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Chapter 10

POLITICS AS A 'SCIENCE OF SOCIETY'. PÁL HUNFALVY'S REFLECTIONS ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF POLITICS BEFORE THE SUPPRESSION OF THE REVOLUTION OF 1848–9

László L. Lajtai

Introduction

Although posterity regards Pál Hunfalvy (1810–1891) primarily as a linguist and ethnologist, it was not in these disciplines that this internationally renowned Hungarian scholar was chiefly absorbed during the first phase of his career.¹ His biographers frequently overlook the early period of his life, during which, as this chapter will show, he expounded abstract and concrete ideas on politics in a variety of contexts and genres. Since – with one partial exception² – as far as I know to date no one has analysed the thoughts on politics of this important nineteenth-century Hungarian scholar, who left behind an oeuvre which was not only highly influential³ but also vast and varied, this chapter should therefore be regarded partly as a presentation of sources on the topic and partly as a first attempt at interpretation.

1. This chapter was supported by the János Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

2. Gábor Zsigmond, *Hunfalvy Pál útja az embertudománytól az etnográfiaiáig*, in *Népi Kultúra – Népi Társadalom*, ed. László Kósa (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1977), 207–12.

3. His major contribution to the history of science was the institutionalization of Hungarian linguistics and Finno-Ugristics based on historical comparative methodology, and he won wider recognition due to his work as a historian and ethnographer, in the course of which he initiated a number of paradigmatic scientific debates in the field of Hungarian and Romanian ethnogenesis.

Sociocultural environment and early career paths

It would be quite difficult to summarize Hunfalvy's long and varied biography concisely, so I will only touch upon the early stages of his life, which are relevant to our topic. He was born into a German-speaking, Lutheran peasant family which belonged to the local Saxon (*Zipser*) community of Northern Hungary. He completed most of his secondary and higher education in the town of Késmárk (Kežmarok, Slovakia), close to his birthplace, and then passed the bar exam in Pest in 1838. As can be gathered from his recollections and other primary sources, it was around the time when he was in higher education that he became a proponent of the Hungarian national movement in a cultural and political sense, which, in his case, also involved a language shift.⁴ In the meantime, on the basis of his first publications he was elected a corresponding member of the Hungarian Learned Society. This happened shortly before his former alma mater called him back to become first professor of law and then rector of the *lyceum* of Késmárk (a Lutheran school complex that included both secondary and higher classes, comprising philosophy, law and theology) between 1842 and 1848. This school, founded in the sixteenth century, was one of the five Lutheran *lycea* in Hungary. Despite its modest financial means, it had long been a prestigious intellectual hub, not only producing a number of eminent scholars and possessing an unrivalled library but also, under Hunfalvy's leadership, becoming the only school in the country to add a second law department in 1846.⁵ His national reputation was enhanced not only by the latter but also by the fact that he was one of the first people to teach law in Hungarian, and to do so in a dominantly German-speaking environment.⁶

Hunfalvy's personal involvement in politics

It is important to note before proceeding further that Hunfalvy was not only interested in politics from a theoretical point of view but also became an active participant in it himself for a time. It is significant that he felt the need to become a political figure at some of the most important turning points in the history of Hungarian politics in the nineteenth century. The constituents of his *Zipser* birthplace elected him as their representative in parliament three times: in 1848, 1861 and 1865, that is, during the revolution, amid the revival of constitutionalism (which lasted only a few months) after the fall of the neo-absolutist regime, and finally during the long parliament (1865–8) that accompanied and ratified the

4. Pál Hunfalvi, 'Emlékezés Késmárkra (V). Tanulói boldogság', *Athenaeum*, 7. no. 47 (1841): 737–45.

5. István Palcsó, *A késmárki ág. hitv. ev. kerületi lyceum története* (Késmárk: Sauter, 1893), 65–8.

6. Johann Lipták, *Geschichte des evang. Distrikual Lyzeums A. B. in Kesmark* (Kežmarok: Selbstverl. d. Lyzealpatronates, 1933), 142.

Austro-Hungarian settlement negotiations. As a commoner, his political role was also made possible by the laws sanctioning a comprehensive constitutional and social transformation, passed by the last Diet of 1847–8. It is worth pointing out that, unlike most of the members of the first Hungarian government responsible to the parliament (e.g. Count István Széchenyi, Ferenc Deák and Baron József Eötvös), Hunfalvy did not retire from politics when the conflict between the Hungarian government and the anti-revolutionary Austrian camarilla escalated in the autumn of 1848. What is more, like Lajos Kossuth, he remained a political actor until the end of the War of Independence. Despite operating typically as more of an observer than a proactive politician, he nevertheless enjoyed the confidence of his fellow deputies to such an extent that he was elected one of the notaries of the parliament, which had temporarily moved to Debrecen to escape Austrian military intervention. Although he stayed with the revolutionary Hungarian government until the end, that is, after the dethronement of the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty by the parliament in April 1849, it is clear from his (privy) revolutionary diary that he was becoming increasingly critical of Kossuth's policies. Moreover, he became convinced relatively early on of the need for a peaceful political settlement (from early 1849 he was a member of the informal parliamentary group known as the 'Peace Party'). In the light of all this, it is not at all surprising that in 1861 and from 1865 onwards Hunfalvy joined the political grouping led by Deák and staunchly supported the policy of Compromise. Consequently, after its institutionalization, he probably saw no point in continuing his active political involvement, and therefore did not stand as a candidate for MP, although he did return to parliament at the end of his life, in 1885, but by then as a member of the upper house appointed by the monarch to reward his academic merits.

The sources of Hunfalvy's thoughts on politics

In the 1840s, Hunfalvy was naturally concerned with political theory as part of his official duties, since as a professor of law he had to teach 'politica' (*Staatwissenschaften*) for six hours a week, alongside other subjects such as public, civil, criminal, ecclesiastical and mining law.⁷ Fortunately, his personal archival legacy contains a large number of sketches and notes, which indicate with some certainty which authors and works he used as the basis for his lectures on this subject. What is certain, however, is that he also wrote a 30-sheet, 189-paragraph note specifically entitled *Országászat* (Political science).⁸ The

7. Pál Hunfalvy's letter to Ferenc Toldy (Schedel), Késmárk, 04/30/1844 – It is currently held in the collection of the Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtár és Információs Központ Kézirattára (MTA KIK Kt); István Palcsó, *A késmárki ág. hitv. ev. kerületi lyceum története* (Késmárk: Sauter, 1893), 59.

8. Its current location is: Štátny archív v Prešove, špecializované pracovisko Spišský archív v Levoči Archív Pavla Hunfalvyho, 1832–1891 (ŠAP SAL).

compilation of this manual, which did not appear in print, was mentioned in his correspondence several times in the 1840s,⁹ but always in close connection with the completion of another manuscript, which he called *Political Studies*. It is clear from his correspondence that when using this title he actually meant the publication of the works of Plato and Aristotle on the theory of the state, works which he was effectively the first to translate from Greek original into Hungarian and which he was able to have published, at least partially. Two points are worth highlighting in this context. First, in the first half of the nineteenth century in Hungary, for obvious theological reasons, Greek was taught mainly in Protestant secondary schools and academies, although even in these schools the subject was rarely taught continuously and to a high standard. On the other hand, the spread of the ideals of German *Neo-Humanism*¹⁰ in Hungary took root above all through the cultural transfer taking place in the Lutheran schools, which had the closest links with Germany. However, even within German neo-humanist circles, interest in classical Greek political theories was for a long time marginalized, and this was even more true in Hungary.¹¹ In the light of all this, I think it is important to point out that Hunfalvy was not only one of the very first Hungarian translators and propagators of Plato's works,¹² but also that the *Republic* was the first of his translations of Plato to be completed.¹³ After completing an annotated translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*,¹⁴ he published a more extensive account of the contents of his *Politics* and of *Nicomachean Ethics* in Hungarian.¹⁵ However, in addition to the ancient thinkers, he was also familiar with the later and contemporary classics of political science in the broadest sense. Not only do the names of nearly half a hundred relevant authors appear

9. The last mention of the manuscript in preparation: Pál Hunfalvy's letter to Ferenc Toldy (Schedel), Késmárk, 03/03/1848 – Its current location is Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtár és Információs Központ Kézirattára (MTA KIK Kt).

10. Friedrich Paulsen, *German Education: Past and Present*, trans. T. Lorenz (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1908), 130–1, 161–5.

11. Gyula Kornis, *A magyar művelődés eszményei*, Vol. 2 (Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyoda, 1927), 219–363.

12. *Plátón munkái*, Vol. 1, trans. Pál Hunfalvy (Pest: Emich, 1854). Cf. Antal Bartal, *A classica philológiának és az összehasonlító árja nyelvtudománynak mivelése hazánkban* (Budapest: Eggenberger, 1874), 69–70.

13. Pál Hunfalvy, 'Platoni köztársaság,' *Új Magyar Múzeum* 1850–1, 177–194, 268–84. The compendiary translation itself was written before 1848.

14. 'A költészet, Aristotelestől,' trans. Pál Hunfalvy, *Kisfaludi-Társaság Évkönyvei* III, 1842, 148–212. In the same year, he also published a study on Thucydides: Pál Húnfalvy, 'Thukydides,' *Athenaeum*, no. 38–41 (1842): 593–8, 609–18, 625–32, 644–8.

15. Pál Hunfalvy, 'Aristoteles elmélete a jogról,' *Társalkodó* 1848/6. Although his summary of Aristotle's *Politics* was completed in 1844–5, it was not published until decades later. Cf. Id., 'Aristoteles elmélete a jogról és államról,' in Id., *Tanulmányok* (Budapest: Ráth, 1873), vi, 339–68.

in his aforementioned unpublished handbook on politics, but his archival legacy includes extracts from the works of such authors as Hugo Grotius, J.-J. Rousseau, Tocqueville, Adam Smith, Friedrich List and Hegel (he even annotated Hegel's entire *Elements of the Philosophy of Right, or Natural Law and Political Science in Outline*).

In order to obtain a comprehensive picture of Hunfalvy's ideas on politics, it is therefore necessary to take into consideration a large number of relevant texts. The situation is further complicated by the fact that most of these sources are not even known to their biographers, and the few relevant publications they do know about are not analysed. In effect, Hunfalvy's writings on politics can be divided into two main groups: on the one hand, texts broadly relating to his work as a law professor and rector and on the other his journalistic publications during the revolution. The first group consists of some printed and manuscript celebratory speeches and lecture notes, while the second comprises articles published in political dailies and weeklies, often under pseudonyms.¹⁶ Given the strict space constraints, it is possible here only to touch upon a few of the topics that appear in this corpus of about thirty texts.

Language renewal and terminological maze

Understanding Hunfalvy's ideas on political theory in the 1840s poses significant hermeneutical challenges for the present-day interpreter. Although these texts are generally written in Hungarian, they use very specific and highly individual terminology. Although the institutional system of the Hungarian Diets and local political self-governments had naturally developed a specific conceptual and terminological canon of Hungarian political life over the centuries, the mid-nineteenth century can be undoubtedly considered a significant turning point in the development of its terminology. On the one hand, it was at this time that the conceptual framework of political thinking was reorganized to comply

16. Most of these were written in Hungarian, but during the revolution he also published several articles in the German-language press in Hungary (all anonymously). Although the target audience of his earlier writings was mainly the students and patrons of the *lyceum* he was the director of, his articles during the revolution were undoubtedly aimed at a wider circulation, as they appeared in the most important newspapers of the time: the first Hungarian illustrated weekly newspaper (*Képes Ujság*), the semi-official daily of the Hungarian government (*Kossuth Hirlapja*), the popular German-language political newspaper in the capital (*Neue Politische Ofner-Pesther Zeitung*) and an important daily of the Debrecen period (*Esti Lapok*). Cf. László L. Lajtai, 'Politika és közvélemény: Hunfalvy Pál 1848–1849-es politikai publicisztikájáról', in *Emlékezetek róla, ha újra csatára keltek!': Tanulmányok Hermann Róbert 60. születésnapja tiszteletére*, vol. 2 ed. Zsófia Medgyesy and László Pásztai (Budapest: Hadtörténeti Intézet és Múzeum – Zrínyi, 2023), 7–19.

with the standards of the Enlightenment and those of liberalism (something that had begun at the end of the eighteenth century), which naturally brought with it a plethora of neologisms. On the other hand, this period also saw the introduction of the Hungarian language into the political life of Hungary, which had hitherto been conducted in Latin (the protracted legislative process to make this change began in the early 1790s and ended only in 1844). In addition, the situation was further complicated by the fact that by the 1840s, philosophical and legal terminology in Hungarian had yet to be solidly established,¹⁷ since it was essentially a matter of individual taste which classical or contemporary term would be replaced by which particular Hungarian word. As a result, not only was the vocabulary of Hungarian politics and political philosophy in this period full of neologisms, but the vast majority of these terms had completely fallen out of use within a few years, and even a significant proportion of contemporaries probably had difficulty interpreting some of the new terms. Hunfalvy's works provide some excellent examples of this, not only in his use of a large number of Hungarian philosophical terms that were to become obsolete in the course of a few years but also in the fact that, in many cases, he himself was fully aware of the problem, and indicated the international equivalent of an abstract Hungarian term in brackets. However, among the many new-fangled Hungarian terms used (in many cases presumably only by him), there is at least one which – even if it was not coined by him – had a lasting impact. This word, moreover, was precisely the name he gave to one of the key concepts of the fundamentally renewing political thought of the time: the state. Indeed, there is ample philological evidence to suggest that Hunfalvy was the first to consistently use the word *állam* as a term of reference for the concept of the *state*, as early as the mid-1840s.¹⁸ The almost overnight proliferation of this standardized modern word for the concept of state in Hungarian may suggest not only that this could have been related to the shock of the neo-absolutist dismantling of Hungarian statehood but also that Hunfalvy's oral and written reflections on politics and political theory were relatively widely and quickly disseminated.

17. Ferenc Schedel, *Előbeszéd*, in *Törvénytudományi műszótár* (Pest: Eggenberger, 1847), iii–viii; Horkay László, 'A hegeli viták szerepe az egységes magyar filozófiai műnyelv kialakításában', *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* 14, no. 5 (1970): 925–35.

18. László L. Lajtai, 'Politika és közvélemény: Hunfalvy Pál 1848–1849-es politikai publicisztikájáról', in *Emlékezettek róla, ha újra csatára keltek!': Tanulmányok Hermann Róbert 60. születésnapja tiszteletére* Vol. 2, ed. Zsófia Medgyesy and László Pászti (Budapest: Hadtörténeti Intézet és Múzeum – Zrínyi, 2023), 7–19. This was in sharp contrast to his contemporaries, from Széchenyi to Kossuth, who even during the revolution used the traditional *status* or the widespread *állodalom/álladalom/állomány* neologisms of the time, rather than *állam*, which supplanted the former almost immediately after the revolution. Ferenc Terestyéni, *Az állami élet nyelve*, in *Nyelvünk a reformkorban*, ed. Dezső Pais (Budapest: Akadémiai), 1955, 95.

Hunfalvy's theory on 'politics'

Perhaps surprisingly, the *state* was not the prime focus of Hunfalvy's theory of *politics*, although, as will become apparent, he did discuss the formation, characteristics and significance of politics at many occasions and length. Although he developed a very thorough theory of politics in the broadest sense of the word, the core of which he fortunately summarized in one of his early private letters pertaining to the subject, it is accessible in his own words.

(1) The form of human life is work; hence he lives his own life, since only by that is he the creature of his own self. (2) And the work is so immense that no one can do it alone. For by his work he makes for himself an external existence, which he does by ruling over nature as much as possible – this is *material work*. By his work he wants to acquire knowledge of himself and of nature, for without it he would be forced to subject his material work to chance, and without it he would not live his own life, he would not be a subject but an object. This work is *intellectual work*: science, art, beauty, religion, etc. Materially and intellectually, only a mature man can work, and a healthy, unimpeded man. There must, therefore, be another kind of labour, which is a *mediator*, which educates man, heals him, which gives him justice, etc. One man with many others necessarily shares these three great kinds of work – *the division of labour is thus the basis of society*, which is again the mediator of civilisation and culture. Mere social instinct begets togetherness, but not society; togetherness exists among animals and among savage peoples; but organic collaboration alone makes society. (3) By the division of labour, each man receives only a small share, and man himself, ceasing to be sufficient for himself, becomes a part. But (he is) not like a bee in a hive. The bee is an absolute part, the man is not, but he is not all whole. For in man there is an inward and an outward existence. There is a unity towards the one, a necessary part towards the other: here is the secret of man's being; he is an individual *sensu eminenti* and a social being. As a social being he works and is a member of society; as an individual he is a spirit. Of society, however, man is a part; here, he realizes his separate interests; for this very reason there is a struggle of interests here; moreover, man's inner and outer existence are in conflict with each other, because the former is a whole being, the latter is a part being; therefore he also wants to become whole in his outer existence, because he also has *universality (egyetemiség)* in himself. And on this the state is based or grows. The state is a great form, the content of which is society.¹⁹

What conclusions can be drawn from this long quotation? First, it seems that for Hunfalvy the basis of the state and, it follows, of politics is inseparable from the phenomenon of society, and in particular from the division of labour (in its

19. Pál Hunfalvy's letter to Ferenc Toldy (Schedel), Késmárk, 10/26/1845–MTA KIK Kt. (The highlights in italics in the quotations below are from Hunfalvy.)

broadest sense); consequently, and somewhat unexpectedly in the Hungarian context of the time, his political theory is definitely *social science* oriented. At the same time, while he was very familiar with the views of Adam Smith and other prominent economists of his time, he, as he mentions elsewhere,²⁰ borrowed explicitly from Plato's *Republic* the idea that society is based on the division of labour. The other conclusion is – as he notes in his letter cited above, 'I found this out through analysis' – that Hunfalvy can rightly be regarded not only as a markedly original thinker but also as someone who explicitly sought to develop a strictly *systematic* (or even philosophic) approach. As he set this approach out in the most coherent detail in his handbook on political science, in the following I will use this text as a basis for summarizing the essence of his core ideas in a concise way, specifically on some of the issues most closely related to the subject of this chapter.

How does Hunfalvy define the 'disciplinary field' of thinking about political theory? In the broadest sense he considers it to be a 'science of man' (*emberészet/anthropologia*), and indeed to comprise all the results and applications of the 'sciences of anthropology' (§ 1). Later he narrows it down to the study of the social life of man in society and in the state (§ 14). Finally, he reflects on the 'protean' meaning of the term politics (*országászat/politika*): which can therefore mean politics proper (*országlat*), that is, law making and government/public administration; political wisdom; foreign policy; even 'tactical reasons' (§ 23). In his handbook, however, he deals only with 'social' and 'state politics', the former being the more prominent (the state is discussed in a third of the space devoted to the phenomenon of family and society at large), although much of the section on society (*material work*) deals with specific issues in the area of what is now called economics.

His starting point, as the long quotation from his private letter above suggests, is that man is both an individuality and a 'universality', who can fulfil himself as an individual in the family and as a social being in the state. While the 'soul' of individuality is *morality*, its result is *culture* (*miveltség*), and its external existence is *property*,²¹ the 'soul' of universality is *law*, and its result is *civilization* (*országultság*) (§ 13).

How does Hunfalvy define the concept of *society*? 'Society is the concept of the whole of the inhabitants of a country, who, out of the principle of the division

20. Pál Húnfalvi, 'Országgazdászati tájékozás', in *Ellenőr: Politicai zsebkönyv*, ed. József Bajza (Németország, 1847), 199.

21. As he later explains in detail, 'the property, then, which is the result of work, is really nothing but the outward manifestation of the spirit' (§ 38). Hunfalvy is firmly convinced of the *naturalness* and *exclusiveness* of personal property. Therefore, he questions on theoretical grounds not only Plato's idea of community of property (already refuted by Aristotle, he adds) but also the views of the early communists, since he considers community of property to be feasible only at the level of the family, and not on the scale of social and state organisation (§ 39).

of labour, freely set themselves separate tasks, and, in the pursuit of endless perfection, endeavour individually or as a group to develop their individuality as far as possible and to acquire public (*állami*) importance.' Or, as he puts it more concisely, 'labour and voluntary freedom are the two principles of society; the expression of particularity is its aim' (§ 23). Furthermore, since 'society is based on the organization and distribution of labour, there is *no authority* in it, but profit (material labour) on the one hand, and intellectual labour on the other, which develops and holds it together' (§ 142). As the above quotation from his private letter already shows, Hunfalvy applies the notion only to *civilized* peoples, but it is also important to clarify that for him the concept of society is more abstract and much more than merely the entire population of a country. As he explains:

The boundaries of society cannot be reduced to a nation, so that as many nations there are as many societies; rather, as the distribution of labour becomes more and more extensive, the whole of civilised mankind will in time become a complete society. It is not the society that is *unique* (*egyedség*) in the chain of humanity, but the nation, because the nation, when truly developed, makes a public spirit (*közszellem*). (§ 140)

As 'society has no boundaries, therefore it is not the individual (*egyedség*), but the nation or the state: the nation has natural boundaries, the state artificial; where the two kinds of boundaries coincide, that is best' (§ 142).

As for the definition of the *state*, in Hunfalvy's interpretation it is primarily a 'universality', and in this respect it has no rival: 'the state needs no extraneous recognition, since it is itself universality, and therefore the biggest unique external form (*legnagyobb egyedségi küllét*)' (§ 142). He explains this in more detail thus:

A state is that association of the inhabitants of a country which they make up by nature, while retaining their individuality, for the purpose of achieving their unity and thus securing and promoting the aims of society. ... The state is a universality. As such, it not only embraces all separate interests, but is also the most complete and autonomous, so that every individual, association and interest is most fully developed in and by it. (§§ 138; 171)

Although Hunfalvy was well aware that there are different conceptions of the state, in his theory the (contemporary) state is based on the *law*. However, he is not satisfied with the thesis of 'empty freedom' guaranteed by law, because it does not take into account the very function of society, since, in his view, 'society and the state differ not in *space* or in their *elements*, but in *scope*' (§ 23), because the two main constituents of the state are '*society* and *universality*, which are to each other as a frame is to a form' (§ 138).

The state as an association is derived from a *public will*, which is the *authority* of the state. Under modern conditions, the 'original and ideal subjects' of the state's authority (in practice, the constituent citizens), out of necessity, set up an operative

organization to which they transfer their original *sovereignty*.²² A balance needs to be struck between the original and the operative organization of the public will, because the universality of the state is also embodied by fallible individuals who can make mistakes, and it is therefore necessary to limit it, because it is precisely its '*limitation that makes it lawful*' (otherwise 'selfishness (*önöniség*) prevails instead of universality', so it is necessary to ensure that '*the state is the defender of rights, not the destroyer of them*' – §§ 148, 150).

Furthermore, in discussing the separation of powers, Hunfalvy not only makes it clear that in modern circumstances the legislature ('the mind of the state') is superior to the executive (§ 164) but also touches in detail on the relationship between the state and municipalities (§§ 171–5).²³ While he does not take a position on whether it is better for citizens to deal with the state directly or through local government (he argues for and against both), he stresses that the municipalities must be entrusted with the management of local affairs, 'otherwise the sense of universality will be lost in the bosom of the people' (§ 175).

Common good or self-interest?

It is clear from the above reconstruction of Hunfalvy's complex theory of society and state that his thinking was highly influenced by the work of Aristotle. In one of his speeches, he openly admits that 'Aristotle calls virtue what I have called universality, and of which I maintain that man's life will only be complete if he can rise to it'.²⁴ However, he also argues that 'the virtue of the public spirit' alone is not sufficient for modern (European) man if it is not complemented by the aspiration to personal autonomy that he identifies with Christian morality.²⁵ Nevertheless, he did not allow his audience to harbour any illusions that achieving

22. With regard to the principle of *popular sovereignty*, Hunfalvy – after mentioning Rousseau, the French and American legislatures – asks again the question whether it does not follow from Aristotle. He reiterates the argument: Pál Hunfalvy, 'Országgazdászati tájékoztató', in *Ellenőr: Politicai zsebkönyv*, ed. József Bajza (Németország, 1847), 157.

23. In discussing constitutional forms, he notes, in relation to Aristotle and Montesquieu, that the former's classification applies only to city-states, while before the latter the modern concept of the state was still vague, and the problem of the relationship between the state and local government was not even interpreted (§ 176).

24. Pál Hunfalvy, *Beszéd melyet Felséges V. Ferdinánd királyunk születése napján a késmárki ev. főtanodában az 1845diki év negyedhavának 19dikén mondott* (Kassa: Werfer, 1845), 8.

25. *Ibid.*, 8–11, 14–16. 'Once, a blow to the state destroyed the people and wiped them out; now the people lose their state existence and yet retain their life. This is due to internalized Christianity, since much of our life is not confined to the state.' *Ibid.*, 14.

one or the other would be an easy task, just as he was aware that the most that could be taught in a law academy was the public ethos of classical antiquity,²⁶ and that a true understanding of Christian morality was assuredly the challenge of mature adulthood.²⁷ Oddly enough, it is on the subject of faith and religion that he quotes Machiavelli, who argued that it is in the wise legislator's best interests to establish even a false religion.²⁸ Hunfalvy was therefore also well aware of the tradition of interest-based political thought. Moreover, in another (unpublished) speech, addressing law students preparing for public office,²⁹ he explicitly analysed the advantages and disadvantages of *morality*, *law* and *interest* and the complex interrelations between the three, concluding nevertheless that in their purest form it is not entirely impossible to reconcile them.³⁰

26. However, he disagreed with Aristotle's opinion that the passion of the young made them unsuitable for the study of politics, and with Hegel's suggestion that the science of politics should not seek to influence the practice of politics. *Beszéd melyet V. Ferdinánd király születésnapján a késmárki evangélikus líceumban 1846. április 19-ikén mondott* (titleless and unpagged manuscript – ŠAP SAL).

27. Indeed, in a newspaper article written during the revolution, Hunfalvy even used the analogy of the redemption of the individual by Christ to illustrate the challenge of the mass political maturity that he identifies as the task of 'Christian democracy'.

As yet the state has scarcely anywhere the content it should have; the redemption of the human race, which Christ began in individuals and in the deepest inner being, can only become perfection and recognised truth, and thus protected against hostile interference, when the redemption of the same is also completed in the general public (*Allgemeinheit*), or the external individual. And this is what Christian democracy strives for, which has found its ground in the equal rights and political maturity of the people.

Pál Hunfalvy, 'Umschau (V)', *Neue Politische Ofner-Pesther Zeitung* 1, no. 106 (16 November 1848): 461.

28. Pál Hunfalvy, *Tanodai szózat (Hit, vallás és egyház)* (Lőcse: Werthmüller, 1847), 7.

29. *Beszéd melyet V. Ferdinánd király születésnapján a késmárki evangélikus líceumban mondott* (titleless, dateless and unpagged manuscript, written most likely in 1847 – ŠAP SAL).

30. In any case, his advice to his students preparing for a career in public life ends on a distinctly moral note (*ibid.*):

Conviction cannot be learned, nor thinking and strength of mind! What you have in life, you cannot borrow: so get it for yourself by your own work, get it, or never enter the public arena, where the affairs of the country are decided! ... We seek freedom and well-being outside ourselves before we seek it within ourselves! The country is made up of men; where is freedom to be found if it is not in men? And can one be free without self-rule?

Of course, in his activities as a publicist during the revolution, Hunfalvy not only drew on his vast theoretical knowledge but also delved deeply into the analysis of practical policy. In doing so, he did not hesitate to declare that ‘there is no a priori in life and politics’ and that ‘politics is the science of exigencies’.³¹ At the same time, he was sharply critical of what is known today as ‘political realism’, which was then also prevalent, above all in the field of geopolitics. As an unswerving adherent of the achievements of the *legal revolution*³² in Hungary, he was all too aware of the bitter fact that the defenders of political freedoms only stood up for their principles at home, while in their foreign policy they only pursued their own interests in a ruthless dynastic and power politics manner.³³ In other words, the Hungarian Parliament and governments in 1848–9 stood on the ground of legality in vain, when the restoration of the balance of power in Europe was far more important than, for example, the Austrian forced abolition of the centuries-old and recently legally democratized Hungarian constitution.³⁴ Finally, in the field of domestic policy, he was a strong advocate of a consistent separation of powers and constantly warned of the rise of political radicalism (labelled by him *ochlocracy*).³⁵ Nevertheless, the peculiarly complex Hungarian political situation allowed him to present the struggle of the legitimate revolution as a paradigmatic case to European public opinion.³⁶

31. Pál Hunfalvy, ‘A népképviselői ház tagjaihoz’, *Kossuth Hirlapja* 1, no. 9 (11 July 1848): 34; Pál Hunfalvy, ‘Néhány bíráló észrevétel a bécsi politicáról (V)’, *Kossuth Hirlapja* 1, no. 95 (19 October 1848): 425.

32. ‘The awakened universality began to struggle to regain for the nations what had been usurped from them [by the dynasties]. This struggle is called a revolution: – for us, it is the “regulation of power” which the contradictions of the past have made necessary.’ Pál Hunfalvy, ‘Állam és társadalom: Az állam mindenhatósága’, *Esti Lapok* 1, no. 69 (14 May 1849).

33. ‘Law and morality should apply everywhere without distinction; but in the life of nations they are applied considerably only at home; abroad they are trampled underfoot without hesitation.’ Pál Hunfalvy, ‘Umschau (IV)’, *Neue Politische Ofner-Pesther Zeitung* 1, no. 103 (11 November 1848): 447.

34. Pál Hunfalvy, ‘Abdankung des Kaisers und ungarisches Staatsrecht (I)’, *Neue Politische Ofner-Pesther Zeitung* 1, no. 119 (9 December 1848): 481–2.

35. Pál Hunfalvy, ‘Országolás és kormányzás (II)’, *Esti Lapok* 1, no. 60 (3 May 1849), 1–2.
36.

Nothing can do more harm to true liberty than to allow the opinion to take root that *order* and *monarchy*, and *communism* and *respublica*, are the same thing. Europe has its eyes on us: let us show it that in a revolution the anti-organisationalists do not necessarily prevail, those who can only dismantle and dismantle again. ... The eyes of Europe are on us, let us win ourselves some laurels! In doing so, we have also half defeated the other enemy, [monarchical] legitimacy. ... let us show them, by our own example, how even in revolution the image of truth is not contaminated.

Pál Hunfalvy, ‘Ismerjük meg ellenséginket’, *Esti Lapok* 1, no. 76 (22 May 1849), 3–4.

Conclusion

To sum up, although he did not become famous either as a political thinker or as a politician, Hunfalvy was concerned with the nature and practice of politics on a daily basis for decades. Despite the above-mentioned political roles he played, his significance is still primarily in terms of the history of ideas, to the extent that perhaps no one among his Hungarian contemporaries has been more thoroughly immersed in the millennial canon of history of political ideas, the basic works of which he sought not only to know but also to make known to the widest possible circles of Hungarian public opinion. If Hunfalvy's thinking about politics is to be placed in the context of the *public good* versus *Realpolitik*, there can be no question that he was fully an advocate of the former. His uniqueness lies rather in the fact that he was one of the very few Hungarian political analysts who studied Aristotle's (and, of course, the other Greek philosophers and historians') works on politics from the *original* texts and drew conclusions from them as few of his contemporaries did. Some of these conclusions, moreover, went far beyond the issues that have been understood as belonging to the sphere of 'the political' since the twentieth century, which of course does not detract from the merits of Hunfalvy's political insight, but which also helps to shed light on the context of his particular way of thinking, which he himself considered in these cases to be inherently political.