reactualisation of republican tradition understood in the broadest sense, as well as to contemporary debates on the role and status of state and position of politics in our contemporary societies.*

## ABSTRACTS

**Plenary Lecture: Ivan Jordović (University of Novi Sad)**

*Politeia and the Problem of Human Nature in Late Fifth and Early  
Fourth Century BC*

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A striking idiosyncrasy of Plato's political thought is that he did not care much about the specific structures of any political system. His attention focused on the effect of political order and the influence of its predominant values on the moral and psychological conditions in the state. This is most evident in Plato's most famous work. Though it bears the title *Politeia*, it essentially ignores the role of legislation, institutions, and constitutional arrangements. Instead, a correlation between types of constitutions and states of the human *psychē* is introduced, and the city-soul analogy becomes Plato's principal tool of political analysis. This analogy represents one of the oldest and most intractable problems of his political thought. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that there is a long-lasting discussion on its meaning and purpose and the related tripartite soul theory. The proposed solutions vary substantially, yet the starting point of most of them is, as a rule, the same: Plato's depiction of this analogy in *The Republic*. In other words, it has become standard practice to attempt to decipher the city-soul analogy by analyzing its characteristics. The present paper deliberately opts for a different approach: it attempts to shed new light on the rationale behind it by revealing the reasons for its introduction. Thus, the focus is on

systematically exploring how the political and intellectual climate of the late fifth and early fourth centuries instigated Plato to formulate the city-soul analogy. The main thesis of this paper is that the civil wars of the late fifth and early fourth century BCE affected Greek socio-political life and thought to such a degree that the contemporaries started to view politics primarily through the lenses of power and self-interest. This development which placed human motivation at the center of political reflection as a harmonious interplay between it and moral virtue is not only a characteristic of a well-functioning political order but an absolute precondition for it. This is because human beings are those who make political decisions, who exercise authority, who form institutions, and who enact, interpret, and enforce laws. Consequently, the moral corruption of those who wield political power and control can lead to the decline of any political system.



## REPUBLIC, POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ugo Vlaisavljević (University of Sarajevo)

*The Republicanism of the Small Nations of Central and Eastern Europe*

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In analyzing the recent history of Central and Eastern Europe it is important to operate with the notion of 'small nation' or 'small state'. According to the classical insights of Tomáš Masaryk and István Bibó, the smallness of small nations/states is not an accidental feature, as it substantially determines their socio-ontological nature, cultural-political profile, and historical destiny. These nations have survived through centuries of foreign rule and resisted threats of cultural assimilation and physical extermination, but the moment they reemerged as liberated nations they were confronted with immense difficulties: they had to rebuild themselves, which was a task of nation-building, and renegotiate their mutual relations, which implied rebuilding national and state frameworks. Neither a nation nor a national state was inherited from the past. The recent political history of the small nations, deeply marked by national liberation wars, is a history of republicanism. We aim to explain the specificity of the small nations' republicanism, which we primarily see in their war and post-war struggle for the unity of one political people and a national common good beyond all ethnocultural and religious divisions. However, what the republican discourse presents as a community of citizens or a unity of people is, in fact, a 'struggling community' (Kampfsgemeinschaft), because the current brotherhood of citizens is forged in the last liberation war as a brotherhood in arms. The thesis is advanced that the small states are republics of soldiers.

**Michael Antolović (University of Novi Sad)**

*Conservative Revolution and Weimarer Republik*

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Although it may sound like an oxymoron, the term 'conservative revolution' has taken root as a label for an influential intellectual movement in the Weimar Republic. Despite its heterogeneity, it is possible to see several common, essential motives in it: in addition to strong anti-capitalism and anti-Marxism, it is primarily about the rejection of liberalism and democracy as an ideology 'foreign' to the German 'conservative' spirit, and hence the strong aversion to the Republic as a form of government contrary to the German 'being'. 'Conservative revolutionaries' (above all Ernst Jünger, Gottfried Benn, Carl Schmitt, Hans Freyer, Oswald Spengler, Thomas Mann until the beginning of the 1920s) accepted modern science and technology while, on the other hand, they glorified the pre-modern political order and demanded the establishment of strong authorities, in the domain of social organization they emphasized the ideal of an allegedly harmonious organic 'community' as an antithesis to a modern, class-divided society, advocating, instead of capitalism, the establishment of a planned economy under state supervision. The fact that in their views they combined a strong longing for the institutions of the pre-industrial world with respect for technical-technological development (which they considered an integral part of German culture), gives the right to the thesis that their ideas can be considered as a form of the so-called revolutionary modernism. Ultimately, with their comprehensive criticism, the

conservative revolutionaries were in close contact with the radical right, contributing to the collapse of the fragile liberal-democratic order of the first German Republic.

**Tomáš Halamka (Charles University of Prague)**

*Republicanism: A Morphological Analysis*

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This contribution will introduce a conceptual analysis of republicanism as an ideology following a conceptual approach to ideologies developed by Michael Freeden. I conceive republicanism through a syncretization of neo-Roman and neo-Athenian republican discourses as 1) a dynamic ideology inspired by both Greek and Roman antiquity, 2) unified by an interconnected cluster of overlapping and intersecting concepts, and 3) displaying a distinctive conceptual morphology. This understanding offers an alternative to a common depiction of republicanism as a story of a single master-concept, which narrows our understanding of republicanism and its ideological complexity and versatility. Instead, I will present a morphological model of republicanism consisting of nearly two dozen concepts grouped around the interdependent core values of freedom, self-rule, and mixed constitution. Such an approach emphasizes sustaining links within a larger cluster of republican concepts and offers a new perspective on how the often-disentangled discourses of neo-Roman and neo-Athenian republicanism could be brought together. Next, I will suggest how this unified account of republicanism constitutes a unique position within a broader ideological spectrum. I will demonstrate this by presenting my second diagram exploring republicanism's relations with other ideologies, particularly liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and populism. I argue that republicanism has appeared as a standalone ideology in some contexts, but in others, it appeared as a subset of some of the „neighboring “ ideologies

in the guise of ideological fusions such as labor republicanism, feminist republicanism, etc. I suggest that while the traditional republican interpretations of the individual concepts often survived in these ideological mutations, a general republican morphology disintegrated in the 19th century and ceased to be a standalone ideology up until the recent neo-republican revival. Arguably, neo-republicanism could meet the same fate if the gap between neo-Athenian and neo-Roman republicanism becomes too great and both disappear in respective neighboring ideologies. However, if we rethink their relation and approach them as two strands of the same ideological family (i.e., displaying different emphases but still utilizing similar conceptual apparatus), we might better appreciate the synergies between the two major republican discourses. That, in turn, might provide a larger employable toolbox at the disposal of neo-republican theorists useful in their ideological polemics with liberalism and populism. I end by arguing why, from a morphological perspective, neo-republican self-localization between liberalism and populism indeed has a case and how republicanism constitutes a middle position between them.

**Predrag Krstić (IFDT, Belgrade), Aleksandar Ostojić (University of Novi Sad)**

*Which Public, Whose Affair: The Aporia of Republic(anism)*

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The Republic always represented a certain emancipatory idea, a password, or a flag, which stood up against imperial tyranny (Rome) or hereditary monarchy (France). But that performance was neither unison nor monochrome. Perhaps the purest, ideal-type representation of the republic, with all the paradoxes and/or contradictions of its discourse, is offered by a republic that in the political sense could not be called by that name, or perhaps it was just a crypto-political republic, a so-called metaphor of the republic that, all the more, reveals its constitutive fragility. *Respublica literaria* is not a „real" republic, but it is not a complete chimera either: it had its members, but no citizenship that guarantees anything. It did not have its territorial boundaries, but it also knew how to limit the conditions of belonging to it – by proving a standard that we could maybe call intellectualistic, but a standard that was engaged inside communication. This is the contradiction we would like to expose in this paper. The fact that *Respublica literaria* consistently, to the point of paroxysm, followed the principle that it is not a private but a public matter and that this occurred alongside the fact that the public space, or the space of that public, was very limited, and more transparently indicated than usual. The characteristic not only of that republic but something like perhaps the fate of each: the first act of the French republic was the closing of the borders, similar to the Soviet one. The question is therefore whether the republic can exist in a

universal way or whether it implies exclusion. And vice versa, is the act of demarcation inevitable when establishing a republic that otherwise aspires to universality?

## EARLY MODERNITY, CIVIL SOCIETY AND REPUBLIC

Olga Nikolić (IFDT, Belgrade)

### *Education for Man and Citizen in Rousseau*

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This talk will begin by exploring Rousseau's distinction between education for man and citizen, based on *Emile* and *The Social Contract*. Crucial in this respect are the distinctions between self-sufficiency and dependence, existing for oneself and others, as well as between two forms of self-love: *amour de soi-même* and *amour propre*. The question will be can these two educational models be reconciled in Rousseau's philosophy, and how, as well as what can that tell us about the relation between individual and society. The key issue to be explored concerning this is what it means to educate for freedom and whether such an education breeds a lack of societal responsibility. Next, implications will be drawn for the idea of republican education. Rousseau's preference for domestic education over public education will be critically compared with the argument in favor of public education as providing a necessary common ground in a pluralist society. Finally, the talk will analyze challenges faced by contemporary republics related to the role of the state in education and the ensuing conflicts over the educational content imparted in schools. Rousseau's rich insights can serve as a springboard for exploring the republican educational ideal, offering valuable reflections on the intricate interplay between individual freedom and societal obligations in contemporary republics.



**Igor Cvejić (IFDT, Belgrade)**

*Feeling of Respect and Civil Society*

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In this presentation, I aim to underscore the significance of the feeling of respect in the context of the (republican) understanding of the civil community. In the first part, I will delve into Kant's concept of the feeling of respect. Kant associates this feeling with our connection to moral law and the inherent dignity of each individual. Furthermore, Kant attributes a pivotal role to this feeling in the elucidation of civil society, as discussed in his work *Metaphysics of Morals*. In the second part, I will explore the interpretation of respect as presented in Bennet Helm's book *Communities of Respect*. Helm interrelates respect with communal norms and a distinctive form of commitment to these. I will conclude by examining the complex interplay of respect for individual persons on one side and collective, moral law in the case of Kant or communal norms in Helm, on the other.

**Guido Frilli (University of Florence)**

*Equality, Diffidence, and Glory. Hobbes and Machiavelli on Republican  
Passions*

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As remarked by James Harrington in *The Commonwealth of Oceana* [1656], Hobbes's *Leviathan* has a largely implicit yet pivotal interlocutor: Machiavelli's republicanism. According to Harrington, this confrontation is inherently ambivalent, as Hobbes would reject Machiavelli's republican idea of liberty, while at the same time embracing some of its core claims. The polemical purpose is obvious: Hobbes aims at subverting the basis of Machiavelli's «ancient prudence», and at replacing it with «modern prudence». When, in ch. XXI of *Leviathan*, Hobbes condemns the advocates of the «popular governments» of antiquity, who have «the habit (under a false shew of Liberty), of favoring tumults, and of licentious controlling the actions of their Sovereigns», he is thinking first of all of Machiavelli's impact on English Republican authors before and during the civil war. The «imitation of the Greeks and Romans», notoriously promoted by Machiavelli in the Proem of the *Discourses on Livy*, spread the seditious opinion that the subjects of a monarchy «are all Slaves» and that the alleged «popular liberty» must be defended through rebellion and even «tyrannicide» [ch. XXIX]. Where, on the other hand, can one find the thread of a positive dialogue with Machiavelli's republicanism, and how does this affect Hobbes's thought? Reading the *Leviathan* with the lens suggested by Harrington, the focus falls primarily on ch. XIII, where Hobbes, illustrates the causes of contention intrinsic to human nature,

illustrates three key passions: equality, diffidence, and glory. Scholars have only rarely addressed the circumstance that all three of these causes draw directly, and quite literally, on central topics in Machiavelli's Discourses. Equality is primarily shown, according to Hobbes, by the equally widespread reluctance to «be governed by others» [ch. XIV], a passion that Machiavelli identifies with the universal «desire for liberty» [Discourses I.V, I.XVI]. Diffidence leads to conflict because of the division between those who desire liberty in order to dominate others, and those who, however, inclined «to be at ease within modest bounds», must accumulate power in order to defend themselves against the former [Lev. XIII]: an explicit restatement of Machiavelli's theory of the «two humors» of the city and their structural struggle, the *popolo* and the *grandi*. Finally, it is Machiavelli's specific claim [Discourses, I.XVI, I.XXIV, III.XXV] that the competition for glory, in the broad sense of ambition, pride, and political or military honors, is the cause as much of the great disunity within popular governments as of their superior vitality, strength, and virtue. The paper tackles this paradox and places it in its proper context: Hobbes assimilates the core of Machiavelli's anthropology of republican passions (liberty as self-government, the conflict between humors, and the pursuit of glory) in order to drastically reverse its original political outcome. The possible success of this reversal depends much on the credibility of the «modern prudence» of Hobbes's state, as opposed to the «ancient prudence» of Machiavelli's republicanism.

Ágoston Nagy (NUPS, Budapest)

*The Republican Festival Culture as Political Otherness: The Experiences  
of a Hungarian*

*Noble Officer in Occupied Northern Italy and the Directory-era French  
Republic*

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The cultivated Hungarian nobleman, and future popular poet, Sándor Kisfaludy as a promising young officer of the Viennese Hungarian Royal Noble Bodyguard was detailed to a garrison regiment of low prestige as a penalty for his rebellious conduct. His unit was sent to the Sforza fortress of Milan during the Italian campaign of the French Republic in 1796. He made a long journey through the lands of Habsburgs, lived through the siege of the city, and became captured and transported to a small, scenic Provencal town, Draguignan. Later that year he could safely get back to Austria, in a no less adventurous way. This forced journey was the greatest adventure of his life and provided fertile ground for his later poetry. Kisfaludy took notes and kept a diary during his journey. These were worked together into an ego-document (Diary), which was written to a high literary standard in the manner of the so-called contemporary "Sensationalist" *belles-lettres*. This work presents the experiences of war and captivity as subsequently formed perceptions, therefore it should be read rather as non-referential, as a self-perception and representation of a certain historical subject. Therefore, what we can learn from, it is Kisfaludy's perspective of history. *The Diary* shaped the experiences of several militarized cultural encounters, as well as of the facing forms of political and cultural otherness. My presentation will

show how *The Diary* represented an evaluative view of the Directory-era French republican festival culture at home and abroad from a distinctively Hungarian perspective. First, I will show, how Kisfaludy developed a mainly negative notion about the efforts of the French to introduce forcefully republican rites and symbols in occupied Northern Italy. Second, the *Diary's* narrative will discuss the practice of two freshly introduced republican festivals in Draguignan, which were assessed by the author more positively. These festive practices were interpreted in a comparative framework, which emphasized in a moderate Josephinist manner the priority of public good over denominational conflicts and Catholic bigotry, and reason over outdated religious practices of devoutness. Moreover, Kisfaludy presented the selected set of French republican institutions and practices (civil religion as a form of religious tolerance, national festivals, and competitions) as an up-to-date model for the Kingdom of Hungary, theoretically flashing the idea of reception.

## Keynote Lecture: Günter Zöller (University of Munich)

### *Res Publica Duplex. Civil Society and the Political State in Hegel's*

#### *Philosophy of Right*

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While Hegel was no republican in the ancient Roman or the early modern neo-Roman sense of the term, the constitution of the modern polity he outlined in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (1820) is only inadequately characterized as a constitutional monarchy. In addition to the monarchical "moment" (Moment) of a largely symbolic head of state, Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* recognizes the aristocratico-republican moment of a civil service executive and the democratico-republican moment of a bicameral legislative body. Most importantly, in addition to the constitutional set-up of the "political state" (politischer Staat) governing the polity from above, Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* recognizes the public sphere of "civil society" (bürgerliche Gesellschaft) structuring and staffing the polity from below. The presentation tracks the emergence and the functioning of Hegel's innovative civico-political distinction in its historical and systematic context. Historically, Hegel's crypto-republican philosophy of the political state and civil society is situated on the distinction, to be found in Montesquieu and B. Constant, between political liberty and civil liberty. Systematically, Hegel's modern polity is presented as the combined differentiation and unification of the two public spheres of the self-organization of civil life and the governmental structuring of political life. The first section presents the historically and geographically extended horizon of Hegel's politico-philosophical thinking. The second section

presents Hegel's outwardly monarchical state as a latter-day alternative to ancient (Roman) and early modern (neo-Roman) republicanism on the one side and post-monarchical late modern democratism on the other side. The third section features the development and articulation of Hegel's civic-political distinction between civil society and the state. The fourth section tracks the transformation of the socio-economically defined divisions of civil society into the executive and legislative powers of government in Hegel's modern polity.

## **Plenary Lecture: Darko Suvin (University McGill)**

### *Hypotheses on Politics, Freedom, Democracy and Violence (The Republic)*

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This paper examines historical and hypothetical models of managing collective affairs in the political communities, proposing a split of central cognitive notions into class and alienating versus utopian and disalienating ones. Among them is “politics”, a set of activities that concern making decisions in groups or other collectives and that involve power and the distribution of resources among human classes or other groups. It is an intervention of what is possible within relationships among groups of people into what is now. This definition of politics questions any vision of dismissing politics as a peculiarity of a class society founded on exploitation, as Marx thought. Instead, a brief glance at Marx, Lenin, and Gramsci proposes the necessity of politics in any present or future emancipatory movements and societies. Traditional notions of freedom and democracy can also be varied, including a freedom for imagining a society radically different from our present. Parliamentary democracy should be confronted with “direct” and “associational” democracy. In a final section opposing the present paradigm of violence to one of care, the author concludes that there are slim chances for a society in which radical alterity is dismissed as superfluous day-dreaming instead of being the basis for freedom.



## REPUBLIC, FUTURE AND PAST: UTOPIAN CONSIDERATIONS

**Tomasz Wiśniewski (University of Warsaw)**

*Republic/State – some Remarks on the Notion from the Standpoint of  
Transcendental Materialism*

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The presentation aims to demonstrate how the socio-philosophical standpoint which I call "transcendental materialism" deals with some historical cases of the use of the notion of "state". In the beginning, I will try to define my understanding of the very idea of "transcendental materialism" developed independently of the use of this term you can find in writings of Žižek, Deleuze, or Adrian Johnston, even though you can probably find some similarities between these stances. Next, I will focus on the idea of the state (or the critique of it) developed by Plato, Hegel, Marx, and Bakunin. I will try to show how the notion of state/republic played a different role under different socio-historical conditions, and how certain authors used the term to achieve very different goals. In my opinion, from the point of view of transcendental materialism, there is no abstract or "objective" meaning of the idea of the state, but at any given historical moment, certain authors or even social movements used (and still use) the notion (in an affirmative or critical context) and this use should always be a goal of critical analysis from the point of view of transcendental materialism.

**Zorica Đergović-Joksimović (University of Novi Sad)**

*Ideal Governments in Literature or Who Rules in Utopia?*

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Although the historical roots of utopia stem from various mythological, religious, and philosophical concepts, in the modern era it has become predominantly a literary phenomenon. Yet, since an ideal form of government has always been one of utopia's primary concerns, it brings it ever closer to political fiction and politics in general. The question of who rules in utopia is thus a point where literary, philosophical, and political issues intersect and intertwine. From the readers' perspective, this is possibly one of utopias strongest points. On the other hand, from the perspective of the ruling class, this makes utopia a dangerous liberating tool. Can utopian literature help us envision and embrace new and different political horizons now? What could be the epistemic value of such insights given the fact that ideal governments in utopia vary from (rare) monarchies to (prevalent) republics – be it capitalist, socialist, or communist – and (not so negligible) anarchist communities? Can utopia help disenchant the people from the macabre hold of the system based on perpetuating the fear of radical societal change and the condescending assumption that the government not only knows best but is the best? The goal of this paper is to show that it is not the political solutions offered by literary utopias themselves that could save us, but rather questions they teach us to raise at this pivotal moment in history.

**Lazar Atanasković (University of Novi Sad)**

*Effect of Utopian Illusion in Walter Benjamin's Passagen-Werk*

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In his *Passagen-Werk*, specifically in his papers on Paris as capital of the XIX-century Europe, Walter Benjamin explored how ideal space became commodified in the bourgeois society of the Second French Empire. Utopian dreams of the masses and individuals became inextricably dependent on the dynamics of the market and inventions of the new commodities and ways to market and sell them. Arcades, trade fairs, streets with shops, and lightning became the presence of the dreams of the distant future of community provided with the abundance and security of every sort – new structures of steel and glass were material products of the present reality but they also represented window to the brighter future. While Benjamin does not insist on the theoretical analysis of the republic or republicanism, very society that he analyzes is built on the throes of the defeated revolutionary republic and on the piles and rubbles of the dreams of 1848. In the Second Empire, *res publica* is preserved only as a collectivist vector, as a utopian dream that is nevertheless thwarted by the emergence of the world of commodities, producing only the effect of utopian illusion. Voices of the past revolutionaries, of those advocating public action and collective goals are now muted in the clamor of the show marketed on the streets of the big cities, in their shiny appearance old republican dreams are sunken and exchanged for the realities of everyday desolation and poverty – here, Blanqui's tragedy and bizarre fantasies of defeated man are represented as the paradigm of the destiny of the age

whose essence is described as *Phantasmagoria*. Benjamin was sure that ideological phantasmagoria of the 19th century persisted throughout the nineteenth century leading to the 20th-century crisis, and to the rise of fascism and lack of subjective and political agency – today we could argue that dynamic between utopian expectation and commodity, between politics and consumerism, is at the very core of contemporary disdain for utopian thinking as well as very broad political crisis reflected in the steep disappearance and dysfunction of traditional political institutions as well as established modes of political action.

# REPUBLICANISM TODAY: CHALLENGES AND NORMATIVE QUESTIONS OF POLITICAL THEORY

**Szilárd János Tóth (Corvinus University, Budapest)**

*Why Republicanism Remains Statist Theory*

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Republicans heavily rely on the idea that maintaining a democratic government demands a great degree of civic virtue from citizens and that the cultivation of such virtue is strongly facilitated by identification with the polity. In this paper, I argue that this aspect of republican theory puts serious constraints on attempts to reconcile it with the more ambitious models for cosmopolitanism which propose dismantling the state system as we know it. On the one hand, as long as people identify with states more than they do with cosmopolitan ties, there will be tension between said plans for institution-building and the theory regarding what is demanded for the stability of such institutions. On the other hand, its above-mentioned aspect makes republicanism a poor theory for cosmopolitan transition. Whichever way such transition is commenced, there will be distinctly republican reasons to moderate it significantly.

**Szolt Kapeler (University of Oslo)**

*Democracy and the Republic*

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Almost all republicans in political philosophy agree that core republican commitments, most importantly to non-domination, imply a strong commitment to democracy as a form of government. Pettit goes as far as to claim that non-domination, a core republican commitment, requires democracy on the state level. In this paper, I argue that this is false. I offer three scenarios where non-domination seems to be satisfied without democracy. In a recent discussion, Niko Kolodny suggests that similar arguments imply that core republican commitments are better understood in terms of claims against inferiority, rather than claims against domination, and non-inferiority, unlike non-domination, requires democracy. However, I show that the same scenarios also satisfy non-inferiority without democracy. Thus, this reinterpretation does not help the republican case for democracy. I conclude that there is no obvious way to derive a strong commitment to democracy from core republican commitments. If one is to be a democrat, it is not enough to be a republican.

**Milán Pap (NUPS, Budapest)**

*Leadership in Republicanism: Divergences in Classical and Neo-republican Theories*

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The issue of political leadership is essential to the republican theoretical tradition. The possibilities and constraints of leadership, as well as the nature of the leader and his connection to the citizen, have presented problems for thinkers of the republican canon ever since Aristotle. Two of the most powerful versions of republican leadership can be found in Machiavelli's Discourses and Rousseau's Social Contract: the myth of the republic's founding, the existential dilemma of the political community, the question of decadence, and the spread of morality are all themes that belong to political leadership. The first section of my paper will cover these issues, while the second section will consider why the problem of leadership has not received enough attention in modern neo-republican philosophy. In contrast to classical ideas, neo-republican theories presume democratic control and a spontaneous spread of civility.

**Zoltán Balázs (Corvinus University, Budapest)**

*Can we Make Sense of (Republican) Virtues in Democracies?*

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Republicanism stands out as an ideology that requires political virtue to be cherished and nourished among citizens. However, as Benjamin Constant pointed out long ago, such an approach is impracticable, even pernicious, in modern polities, especially in democracies. Most people can and should enjoy privacy and political virtue, with the best intentions, which tends to make them intolerant. His compatriot, A. de Tocqueville has a slightly different view, as he thought that democratic values will, like it or not, shape private life, and have a bearing on what look like the most intimate virtues such as love, faith, and hope. He implicitly advised us to be alert to the influence of political virtue. In my paper, I intend to look at some contemporary republicans, such as M. Viroli, R. Bellamy, and Ph. Pettit, and virtually ask them how they can cope with Constant's and Tocqueville's objections and qualms about political virtue to be applied in a genuine democratic polity.



**Marjan Ivković (IFDT, Belgrade)**

*From Complex Domination to Complex Non-Domination: Requirements  
of Real Political Agency*

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In this paper, I aim to contribute to the elaboration of one central normative concept of the republican tradition – freedom as non-domination – through an analysis of forms of domination that exist in contemporary capitalism, and a consideration of what is required to counteract (and possibly overcome) them. I borrow the term 'complex domination' from Luc Boltanski, but I expand it: for Boltanski, complex domination essentially means the post-Fordist technique of government of 'simulated social change', which nominally invites people to 'get engaged' in solving societal problems, while it neutralizes their capacity for real engagement, i.e. their real political agency. I argue that, in order to grasp the complexity of domination in present-day capitalism, Boltanski's concept needs to be expanded to include the dimension of structural domination as theorized by some currents of contemporary Marxism: the domination of all social actors by the basic forms of social structure in capitalism – value, commodity, and capital. This deep 'layer' of domination is not specific to post-Fordism but exists throughout capitalism; however, it does become more pronounced in the current formation and stands in a relation of mutual reinforcement with the layer of domination which could be termed the 'hegemonic project', and which is treated by authors such as Boltanski, Wendy Brown or Nancy Fraser. I address the combined effects of structural domination and the post-Fordist hegemonic project to arrive at a preliminary understanding –

normative-theoretic and political-strategic – of what is required to counteract this synergy. Drawing on some elements of Axel Honneth's perspective, I argue that, in addition to the claims of distributive justice, adequate recognition, and participation in decision-making processes, the ideal of non-domination (i.e. the struggle to attain non-domination) requires a form of 'respect' of social actors' moral accountability – what I call 'politics of respect'.

**Željko Radinković (IFDT, Belgrade)**

*Modern State and Myth*

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The lecture deals with the theories of the modern state and politics that emerged in the middle of the twentieth century and can be seen as a reaction to the rise of political totalitarianism of that time. On the one hand, it points to the theses of Horkheimer and Adorno about the threat to political and social modernity caused by the mixing of Enlightenment principles with mythical thinking. In this context, Cassirer's theory is also of interest, in which the relationship between the mythical symbolic figure and modern political thought is reflected on the level of a philosophy of culture. But it also examines another way of thinking about political modernity, which starts from the continuities between the pre-modern and the modern and identifies the critically highlighted part of the pre-modern myth as part of a historical, all-encompassing life that also includes the Enlightenment and modern political tendencies.

## **Keynote Lecture: Zdravko Kube (University of Ljubljana)**

### *The Problem of Representations in Hegel's State*

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While it is no longer common to accuse Hegel of being a court philosopher of the Prussian police state, his denunciation of liberal democracy remains a well-documented fact. Indeed, Hegel vehemently rejected the system of people's sovereignty and general elections that has become the accepted standard in the 'free world', and he even saw in this abstract liberalism the key historical problem to be solved in the future. In my contribution, I will first try to review the reasons that led Hegel to reject the model of liberal democracy. We will see that he accurately identified some of its key weaknesses, which we are confronted with today. I will then present Hegel's own conception of the political constitution, conceived as a system of continuous self-mediation, in which the formation of the political will is firmly grounded in real social structures and their interests, and individuals are given the opportunity to lead a universal life. Given the present crisis of liberal democracy, it will be argued, both Hegel's diagnosis and his proposal must be taken seriously. Indeed, his concept of political representation in which interests are not represented but are actually present in the political assembly, together with some other Hegelian features, such as the extension of democracy to the economic sphere, could well prove fundamental to the restoration of democracy in our time.

# GERMAN CLASSICAL PHILOSOPHY, IDEALISM AND MODERN STATE

Marica Rajković (University of Novi Sad)

## *Schiller's Idea of Aesthetic State*

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The author examines Schiller's concept of the aesthetic state as the kingdom with the fundamental law that freedom is bestowed using freedom. Man is forced to live in society under the natural compulsion of needs and the binding force of laws, but his social character does not come from them, but from a third source - from the realm of beauty and play. Relying on moral character is not enough - one must develop a social character, which is enabled by the beautiful and the sublime. The idea of aesthetic state is not something foreign to reason - it was precisely the reason overcoming the natural state that made it possible to establish a moral man, who is no longer a finite being, but a possible one, so the new ideal of society is just one of the possible consequences of a rational act. The difference that Schiller makes between the dynamic, ethical, and aesthetic state lies in the overcoming of forced limitations, and the final victory of freedom, because in the aesthetic state man no longer appears to another man as a wolf, but as a figure - and can only be seen as an object of free play. According to Schiller, the spirit can not be satisfied with merely being free - it must also liberate everything around it: the constitution of the aesthetic law using play is also a constitution of freedom for others. Schiller, therefore, opens a new

possibility: not that the aesthetic field is practically conditioned, but that practical principles can be adequately presented only through art. If it is understood that the ultimate purpose of art is the sensory presentation of the spiritual idea, it should be understood that in this way it presents moral and political laws as a sensory recognizable form.

**Gorge Hristov (IFDT, Belgrade), Mark Losonc (IFDT, Belgrade)**

*Rousseau and Hegel: the Many Sides of Republican Freedom*

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Our presentation will consist of two parts. The first part will focus on the ambivalence of Rousseau's republican freedom and critique the interpretation of Rousseau offered by Isaiah Berlin. Berlin's interpretation ignores essential aspects, including the fact that the social contract itself, as the preservation of citizens, does not simply manifest positive freedom. Similarly, the more obviously republican thought, that freedom is not being subjected to the arbitrary will of other agents, embodies a complex concept of freedom. The complexity of the Rousseauian republican concept of freedom, with its multiplex combination of positive and negative aspects, is revealed when we take into consideration the various layers of Rousseau's quadrotomy of freedom (natural freedom, civil freedom, democratic freedom, moral freedom), without resorting to reductionist interpretative strategies. Rousseau will also be analyzed as an advocate of freedom as non-domination and in the role of watching over and critiquing the government. Based on this analysis and in light of the discussion about the positive and negative aspects of Rousseau's conception of republican freedom, the second part will examine Hegel's critique of Rousseau. It will be demonstrated that while Hegel does indeed resolve some of the paradoxes of republican freedom, which he implicitly identified through his criticism of Rousseau, he introduces new ones within his political philosophy. At the same time, it will be shown that when the negative aspect of Rousseau's conception of republican freedom is taken into account

some of Hegel's criticisms directed at Rousseau's 'general will' have merit and cannot be reduced to a mere misreading as is often done.



**Nevena Jevtić (University of Novi Sad)**

*State's Inner Enemy, Hegel's view on Women's Status from a Political Perspective*

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In his work *Outlines of Philosophy of Right* Hegel presents a critique of gender relations within the bourgeois nuclear family, marked by conflict. He highlights an "ethical collision" that arises from the power asymmetry between the husband and other family members, particularly concerning property rights. While love may be the principle of familial relationships, Hegel argues that conflict has been its historical social reality. Far from concealing societal oppression of women with misogynistic platitudes about their supposed inferior nature, Hegel exposes the patriarchal system's social conditioning of women as a politically dangerous mechanism. This article reviews the main evidence that Hegel drew from contemporary political struggles for women's emancipation in the European intellectual realm. Also, his analysis of family and its relationship to civil society and the state was influenced by Hippel's interventions. The notions of marriage proposed by Kant, which uphold the naturally superior arbitrariness of the male head of the family, and Fichte's glorification of self-exclusion of the female counterpart, provided Hegel with a blueprint for the bourgeois construction of gender roles. This construction builds up certain pressure within the sphere of politics, which will be further explored in this article.

**Mina Đikanović (University of Novi Sad)**

*Concept of the Sovereign in Hegel's Philosophy*

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If Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the true birthplace and secret of Hegel's philosophy, as Marx said, then his *Philosophy of Right*, and especially the role of the sovereign, can be defined as its dying place. The whole of the magnificent system of spirit is shattered down to ash in one simple move: on the top of spiritual reign comes natural principles. The author examines Hegel's motivation for this paradox and tries to shed light on an even bigger question: is it even possible for Hegel to make a different conception? Taking into account Marx's critique of Hegel's philosophy of state, it is necessary to reexamine the key stations of Hegel's conception of state.

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