Péter Cieleszky, Katalin Molnár

Philosophical thoughts on security

Abstract: The authors of the article are committed to a set of values that emphasise the primacy of human dignity. One of them is a student at the Doctoral School of Law Enforcement, the other is the student's supervisor. This paper is based on a longer interview between the two of them and the Ph.D. student's co-subject supervisor, in which they discussed a liveable society, the importance of individual and community participation in decision-making, the quality and role of justice in a well-functioning society, and the dichotomy of freedom and security. They share a common purpose and their careers have been guided by a vision of a democratically functioning Police Force in a modern society. The interviews were finally published by documenting their common reflections, including interview elements, structured around thematic elements. In this form, the authors were able to express their ideas in a more focused way, which could help develop a Police Force based on such an intellectual foundation.

Keywords: justice, freedom, safety, liveable society, trilemma theory

Introduction

In 2012, the training/education of police officers in Hungary was granted a university degree. The Faculty of Law Enforcement of the National University of Public Service commenced its activities, and since 2016 it has had an operational Doctoral School of Law Enforcement (RDI). One of the authors of this article is a PhD. student at the school, a researcher in basic law enforcement research, and the other is a lecturer at the school, and a PhD. student´s supervisor (His words from the interview are simply quoted. The other subject leader, Géza Finszter, is also quoted, but his name is also indicated).

The Idea of Order and the Order of Policing

The PhD. student proceeded on the assumption/premise that the future challenges of policing can only be addressed effectively if we explore the conditions that determine the relationship of human communities to the concept of order, the ideas of order in different cultures, and the main features of the relationship of individuals and communities to reality. He is convinced that at the heart of thinking about order, irrespective of time and place, lies an evolutionary need inspired by *a priori* necessity, which he has called the idea of order. Its historical expressions can also be found in the preview-concepts of order. These are both characteristic of the age in which they appear and, in conjunction with it, reveal the humans who think about order in a particular way. Thus, there are two aspects to the notion of 'contemporary determination'. The first refers to the influence of historical context, the second to the evolutionary determination of the individual.

In the current phase of his research, he looks at evolutionary psychology to support the latter and to emphasise its importance. He cites the research findings of Tamás Bereczkei, who argues that the development of human cognitive processes and mental abilities is based on an evolutionary history, 99 % of which was spent in a hunter-gatherer society(Bereczkei, 2008, p. 27), and in which most of its psychological algorithms relate to interpersonal relationships(Bereczkei, 2008, p. 28). According to the PhD. student, the fact that this is the case could have a decisive influence on research that deals with the manifestations of human adaptability.

From this perspective, since the subject of the relatively new police science is policing, the police and police activity, as well as their organisational, functional, social, and community-determined embedding, undoubtedly unavoidable questions for him are the

questions of what (order) preconceptions are used to form institutionalised policing, what sustainable way of functioning can become accepted in a given community, and what community and institutionally mediated preview-concept of order can make this acceptance legitimate.

Through these ambitiously complex and wide-ranging ideas, he explores the role and the impact of ideas, such as justice within human communities. In this context, the dichotomy of security and freedom arises for him.

The PhD. student's independent reflections constantly clashed with those of his supervisors. In this paper, we refer to several interviews with the two of them, focusing on justice, freedom, security, and liveable society.

Justice

In what kind of environment can social functionality be created that also stands the test of justice? Is it necessary to combine these two qualities, and if so, how? We are convinced that these are unavoidable questions concerning our responsibility for the future, to which the short answer has become a partial anticipation of the definition of the term 'liveable society'. According to this definition, a liveable society can only be imagined if it is functional and fair. How can this be achieved?

"I have a seemingly infinitely simple answer: participation. You have to get people in the community interested in wanting to participate in the life of the community, and you have to create opportunities for them to do so. What I find is that what I can add to, what I can contribute to, what I can give to, what I can be involved in - because that is what I mean by participation - I have much more to do with than what is decided over me, what others do, what I get ready-made. I feel that the greatest shortcoming of the Hungarian regime change is precisely the fact that we have not learned this participatory approach. Because we have to learn it, we are not born knowing it. It is a very long process to learn this, and it has a serious methodology, and I do not feel that in thirty-three years we have made any progress in this and that is the key to motivation."

Obviously, there is no such thing as a truth that is universally valid for everyone, and it is pointless to try to achieve it. There is, however, decision-making based on open and meaningful dialogue, reconciliation, representation, and consensus, in which we strive to ensure that the interests of as few members/groups of the community as possible are harmed. This is a much more complex and difficult process than the simple majority rule. It is also much fairer, especially if the interests of each community can be balanced in the long run. In other words, we must not always allow losers or even winners to be the same.

Furthermore, participation cannot be purely formal, because it may lead to a loss of legitimacy over time. Participation in maintaining the ability to function must be experienced both by individuals and their communities in their everyday lives; both directly and continuously through their social existence, through their community experience. And, admittedly this proves to be the most difficult task in modern democracies.

Examples from Antiquity

According to Aristotle, actions that are in accordance with rightly constituted laws are also just. This justice manifests itself in the equal distribution of goods (the democratic functioning of the political state) on the one hand, and in the settlement of disputes between parties (the marketplace of civil society) on the other. So when the Greek thinker speaks of

justice, he means the arrangement of things in such a way that, by a middle ground between more and less, equality is achieved in the form of justice for some and between some(Arisztotelész, 1987, pp. 127–128). Going even further, justice becomes a case of proportion. As equality can appear not only as the arithmetical mean - as in the case of justice in the distribution of common goods - but also as arithmetical proportionality in terms of corrective justice(Arisztotelész, 1987, pp. 130–131). And the participation referred to above replaces just such a corrective function. It is the power of community decision-making, the belief in its soundness and participation in it, which had to replace the previous practice of exclusion - the exclusion of a social group or individual from decisions or, for example, from the right to vote. Thus, the basis of legitimacy became the experience of the community. This means that active and non-formal participation in decision-making will guarantee a just decision, which will further create an equitable and proportionate arrangement.

Freedom and/or Safety?

There is also a case of proportionality in the dichotomy of freedom and security. Some argue that society can function very well without over-regulation because over-regulation creates as many problems as regulation was intended to prevent or solve. This is perhaps also the point of the idea attributed to Confucius that where there are too many laws, there is no order. For most people, however, security is more important than freedom in a given situation. Let's face it, appeasement and acquiescence are well-known and not uncommon human traits regardless of our preference for remembering those for whom freedom seems to come first.

Hedley Bull was a specialist in the Anglo-Saxon school of international systems and relations, known in this country as security studies, who developed his theory of the society of states in the 1970s. Among the author's ideas, we would like to point out one, namely that he sees order as a value, but not as the only value, and especially not as the value above all others. He cites the example of Ali Mazrui's reference to the UN Charter, in which security and peace are the main priorities, but he also points out that the need to reverse the order of priorities in African and Asian states is also evident in the case of human rights issues(Bull, 1977, p. 74).

Considering the above, a more nuanced answer can be given to the question of how to explain the relatively long-term viability of repressive regimes. In order to get a sense of this problem, we draw on the reflections of two of the doctoral advisors of the doctoral programme in law enforcement, in this case the doctoral advisors of the student. "*Slaves put up with it, tolerated it, because on some level, I suppose, even that life was more predictable, and it may not have even occurred to them that justice had to be done*." We believe that our modern-day exposure is based on a similar principle: the illusion of freedom is fed to the masses for the sake of apparent security, and, moreover, with the sophisticated techniques of propaganda, it is more effective than ever. And perhaps to us, as to slaves, this seems natural. We ourselves, for example, accept without doubt that people today do not get rich on merit, and that they share in a greater or lesser share of wealth. We know full well that this is not fair, yet we live within this framework and accept this disproportionality day in and day out. This idea is as self-evident to our common reality as the idea that people are not equal from birth was to Aristotle. And if you reflect on the former idea, today we accept this disproportionality precisely because a few centuries ago we became convinced that people are born free and equal. The current social system is at least consistent in this respect, while we all know that the value-creating processes often do not even permeate democracy itself. That is why more people can get rich without merit, to the detriment of the common good. But let us move on from the individual to the community and to the exercise of community power,

which was originally intended to provide a means of redressing such imbalances through participation.

This is a fitting conclusion for a trio of overseas authors(Holley, Mutongwizo and Shaering, 2020), as they explore the issues of governance in the name of security, the relationship between public peace and private peace, and the consequences of a market-oriented approach by private security actors.

In an earlier review, the PhD. student (Borbély *et al.*, 2021, pp. 287–289) pointed out that the authors take the reader on a smooth and elegant intellectual journey, combining the ideas of several authoritative researchers, through the changing interpretation and conceptualisation of security and the non-exhaustive history of ideas that define this phenomenon. It is also clear that, while the problems associated with the phenomena identified as interconnections and the challenges associated with the Anthropocene and cyberspace are global in nature, the manifestations of the governmental will to address them are largely local or, in many cases, regional in nature and historically determined. It should therefore be borne in mind that the decisive difference behind the apparent similarity between some of the domestic conceptions and those presented in the study is due to the historically determined differences in the conceptual understanding of the compatibility of freedom and security. And while the focus of this reflection is, in a clear and detailed manner, not on exploring this problem, a correct understanding of it is aided by its recognition, especially when alternatives to responses to domestic policing challenges are to be developed using the interpretations highlighted here.

The researchers argue that the separation of the national defence and law and order domains were a historical process that originated in the Peace of Westphalia and unfolded within the modern civil and nation-state framework. It may be noted that in our country, one of the symbolic milestones of this subsequent unfolding process was the expression of the will to demilitarise, decentralise and depoliticise policing during the period of regime change. However, in the geopolitical context studied by the authors, it is not surprising that the rise of private security in the mid-twentieth century could also be interpreted as a social and institutional response to a kind of deficit in the central (i.e. state) policing that was being dismantled. At the extreme, private security could be seen as a disruption of public security in the same way as offences.

However, the authors also point to the validity of other approaches (vacuum theory, polycentric policing), which are characterised more by the natural overlap between the public and the private security, the interdependence of the activities that define them, and the need to develop closer cooperation at an institutional level, which also generates security risks. While the primary objectives of public action are based on a belief in the public good, those of market operators are based on the hope of profit. And these values are not easy to level out or bring into common ground.

Finally, the study concludes that the changes highlighted, in particular the impact of new challenges posed by cyberspace and the Anthropocene, raise a number of additional questions concerning the governance of the police, the changing role of the police in guaranteeing security and the already problematic area of how to work with the private security sector. As one of the possible ways forward, the researchers advocate for the strengthening and consolidation of public policing, decentralised management of certain elements of security, closer links between technology, people, and their environment, and in this context, the strengthening of the role of communities and the development of their self-sufficiency.

However, domestic law enforcement thinking faces a fundamental difficulty in thinking the study forward. If the solution is indeed to strengthen the role of communities and

develop their self-sufficiency, then before developing new methods of policing, it is necessary to clarify how the role of a community can be understood and what its characteristics are in a more and less liveable society within the framework of the triple field of freedom-control-security(Krémer, 2020, p. 23).

The Impact of Technology on the Technique of Political Power

In an interview with Professor Géza Finszter, he approached the issue from a unique perspective. In his opinion: *"Technological progress not only provides the means for the exercise of autocracy and makes it really easy, but also gives democratic power considerable ammunition. The big question is which of these two options is more successful. So far, we have seen on the European path of the original accumulation of capital from the 17th century onwards that technical progress was conditional on the bourgeois state and bourgeois society, or on the political state and bourgeois society, all of which pointed in the direction of the democratic exercise of power. It seems to me that for a very long time, technical progress has been conducive to this kind of democratic system. The reverse is also true: technical development in such conditions has been much more innovative and dynamic than in authoritarianism. Technical progress has provided the means for the exercise of democratic power in a historical period. What I do not understand is how, in the age of the World Wide Web, the threat of climate catastrophe, aviation, and space flight, it suddenly seems that all this is reversed and that societies that turn inwards and look for myths within are successful. It seems that these societies, these manifestations of power technology, can very well use the same technological advances that have driven democracies forward to date to run anti-democratic institutions.*

Criticisms of the glorification of formal democracy can be found elsewhere. József Haller, a domestic expert on aggression research, also points out that the role of democracy in creating social peace must be judged with caution and due care. At one extreme, he points out that *"[I]f the rise of democracy had made society more peaceful, the number of violent crimes in the post-war decades should have continued to fall [...] Instead, violent crime has increased tremendously [...] there have never been so many violent demonstrations, football hooliganism, street clashes as in the democratic era"*(Haller, 2005, p. 94). In other respects, his thoughts resonate with Michael W. Doyle's *democratic peace theory*(Doyle, 1983b), which states that war aggression is the least used tool in the toolbox of countries that are closer to the democratic ideal. There is, therefore, a particular Janus face to democracy. While it has undoubtedly put the system of rule/governance on a new footing, and in many respects making the distribution of wealth fairer, its particular internal world and functioning have similarly become capable of accommodating the unilateralism of previous (more authoritarian) regimes. This has also impacted the development of images of freedom/security. Professor Géza Finszter had this to say about it:

"The relationship between freedom and security, these two values, is a very delicate issue. Should one necessarily exclude the other? There is a definition of security that does not tolerate any risk. When one thinks that security means a life without risk, one is in fact giving up freedom. A lot of people make this choice, but I hope not everyone. If everyone makes this choice, then societies will get nowhere. Because it is, after all, an incapacitated state. Because there are sensible, even obligatory, risks. They are unavoidable. It is not life that wraps itself in total security. I would not want to be part of such a life journey. The best way I can think of to get to the bottom of this security/freedom issue is to bring them into good harmony. And this harmony always needs to be worked on, but it never comes to a complete rest, it always wobbles in some direction. Either in the direction of security or in the direction

of freedom. [...] If you think about it, in 1989, what a great attraction freedom was for everyone. [...] today there is no attraction at all."

Others point to this dichotomy from a slightly different direction:

"One gives up a lot to have some security, and existential security is massively involved. Because what does security mean to anyone? Someone defines what is meant by security and what is meant by freedom. I have my own idea of both, and I would like them not to be in conflict, not to be mutually exclusive. There is no either/or option, but and."

So here are both sides of the coin. We do not claim to have reached a similar conclusion to the truth section of the study. However, we have certainly gone deeper in that we have formulated the inescapability of answering the freedom/security dilemma within a just social order. In other words, each social system creates a balance between the two in a way that reveals its own values. It should not be overlooked, however, that truth can always be interpreted within the limits of the common experience of reality on which it is based, at least as Aristotle's approach suggests. We argue, then, that it was possible to treat a slave fairly, and that the state socialist system could make fair decisions for particular social groups and individuals. Briefly: *"The Just, then, is a certain proportionate thing"*(Arisztotelész, 1987, p. 129). At the same time, this means that even within a democracy, justice must be promoted, and the forces that aid it must be protected because otherwise, it can become a field for injustice and disproportionality just as much as in authoritarian regimes. It would be a mistake, therefore, to see the present as a time in which these dilemmas have already been overcome.

A Liveable Society

The fourth concept, that of a liveable society, is also not clearly separable from the previous ones, and this was repeatedly confirmed in the discussions. In the context of justice and viability, some elements of its definition had to be anticipated. In the year of the interview, in the summer of 2020, Ferenc Krémer's book, The Liveable Society and the Crisis of the Police was published(Krémer, 2020), which approached police research not from a legal perspective, following the European traditions, but on the contrary, from a sociological perspective, more typical of Anglo-Saxon studies. I note that the interviews with the interviewees referred to several times were originally intended precisely to help the doctoral student gain a deeper understanding of the concept of a liveable society.

Of course, both of the interviewees had read the book, and one of them had been actively involved in its creation. The co-author had been a colleague of the author for decades, they worked a lot on the preparation of the master's degree programmes, taught together for years, and published together. This may also explain why the concept of a liveable society is easy for him to define. He prefers it to the word public safety because it is less abstract, legal, or technical, and therefore more easily understood by civilians, and far from covering security in the law enforcement sense, it operates with a much broader meaning. It should be remembered that security, both in the physiological and existential sense, is the most basic, one might say elementary, human need and policing as a profession responds to this need. A liveable society (environment, municipality, country, etc.) is one in which the most basic elements of common security are present and are maintained and restored by the members of the community, i.e. the civilians themselves, and law enforcement professionals working in partnership and in constant cooperation.

The concept of a liveable society is not used by Géza Finszter, but he tried to define it in the discussion, and in fact, he managed to capture its essence: *"[I] don't use that term, to be honest. So I have to rack my brains as to what I mean by a liveable society. I think of a*

liveable society as a society in which individuals can have goals and opportunities to achieve them, even if not all of them, because they may misjudge a lot of things. A liveable society is not only for the gifted, it should also be liveable for the ungifted, the crippled, the alien, and the migrant. This does not mean that only a society in which success is guaranteed is liveable. It is also possible to fail in a society that is liveable. And it is not good to blame the failure on society and say that it was not a liveable society, even though I was not sufficiently prepared. That's pretty much how I feel, that's what I consider a liveable society. [...] There are tragic moments in a society in which people feel trapped. And then there are times when you can find the opportunities that make people feel justified in taking advantage of what is liveable in the circumstances. [...] Society is not liveable if there is a level of tyranny in which the individuals cease to be individuals. Regardless of the fact that they have ceased to be individuals, they may still be materially well off, it does not depend on that. But society is liveable in that one can build it up, if one feels like it, and retain one's own personality. This is a very important element, that the individual is not a subject, not a slave."

The interviewees' responses pointed back to our initial concepts: justice, functioning, participation in decision-making, the possibility of freedom and security, the relationship between the individual and the community. All these concepts converge in the quality of life that can provide the basis of legitimacy for a good system. This is where modern advanced democracies are today.

Facing External Challenges

It is another question of how the external environmental challenges of these democracies shape and modify their internal development trajectories, especially given the different characteristics and traditions of each country. We believe these challenges are, best illustrated by Dani Rodrik's trilemma theory(Tapaszi, 2019). The economist's approach placed the possibility of the fulfilment of democratic value choices in a higher, broader context. The essence of his trilemma theory is that the three poles of choice for each country are nation-state interest-driven goals, democratic political goals, and goals towards the realisation of a connection to a globalised world economy through deep economic integration, of which only two goals can be pursued more fully by choice at any one time(Rodrik, 2021). Indeed, a commitment to economic integration alongside the need to express the interests of the nation-state essentially challenges democratic functioning, as the state interest is subordinated to the global interest. This is something that can only be maintained in the internal environment by authoritarian regimes. Where economic integration and a democratic political system are intertwined, this is only possible in a federalist alliance in which nation-state interests are dissolved, or at least eclipsed. When the democratic framework and nation-state interests prevail, a closed economy is created and many of the benefits of integration are lost and ultimately lead to fall behind.

It is very interesting to try to approach these three choices from the point of view of what we have to give up in each case. In the first case, the fundamental values of democratic values, in particular freedom and justice. In the second case, there is a threat of cultural loss, of identity in crisis. In the third case, over time, the closure will limit the scope for the development and lead to a deterioration in the general standard of living, which will ultimately lead to a loss of security.

It would therefore seem that the realisation of a liveable society is sometimes far beyond the capabilities of individual countries and can only be imagined in the longer term in a supportive global environment, and only under these circumstances.

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Summary

Although we use different terminology, the final conclusion that can be drawn from our opinions, (i.e. the efficient and safe functioning of human communities obviously need to be regulated, but it is important what value system they are based on) is very close. Clearly, we believe that this is a value system that respects human dignity and that can flourish in developed democracies. Our own human, teaching and research practice is based on this, and thus we also clearly and consistently argue that a well-functioning and, dare we say, just, free, safe, and liveable society and the democratic policing that necessarily goes with it should work in this way. We firmly assert that this is possible, and we also very much share the view that the ingredients for this are as follows:

- transparent operation based on dialogue and participation at both the social and law enforcement levels;
- cooperation between law enforcement and communities, oriented towards problems and committed to solving them;
- high-quality law enforcement training and the professionalism it can bring;
- knowledge and application of modern tools for consensus-based decision-making, democratic leadership, and governance, which can only be ensured through high-quality law enforcement leadership training;

- *a liveable society*, based on balanced representation and advocacy, and the pursuit of harmony between *freedom* and *security,* and *justice*, where both individual autonomy and community values can prevail.

The doctoral student's research, as can be seen from the above, seeks to contribute to these goals in an unusual way. On the one hand, its approach is akin to the Anglo-Saxon sociological approach. On the other hand, it also draws on the findings of evolutionary psychology to explain the behaviour of individuals and their communities. Its aim is to determine, in the context of basic research in police science, which (order) preconceptions underpin the development of institutionalised policing, which sustainable ways of functioning can be accepted in a given community, and which community- and institutionally mediated conceptions of order can legitimise this acceptance.

Péter Cieleszky
PhD Student
University of Public Service Budapest
e-mail: cieleszky.peter@uni-nke.hu

Katalin Molnár, PhD
Associate Professor
University of Public Service, Faculty of Law Enforcement, Department Behavioural Sciences in Law Budapest
e-mail: molnar.katalin@uni-nke.hu

Reviewers: pplk. doc. JUDr. Mgr. Jana Šimonová, PhD., JUDr. Ladislav Igenyes, PhD.