

Béla Mester

**Changing Reflection of Ourselves
Redrawing of Our Self-Image
with the Reinterpreted Alien in the Background**

This paper offers an analysis of the European discourse on the alien cultures and migration, focused on the opinions about Islam and the Muslim communities. The topic of an *aggressive, offensive religion* will be discussed in the first section. Several everyday customs of the Muslim communities, concerning the marriage, (female) body and clothing is the topic of the second section. The third and last section will summarise the investigations about the changing image of Islam in the European public sphere, focused on the opinions appeared in East-Central Europe. By the conclusion of the overview offered by this paper, the analysed European discourse uses the image of Islam created by the Europeans in the redrawing of the self-image of the European culture. The aim of the European discourse on Islam is not the development of the knowledge about the Muslim communities and culture, but a reinterpretation of the European self-knowledge.

Keywords: aggressivity, identity, Islam radicalism, integration, migration.

Alpár Losoncz

Multiculturalism: Solving or Defining a Problem?

Multiculturalism today is surrounded by contrasting interpretations and at the same time the related confusion increases. In this article, I am trying to outline those trends in late capitalism that reinforce this confusion. In fact, the crisis of multiculturalism is not a novelty, the relevant interpretations have long warned us. I specifically address the

danger that has always determined the meanings of multiculturalism, namely the pattern of culturalism, which dislodges us from the analysis of structural constraints. I will point out to Will Kymlicka's diagnosis that multiculturalism is finally rooted in Europe and problematize the thesis. Using examples I show that multiculturalism is both a solution and a problem in modern society.

Keywords: multiculturalism, contrasting interpretations, culturalism, Will Kymlicka.

Attila Károly Molnár

The shifting Expectations of Liberal Politics: Tolerance, Openness, Neutrality, Multiculturalism and Recognition

The paper deals with the multiculturalism as a contemporary ideology. It fits into the line of several ideals aiming to solve the political problems emerging from plurality. However, neither of them could achieve its political aim, therefore new and new ideals have been constructed. By overestimating the actually fashionable political solution for plurality, these have become the ideologies of liberalism, recently merging into leftism.

Although, multiculturalism emerged allegedly to solve the problem of pluralism and emancipate minority and/or oppressed groups, it has served as an ideology of the progressives after the failure of socialism. It justified a new version of statism, promoting the slogan of „The personal is political”, so promoting the renewed managerial control of personal life in name of justice and cultural equality and providing identity and moral superiority to them, too.

It legitimates and supports the claims of some established minority groups, emerging into the public life mainly during the liberal democracy, and it would mobilize them on its side, while other groups, not necessarily supporting the agenda of liberal democracy, could not get this established status and support in this political thinking.

Keywords: multiculturalism, recognition, tolerance, openness, neutrality, liberalism, leftism.

László Levente Balogh

Hannah Arendt on Refugees and Human Rights

The refugee crisis has become one of the central issues of contemporary political debate having a strong influence on framing political agenda. Its manifestation, however is not recent at all. Global and internal political changes of the twentieth century lead to a global human migration, in which thousands and millions of people moved from their original places to new locations. It was probably Hannah Arendt the first thinker who, induced by her own experience, turned her attention to the complex issue of exile and migration and discussed the subject in a broader context. Her theoretical ideas on the issue do not really provide direct solutions to practical problems, but point out the fact that the manifestations of exile and migration are deeply rooted in modern political and social structures, in the conceptions of human rights, as well as in the generally accepted ideas of nation-states, anticipating this way the totalitarian regimes.

Keywords: refugee crises, global human migration, human rights, Hannah Arendt.

Ferenc Hörcher Horkay

Pierre Manent and the Grand Narrative of the European (City)State

This study introduces and interprets the suggestion for a renewal of the republican tradition by the contemporary French liberal-conservative philosopher, Pierre Manent. In his recently published grand historical narrative (*Les Métamorphoses de la cité*, 2010) Manent, a student of Aron and Strauss, does not accept that the ancient Greek city-state was only a momentary historical example, but claims that a continuous development leads from the Athens of Pericles to the contemporary western liberal state. This continuity of course only means a continuity of changes (metamorphoses) and Manent's aim is to show the turning points of this story.

As he sees it, already ancient Athens followed an earlier, more perfect forerunner, the example told in the epic stories of Homer, there is no wonder, therefore, that later Europe followed the same pattern. In his view, the political nature of the human being, as explained by Aristotle,

was best suited to the conditions of the city, and compared to that, already the Roman empire was a novel political formation, in so far as it gave up the scale of the city. Although already Cicero introduced the figure of the private citizen, Rome still preserved the close connection between the individual and the city, although partly motivated by private interests. This was developed in Christianity, when St Augustine differentiated between the sphere of politics and religion. From then on, politics became an external and formal issue. Although Luther helped to create the modern confessionally engaged state, in fact protestantism, and the religious wars that accompanied its progress, proved to prepare only the way to the birth of the confessionally independent, neutral state.

Manent forcefully claims that this political regime aborts man's search for God. But himself a gaullist, he still finds the most easily defensible position from a political perspective – the nation, because as he sees it, the nation preserves the option of transmission or mediation, between man and the Absolute, while securing the democratic principles of ancient Athens.

Keywords: Strauss, Aron, Athens, Aristotle, Roman Empire, Augustine, Church, city-state, neutral state, nation.

Attila Márton Demeter

The political Philosophy and the Methodological Requirement of “Enlarged Mentality”

In my paper, I try to reflect on the methodological requirement of “enlarged mentality” as it was once described (shortly) by Hannah Arendt in her essays on *The Crisis in Culture* and *Truth and Politics*. According to Arendt, one cannot think about politics with scientific neutrality: not even the philosopher. This means that our political thinking never will be simply “true”, but, instead, it could be “representative”. For this reason, we should always try to transpose our existence where we are not and view the world through the eyes of those who look at it from a different angle. However difficult, perhaps this is not impossible after all. I also try to compare this ideal of political thinking with that of Leo Strauss's and demonstrate that – though both were greatly influenced by classical political philosophy – the Arendt's vision is much closer to the original, Aristotelian ideal than that of Strauss's. This is mostly because for Strauss the Aristotelian form of political philosophy was nothing

other than the fully conscious form of the common sense understanding of political things. In this way, Aristotle becomes for Strauss the founder of modern political science and this is precisely the reason why Strauss finds Aristotelian political science to be less than the whole truth about politics: it is the kind of political science that emerges out of political life rather than from philosophy. In turn, for Arendt the capacity to judge, the ability to see things not only from one's own point of view is the only political capacity that allows us to orient ourselves in public realm. The Greeks, writes Arendt, called this ability *phronesis* or insight, and they considered it the principal virtue or excellence of the statesman in distinction from the wisdom of the philosopher. The difference between this judging insight and speculative thought lies in that the former has its roots in what we usually call common sense, which the latter constantly transcends.

Keywords: political philosophy, political science, scientific neutrality, "enlarged mentality", Hannah Arendt, Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, Karl Mannheim, Aristotle.