

## Abstracts

Csaba Olay:

### Hannah Arendt on the Meaning of Politics

The paper seeks to reconstruct in detail and to scrutinize critically Hannah Arendt's idea that the meaning of politics is freedom. In her thought, this fundamental idea will be thoroughly examined and regarded also within its complicated frameworks, primarily with regard to her conception of action and her typology of human activities. Special attention will be paid both to Arendt's attempt to elaborate a non-instrumental understanding of politics and to her description of modern political life in the book on revolution.

Gábor Kovács:

### Hannah Arendt and the Weimarian Modernity

Hannah Arendt as a young intellectual was socialized in the peculiar atmosphere of the Weimarian Germany. It was the place where she had got the first imprint which influenced her way of thought in an important degree. The paper focuses on the durability of this imprint. It investigates the problem in the ensuing periods of her political thought, associated with three books: *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, *The Human Condition* and *On Revolution*. What was mainly important for Arendt and what proved to be a lasting imprint, it was the special conception of modernity of the interwar German thought, imbued with cultural criticism. The conclusion of the paper: the attitude of cultural criticism is present in her whole oeuvre but in a lessening degree. It appears in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, it is very strong in *The Human Condition*, mainly concerning the question of technology, but it is secondary and less conspicuous in *On Revolution*.

### Attila Pató: Arendt in Prague

The paper sets out to provide some points in interpreting the influence Hannah Arendt had had on the Czech intellectual movements in the 1970's. Hannah Arendt's flight from Berlin in 1933 via Prague has never been gained much attention. Similarly, the main character of her much disputed work, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, apparently spent his best times in Prague: due to scarcity of resources not much has been said about that topic either. Philosophically more important, however, is the impact of Arendt's central thoughts

on totalitarianism, the *public space*, *human existence* and *worldliness*, so much palpable in Patočka's works. The paper explores the inspiration the intellectual movements might have had from Arendt, via Patočka's *flying university* lectures and seminars. That is, the form of discussions, speech and discussions as performances, actions is presented with an emphasis on the political meaning – political in the sense of its capacity of providing space for meaningful action in a totalitarian context.

Éva Biró-Kaszás:

On the Banality of Evildoer and Evil – after Arendt

Hannah Arendt coined the notion “the banality of evil” in her 1963 book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. The “banality thesis” gave rise to a bitter controversy. Arendt had to face many critics. Her struggle to come to terms philosophically with Eichmann and his kind of evildoers forced her to consider the interrelation between thinking, willing and judgment, on the one hand, and evil-doing, on the other. I do not attempt to clear up all the aspects of Arendt's reflections on evil; this paper examines the different contexts of the debate and the arguments of critics in respect of their understanding of the meaning of “banal”. First, the banality of evil refers to a type of perpetrator meaning that monstrous deeds do not necessarily require monstrous doers. Second, the radical evil is ever-present, banal possibility of modern life. (Birmingham) Since the human condition of modernity is abandonment/finitude and the dealing with this wretchedness is demanding, if we repudiate our finitude we might make possible the radical evil.

Petar Bojanić:

Sovereignty and Its Boundaries

In the text, the author shows the origin and genesis of the concept or figure of sovereignty in Jean Bodin's works. Using Bodin's texts, as well as certain fragments from Leibniz, he attempts to find the limits and deficiencies of this fatal construction that lies at the foundation of Western theory of politics and the state. His intention is to replace the substantive of this term with a much more realistic vision of power, according to which sovereignty is above all a quantitative and comparative term. The development of the world and the world state, and contemporary theory of international relations show that the sovereignties of various entities differ considerably, and that some states are, for example, “much” “more” or “less” sovereign than others. Such insight into a problem discussed in old texts but as omnipresent as ever, could certainly eliminate unnecessary conflicts and military interventions.

Henrietta Horváth:  
The Invisible on the Canvas.  
Expressions of the Painter's Artistic World

In this paper, the author describes a peculiar aspect of the painter's creating process by means of the examination of transformation of the invisible artistic domain to visible forms. Her presupposition is that every artist virtually expresses the invisible, independently of the theme of the actual picture. In order to present this argument, the author will describe two kinds of artists, and this distinction will be based on the mode of expression of the revelation of the invisible. This claim emphasizes a further dichotomy between the "representative" and the "transmitting" artist. The author approaches these problems on the basis of Merleau-Ponty's "wild-perception" and Heidegger's "world creating work of art" concepts.