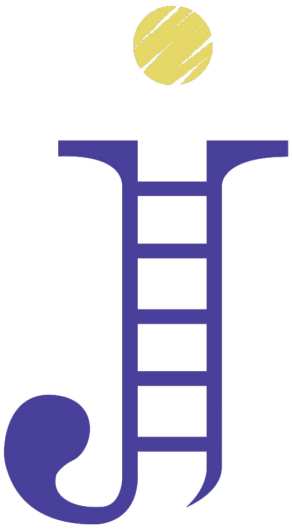
JAKOBSLEITER



2022

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The publication of this material was made possible
by the generous grant of the Nemzeti Tehetség Program
of Emberi Erőforrások Minisztériuma

Budapest, Wesselényi utca 17, 1077
Felelős vezető: Palasics Péter
Szerkesztette: Kelenhegyi Andor
Nyomtatta: Érdi Rózsa Nyomda,
Érd, Törökbálinti út 34, 2030. Felelős vezető: Juhász László
ISSN 2939-6042
2022

JAKOBSLEITER

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Proofreading by László Zala
Typesetting by András Lévai

Cover by David Crisp and Tamás Novák

MILESTONE
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Dreaming of Ladders

Here at Milestone, we have always been dreamers. And we like to dream big: of students reaching for the stars, of acting as a trailblazer in the educational revolution of the 21st century, of preparing new generations for the challenges they are bound to face. Most of all, however, we have been dreaming about forming communities, about enabling different generations to interact, to share their wisdom and insight.

Dreams tend to grow on you, and they tend to grow bigger than you ever expected. Just like the ordinary man, the fleeing Jacob, hoping for a better future, gaining insight into a heavenly realm beyond his comprehension through a dream, the humble editor of this first issue of *Jakobsleiter* is but a mere narrator of a dream: a dream about a ladder.

Jakobsleiter's namesake, the heavenly ladder connects worlds. This paper-based *Jakobsleiter* has the same purpose: it serves as a ladder connecting the world of students and those of academia, enabling not only those who are below to climb upwards, but also those above to reach out with their hand and help the next generation's climb upwards.

It is a humbling experience to see young students produce peer-reviewed, scholarly articles of such high quality. It brings immense joy to enable them to share their ideas with leading scholars as well as with the larger audience, you the readers. It is in this "Jacobean" spirit of hope and humility that I am calling upon our readers to share our dream and start reading these wonderful articles.

Andor Kelenhegyi

On the importance of Maps and Models

The capacity to describe spatial settings and the ability to build great works of conceptual architecture that then inform the way in which the physical world is moulded to suit human habitation have greatly influenced the development of civilisation. While generally true, such general Hararieque statements are poorly suited to inform our dear readers as to the value contributed in the first volume of Jakobsleiter on these noble topics. As such, let's begin elsewhere. It is perhaps far more noteworthy to thematise the significance of these concepts from the vantage point of those employing them in the labyrinth of intellectual toil, than the lofty heights and birds-eye views of important sounding superficiality.

As those sensitive to the intricacies of historical analysis would tell, the value of any artefact of past thought lies as much in what is not present as that which is. What is missing and what is not posits the precise vantage point of its maker, and helps us infer from their view of the world. Such vantage points can serve as our building block of understanding the past and present, through reasoning and imagination. The often asymmetric and contrasting conclusions derived from such sources provide our greatest puzzles to be resolved, or more metaphorically framed: the spatial periphery of our knowledge, the measured height of our abstraction.

ow indeed can we come to terms with the coexistence of monsters in 16th century travel logs and the Great Pyramid aligned to true North but several thousand years earlier? What do those artefacts tell us about the status of knowledge at a given time? The former bespeaks of a cartography

of enchantment, where the void of knowledge is filled with imagination. The latter forces us to face 20th century level knowledge of physics and architecture, a complexly modelled understanding of our planets precise measurements at a time when such understanding should not - according to our assumptions- exist. How indeed does this map onto our general history as a narrative of linear development? If we are honest, we may admit in to ourselves and in whispers to others, that something is missing from our map, at least one axiom in our model seems false. Back to square one.

Humility induced by failure and the simultaneous drive to expand what we know of ourselves and the world around us is not a topic to be approached through the lens of utility. Rather its should be charted from the viewpoint of experience, the "erfahrung" of those on the journey of wishing to find something out. The labour of inquiry is that of Charon, endlessly navigating between the seemingly stable ground of orthodoxy and the sirens of the great discovery. It is an often lonely labour of love, driven by the habitus of pioneers, the bravery of generals, the loyalty of servants, the adaptability of entrepreneurs.

The limits to discovery are often coded in ourselves, what we are capable of knowing, or what we are capable of facing. Who would have predicted the slave revolt of Haiti or the landing on the Moon? And yet, it seems that it is sometimes the discovery itself (its agents and deliverers) that come to shake our world from its slumber. Sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse. However without too much qualification: when new land is discovered, when a new paradigms emerges, when systemic change is induced, the opening of "horizon of possibility" is perhaps the most exciting thing to experience. It contains within itself the possibility that those walking in our footsteps may live a better life than ours.

It is thus that I invite you dear reader to enjoy and marvel at the thinking and discovery on show in this volume and infer from these works, the brilliance there is and will be of these young minds and the light they shine on the world through their labour of love: thinking.

George Greskovits

Octroi, City Toll and Greater Budapest

SIMON RÓZSA

> "A peculiarity of the development of great cities is that their societal life breaks out to the neighbouring settlements. […] However, stronger threads of societal cohesion are woven by the settlement of city population in neighbouring settlements by the consequential urbanisation of the settlements."
>
> Dr. Ferenc Harrer, Nagy-Budapest (1908)

Introduction

"*Wien ist anders*" ("Vienna is different") was the official slogan of the city of Vienna for tourism. We would not be much in the wrong to say the same in the context of Budapest and Hungary. There exists, and has existed, at the least since the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, but perhaps since the very creation of Budapest in 1873, a certain economic disparity between Budapest and the countryside (*vidék*), which includes not only rural areas but also other cities in Hungary. This was in great part due to the fact that in the second half of the 19th century, the then industrializing country needed a center or centers, and Budapest would fill that role. The old question[1] as to what extent the centrality of Budapest was planned or was a "natural"[2] process, this essay does not aim to answer. What it aims to present is how the Budapest octroi (*fogyasztási adó*) and the Budapest city toll (from the 1890s, *városi*

[1] See for instance Sipos (1993); Szekeres (1990; 1996) takes the former opinion.

[2] The position that assumes the centrality of Budapest was "bound" to arise, be it due to its favorable position, previous pre-eminence, or some other reason.

vám)[3] influenced city development and contributed to the emergence and development of Greater Budapest. First, I am going to sketch the emergence of the idea of Greater Budapest, then move on to elaborate on the concepts of the octroi and city tolls, and finally present how the latter might have affected the former. I argue that just as the octroi contributed to the emergence of the problem of Greater Budapest, in the end it ultimately hindered reaching a solution. The capital was unwilling to abandon this valuable financial resource, and the peripheral cities were afraid of an increased tax burden. It was not until a decisive, central governmental intervention by the communists that Greater Budapest was finally realized.

Throughout the article, I make use of existing literature on a similar system in Vienna, the *Verzehrungssteuer*, with which useful parallels may be drawn. Comparison here is all the more insightful, as there were observable similarities between the development of the two cities, and these can thus not only serve as reference points for the roles of the octroi in their respective systems, but also show specific processes unique to Budapest. The story of the Budapest octroi and city tolls is an instructive one about how a financial instrument created for a certain purpose can later have quite unintended, mainly political consequences and live a life of its own.

The idea of Greater Budapest

Budapest was formed in 1873, after decades of plans calling for its establishment (and after having been realized briefly in 1849). The great figure of the Hungarian "Reform Age," István Széchenyi, was its most prominent supporter in the 1830s and 1840s,[4] but the project, when discussed in the parliament of 1847–1848, was opposed by Pest. In 1849, the prevolutionary government led by Bertalan Szemere decreed that Buda, Pest, and Óbuda be unified. However, this lasted only a few days and could not be implemented in reality, as the Austrian forces occupied the cities in July. After the neo-ab-

[3] In this article, I usually refer to these two duties together as "octroi" or "Budapest octroi," but whenever a distinction is needed, I highlight to which duty I am precisely referring.

[4] See for instance Spira (1998, p. 600), Gárdonyi (1941, p. 20), Lovra (2019, p. 17), and Széchenyi (1834).

Figure 1: The illustration of Harrer's 1908 plan in the 1909 *Kincses Kalendáriom*. The area bordered by the bold red line (Újpest, Rákospalota, Rákosszentmihály, Kispest, Erzsébetfalva/Pestszenterzsébet/Pesterzsébet, Albertfalva, Budafok, Kistétény/Budatétény) would have been directly annexed to the capital, while in those bordered by the lighter red line, there would have been a looser connection.

solutist period[5], the Compromise of 1867 gave a new impetus to the unification efforts, and in 1873, it finally became a reality. Interestingly, the abolition of the octroi between the respective cities was an issue even then, as shown by an article in the *Pester Lloyd* (Berza & Zoltán 1966, p. 618/13 877.) the discus-

[5] Referring here to the period 1849–1859, when political freedoms in the Habsburg Empire were severely restricted and the government centralized under Emperor Francis Joseph I and Interior Minister Baron Alexander von Bach.

sions about the "customs union" of the three cities began in 1869, four years before Budapest was formed as the union of Buda, Pest, and Óbuda (Buda and Pest had formed a common customs territory since 1852).

As a result of the thunderous development of the coming decades until 1914[6], it would not take long for the question of enlargement to emerge. Sántháné (2002, p. 352) lists Szilárd Blana's 1893 work as being chronologically the first in the "literature of the question of Greater Budapest," while György (1993), citing Bene (1945), lists a 1901 report (presented to the prime minister in 1902) of the Administrative Committee of Pest County, requesting an annexation of nearby settlements. There is a scattered reference to "*Nagy-Budapest*" ("Greater Budapest") in an 1895 article in the *Vasárnapi Ujság* in the context of property rental. Szekeres (1996) references Károly Szendy's 1942 *Study about Greater Budapest* (*Tanulmány Nagy-Budapestről*), whose articles on the topic had appeared since 1891. Even earlier, Lajos Hevesi's collection of feuilletons written for the *Pester Lloyd* and titled *Karc[z]képek az ország városából* ("Engravings of the Capital") from 1876 contains a short satire about the ongoing development of the areas around Budapest, titled "The colonies of Pest"; the sharp-tongued author mostly ridiculed these endeavors given the scanty infrastructure.

In 1906, the newly elected mayor, István Bárczy, commissioned Dr. Ferenc Harrer to evaluate the possibility of the idea of Greater Budapest. The study resulting from this is usually counted as the first serious proposal calling for the establishment of this entity (see Figure 1). In 1909, the *Kincses Kalendáriom*, a popular yearbook, reported on this thus: "[i]t has been two years since Budapest received a young, ambitious mayor [i. e., Bárczy], who, it seems, would prefer that the formation of Greater Budapest be attached to his name." However, the paper lists several arguments against the study, most importantly that the annexation would be too great a burden for the capital. Yet, this is the very problem that Harrer (1908) foretold. Because of the precision of his analysis, I would like to quote a longer excerpt from it.

> For it is doubtless so that the common interest of the city and the nearby municipalities does not appear at the same time but shows the following

[6] Between 1869 and 1910, the city's population grew from roughly 300,000 to 931,000, an increase of more than 600,000 people (Pikler, 1914, p. 96.).

> development: the connection appears first as an interest of the municipalities, when, as a result of their urbanisation, they cannot produce the infrastructure necessary to satisfy their public health, public security and public education-related needs due to their scant financial power and no less their narrow administrative organisation that depends on a socially differently constituted body (the county). At this time, from the point of view of the city, the connection, because of the investment burden, […] seems disadvantageous. Once, with the settlement in outer areas accelerating after this, the municipalities […] procured first-rate city infrastructure […] and especially when they succeeded in reaching the broadening of their administrative purview (their becoming cities), their interest in the connection decreases. Yet, now the connection is more and more in the city's interest; because excluding that with outwards migration, the number of those who use the city's public infrastructure is ever increasing without them carrying the appropriate burden. The neighbouring municipalities (cities) cannot avert the harmful effects of the clustered living on public health and public security, which is a constant threat for the city as well; furthermore, the independent development of the neighbouring municipalities is disadvantageous for the city's regulatory, land and building policy. Therefore, we experience that in the first period of urbanisation, the municipalities search for connection with the city, but the willingness on its part is absent and when afterwards, the connection becomes important on the city's side, the municipalities are reluctant.

In this exposition, Harrer predicted[7] a crucial aspect in the creation of Greater Budapest with astounding accuracy. Yet, in their own way, both the *Kincses Kalendáriom* and Dr. Harrer were in the right: while the former stated that Greater Budapest will be realized by the time of their grandchildren, the latter warned that "it is almost certain […] that the later the question of Greater Budapest is solved, the more adverse the circumstances will be, especially for the capital." Probably even Harrer himself could not have imagined that 42 years later, in 1950, when the idea of Greater Budapest would finally become a reality (see Figure 2), it would be done after two world wars, the loss of two-thirds of the country's territory, and accompanied by the destruction of local autonomy under a totalitarian regime led by communist forces.

Why did the establishment of Greater Budapest take so long? The length of the process is even more curious as we observe that in the Dual Monarchy era, the formation of a national capital city (Budapest) that would

[7] Albeit, admittedly, with the help of past examples.

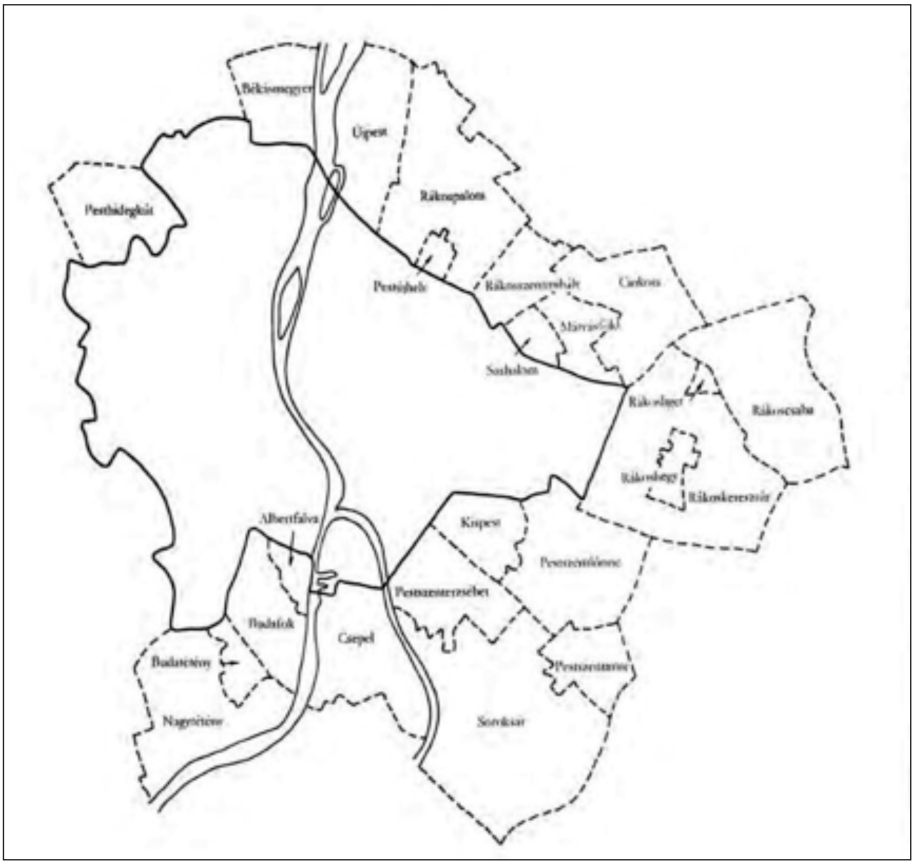


Figure 2: The old (1873–1950) boundaries of Budapest and Greater Budapest (1950–present) with approximate territories of the then suburbs. (Gergely 2002)

be able to compete with the imperial capital (Vienna) was a pronounced goal of Hungarian politicians and urban planners[8] connected to the nation-building efforts and the nationalist sentiments of the time. Thus, Budapest was at once the metropolis of the nation, manifesting the progress and brandishing the image of a supposedly modernizing country, yet it also embodied in the eyes of some a "corpus separatum" (Sipos, 1993)[9].

[8] In this context, see Heiszler (1995).

[9] This latter differentiation between the "alien" city and the "authentic" countryside was not exclusive to Hungary. In France, the ideas of Barres (Polakow-Suransky et. al., 2019) and Maurras (Tucker, 1955), and in England those of G. K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc (Schneidau, 1991) voiced these anti-modernist opinions to some extent. A similar development can be discerned in many other countries as well.

Figure 3: The painting *L'Octroi* by self-taught post-Impressionist painter Henri Rousseau, also called "le Douanier" for his association with the Paris octroi, as he himself served as a tax collector for the capital.

For right-wing and far-right circles, this concept of Budapest as a "foreign body" would be cemented by the events of 1918–1919[10], and the epithet *bűnös város* (guilty/sinful city) was attached to Budapest in interwar political parlance (Schweitzer, 2005), which carried extra anti-Semitic overtones.[11] The role of the city was also increasingly questioned, as many thought (and still do, see Matolcsy, 2021) that the capital may be oversized for a country that was drastically reduced in its size and population by the Treaty of Trianon in 1920.

This treaty, a call for mourning in Hungary but celebration in Romania and a source of seemingly never-ending political and cultural disputes even today, undoubtedly had a negative effect on the Hungarian economy, along with the First World War itself. The precise extent of these may be disputed; Tomka (2020), for instance provides a concise, English-language overview of the associated literature and a critical view on the topic insofar as he argues that the treaty did not cause as much devastation as previously thought.

Nonetheless, two-thirds of the country's former territory; more than half of its population; and a great amount of important natural resources,

[10] I.e., the Aster Revolution in 1918 and the establishment of the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919. For a summary in English, see Cornelius (2011).

[11] An echo of this was witnessed in 2020, when it surfaced that an opposition parliamentary candidate casually used the word "Judapest" in a Facebook conversation (Herczeg, 2020). As for the actual ratio of Jewish people in Budapest, of the 960,995 inhabitants in 1925, some 21.6% (or 207,563) were Jews (Thirring, 1937), while for Hungary as a whole, the ratio was 5.5% in 1928 (Karner, 1931).

such as forests (89%), copper (almost all), salt (almost all), and iron (89% of iron ore production), were now situated outside its borders, along with important centers of population, for instance Košice (Kassa), Cluj-Napoca (Kolozsvár), Arad, Timişoara (Temesvár), and Subotica (Szabadka), increasing the perception of Budapest as a "hydrocephalus."[12] Moreover, railroads were severed (see Czeferner and Nagy [n.d.]; Nagy [2001]; Péterffy [2019]) and a substantial number of immigrants from the newly formed and expanded countries had to be taken care of by the government (see Koloh [2021] for an estimate of the numbers and Ablonczy [2020] for the analysis of the "refugee experience").

There were also political difficulties, such as two coup d'etat attempts by former King Charles IV in 1921. Furthermore, the new conservative, anti-democratic government led by Regent Miklós Horthy did everything to prevent the liberals and the social democrats from controlling the city; the latter enjoyed significant support from the peripheral cities, populated by many workers.[13] Thus, the paucity of this debate at that time (until at least the middle of the 1930s) may be attributed to an interplay of cultural, financial, and political reasons.[14] Nonetheless, "until further notice," the capital and the growing surrounding areas (in Hungarian *Pestkörnyék*) would have countless issues to arrange. One of these was the issue of the Budapest octroi and city toll.

The Budapest octroi and city toll

What exactly do we mean by the terms "Budapest octroi" and "city toll"? In effect, both terms mean the existence of a customs border between the city and the rest of the country. In their specifics, they are slightly different. The term "octroi" refers to, strictly speaking, a local levy collected usually at the border of a district on articles brought into that district for consumption.

[12] "Vízfej" in Hungarian. This otherwise medical term carries a meaning of "[u]nhealthily and redundantly enlarged institution, organisation or settlement" (Bárczi & Országh, 1959–1962) in this context. For the persistence of this notion, see Matolcsy (2021) or the 2014 book of Pál Beluszky, Budapest – Zászlóshajó, vagy vízfej?.

[13] Indeed, the social democrats supported Greater Budapest throughout. See Népszava from 8 October 1927 (5) and 9 July 1935 (6).

[14] For detailed overviews of the development of Greater Budapest from multiple sides, see Sipos (1993), György (1993), and Szekeres (1996).

Such institutions have ancient origins, as referenced by Ingram (1911). Similar systems existed in many countries of Europe under various names, including "*octroi*" in France, "*Dazio Consumo murato*" in some areas of Italy (Hauer 2010), "*Akzise*" in certain German-speaking areas, and "*alcabala*" in some Spanish-speaking regions (The Encyclopedia Americana, 1920).

The most infamous of these was probably the Paris octroi, which arguably played a significant role in the French Revolution. The great indignation at the building of the Wall of the *Ferme générale*, envisioned by famous chemist Antoine Lavoisier to combat smuggling and planned by architect Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, is epitomized by the saying, sometimes attributed to Beaumarchais, "*Le mur, murant Paris, rend Paris murmurant*."[15] It signifies the symbolic importance of the *octroi* for the people that one of the first acts of the French Revolution, almost contemporaneously with the storming of the Bastille, was the destruction of the custom houses, the *barriéres* of the Paris octroi. In 1791, the octroi duties were abolished, but they were reintroduced in 1798 and stayed in place until the calamities of the Second World War, ceasing to exist *de facto* in 1943 and *de jure* in 1948 (Chappet, 2017). This example shows well how the octroi could be such a serious burden on the relatively poorer population that when they revolted, one of their first acts was to destroy the abhorred wall. Similar events happened at Vienna's customs wall as well (Litschauer & Geigenberger, 2021).

The definition of octroi presented above is nearly identical to that of the *Verzehrungssteuer* ("consumption tax") in Vienna between 1829 and 1921 and that of *fogyasztási adó* ("consumption tax") in Budapest between 1850 and 1950. In other words, the *fogyasztási adó* and the *Verzehrungssteuer* could be interpreted as a kind of import duty, as if the city were a "country" of its own, imposing a tariff on certain items that arrive to its territory.

Previously, I mentioned "city toll," which is a translation of the Hungarian term *városi vám* used to describe this duty. Here, the explanation is a little more complicated. In Vienna, almost the entirety of former duties was integrated into the new *Verzehrungssteuer* (Hauer, 2010). In Pest-Buda (the then two cities of Pest and Buda formed a "customs union" in 1852), the *kövezetvám* (roughly "pavage," which had to be paid originally after empty

[15] I.e., "The wall, surrounding Paris, renders Paris murmuring." See also L'historie en citations (2016).

and loaded carriages entered the city) and *budai vízvám* ("Buda water toll," which had to be paid originally after watercraft were dragged upwards on the Danube) remained separate; theoretically, these should have served the maintenance of roads. After wine, spirits, beer, meat, and firewood, the *fogyasztási adópótlék*—the part of the *fogyasztási adó* due to the city—was to be paid. The ratio of the revenue due to the state and city was different from product to product; Fabó (1996) provides a table from 1851 showing the respective prices for taxable items, but the list changed regularly. This division of the income between state and city was also present in Vienna, although not identically[16]. In 1890, a law[17] further regulated the pavage rights and compelled the municipalities to use this income factually to improve road quality. To avert the adverse effects for its budget, the city of Budapest changed the name of the *kövezetvám* to *városi vám*, creating an income source that would last until 1950. This meant a partial amalgamation of the octroi and the pavage insofar as in Budapest, the *városi vám* was afterwards explicitly not used to actually improve the quality of roads. Instead, it created new duties that would not have been legally possible under the octroi, while being collected according to the same logic. Interestingly, this was openly admitted by the municipal government (Halmos, 1902).

This move naturally created animosities and was a source of legal scuffles with the government without any satisfactory resolution. An article in the *Pesti Napló* from 1897, reporting on the report of the Budapest Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the royal trade minister, deplores the fact that industrial raw and supplementary materials are charged this way. The example of Vienna is explicitly advanced, where this specific duty was not to be paid. Hauer (2010) relates that from 1874 there was indeed no such obligation for building materials. However, as Hauer (2010) notes that this was likely to have been influenced by the *Gründerkrise*, an economic crisis in 1873 that was especially disadvantageous for Austria-Hungary. Furthermore, while the development of Vienna was fast, after 1873 it was no longer as dynamic as that of Budapest.[18] It seems that the "gap" between the development of the two cities was followed by changes in the octroi.

The *városi vám*, nevertheless, continued to operate in this legally ques-

[16] In Vienna, the share of the city, except for a few items, was limited at 25%. However, the city played with the rules somewhat, so this was more of a guideline than a real obligation.

[17] 1890. I. tc. 85. §

[18] Compare Thirring (1933, p. 60) with Statistik Austria (2015, p. 3) and see Figure 4 below.

tionably defined zone, with the formal proposal from the city due in the 1890s not being ready even by 1920. Thus, Dr. Jakab Schreyer could still complain in 1915 of it being "the most unjust tax that has ever existed" (Fővárosi Közlöny, 1915, p. 2126). Even earlier, in 1873, the famed statistician József Kőrösi, the first director of the Statistical Office of the Capital[19], denounced it as a "financial institution that can barely be maintained between country and country, thus much less between city and city or city and country" (Kőrösi, 1873, p. 145.). The octroi also attracted criticism from Vilmos Vázsonyi (1910), a leader of the liberals, who denounced the octroi (specifically the tax on meat), claiming that it amounts to "agrarian exploitation."[20] Just or not, the levies seemed crucial; in the first three quarters of 1913, the *városi vám* and the octroi together constituted (Szimély, 1913) around 14.1% of the ordinary revenue (i.e., excluding sold property and loans).[21] However, this signals a decrease compared to 1894,[22] when this ratio (Lampl, 1894) was at 25% (in both cases excluding the maintenance of customs infrastructure).

In 1923, the situation was clarified a little, with the *fogyasztási adó* being entirely delegated to the municipalities and a new proposal made for the *városi vám* the year before; nevertheless, with the change in the entire political situation, the latter tax became established through the years by itself as well. A more detailed description of these developments and other facets of the Budapest octroi and city toll are provided in Fabó (1996), which according to my knowledge is the only recent study dedicated exclusively to this issue. A study with regard to the exact changes of the tax rates for specific items and its connections with political and financial issues of the city and the state would be greatly welcomed here; unfortunately, this essay cannot endeavor to provide it due to a lack of space.

[19] "Fővárosi Statisztikai Hivatal" in Hungarian.
[20] He raised the issue that the városi vám, in effect, helped the aristocrats who had large swathes of land and engaged in agricultural activities.
[21] Counting the fogyasztási adópótlék and the városi vám but not the italmérési jövedék or the italmérési illeték.
[22] Counting the fogyasztási adópótlék and the kövezetvám, but not the italmérési jövedék.

Interactions

With both of the expositions on the respective topics pointing towards a turning point in the 1920s, I will now analyze the interaction between the Budapest octroi and the *városi vám* and the development of Budapest. Harrer (1908) himself also mentioned the importance of the octroi with regard to the plan of Greater Budapest, noting the need for an appropriate financial agreement with the state. In what ways did the levies influence the development of the city?

The most significant direct effect of the octroi was the growth of the price of food. Hauer (2010) says

> the fear of the elites of the volatile, impoverished mass of factory workers had […] led to repeated attempts to relocate certain businesses and industrial plants […]. The Vienna *Verzehrungssteuer* [Italics mine] had had just this effect through the severe rise in the price of basic foods and energy sources. (Hauer, 2010, p. 49)

Although there were numerous other factors at play, such as high rent, the effect of the octroi should not be underestimated. Most probably, this factor was a catalyst in the process of urbanization on the periphery, not only in Vienna, but also in Budapest.[23]

The processes were indeed similar in the two cities in their outlines. Berend and Ránki (1961) relate that the growth of Újpest (mid-19th century), the first urbanized settlement located on the northern edge of the capital, was partially due to the guild regulations in Pest. Beluszky (2002) states that most inhabitants of Újpest were either craftsmen who were not members in Pest-Buda guilds or Jewish tradesmen. Furthermore, they note that "the development of the first periphery city of Budapest was not the organic consequence of capitalist city development; furthermore, in its founding we can discern some traits similar to medieval city development" (Berend and Ránki, 1961, pp. 538-539). Moreover, when writing about the Budafok wine industry, they mention, "We can only talk about that natural facility

[23] For a literary example, Rodion Markovits, in his once-popular 1928 book Szibériai garnizon [Siberian Garrison], describes his hero's choice of living in the suburb of Kispest: "He came to the capital from a little town in the country and he wanted to exchange his degree for bread. He came to the factory town [Kispest] so that from here with cheaper conditions he may wait for the bread-opportunity." (p. 7; own translation)

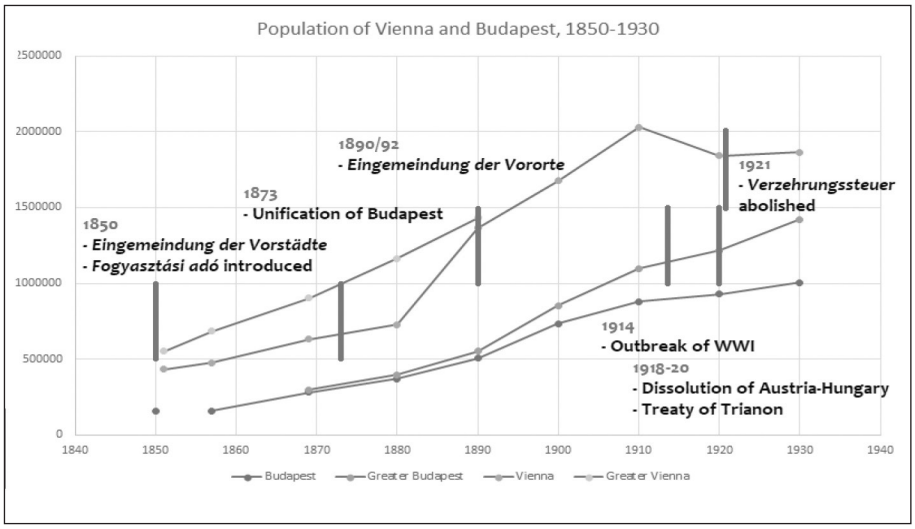


Figure 4: Graph showing the population of Budapest and Vienna between 1850 and 1930, along with the most important administrative developments. The term *Eingemeindung der Vorstädte* refers to the annexation of what today constitutes Vienna's II–IX districts, situated between the old city wall and the Linienwall, while *Eingemeindung der Vororte* is the annexation of the settlements just outside the Linienwall, today's X–XIX districts, corresponding more or less with today's Vienna (with the notable exception of Floridsdorf, Donaustadt, and Liesing).

that made it possible, indeed advantageous for part of the alcohol and beer industry to find appropriate accommodation in the cellars of the Budafok cliffs" (Berend and Ránki, 1961, p. 539). While it is true that this process was certainly not solely capitalist[24] and that there were certain natural factors at play, I would contend that the model used by Hauer (2010) is also applicable here. Since the 1850s were the time of neo-absolutism, the conservative elements predominating then would have been rather dissatisfied about numerous factories within the city or directly on its borders.

With the octroi enacted in 1850, there were two mutually supportive motivations for the growth of peripheral cities: firstly, the factories began to open plants outside Pest-Buda due to restrictions; secondly, the poorer population also settled there because of the proximity to work and cheaper life, not burdened among others by the octroi. However, there was something else needed for Pestkörnyék to truly emerge, not only as a loose formation

[24] In the sense that it was not the straight consequence of the development of the Pest industry but was independent from it, based on the natural resources of that specific area.

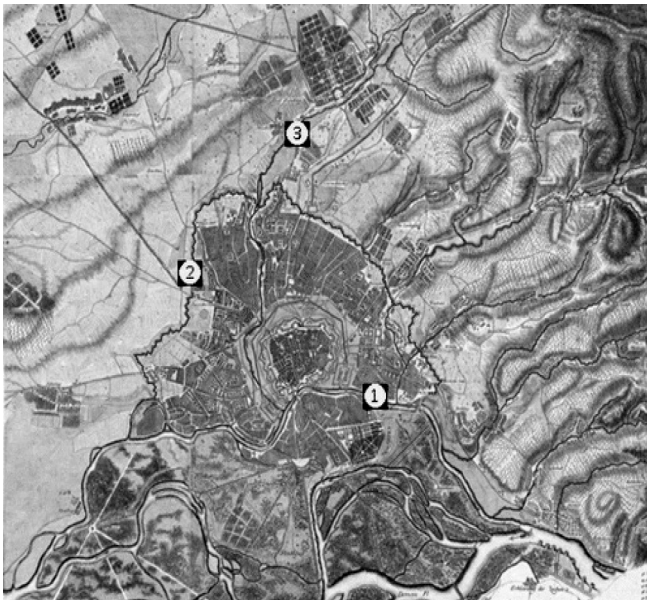


Figure 5: A map of Vienna and the Linienwall (number 2) from 1770, referenced by Gierlinger et. al. (2013). The numbers 1 and 2 show the Donaukanal and the Wien river, respectively.

of settlements around the capital, but an integral part of it, even though not administratively: transportation, especially public transportation. The construction of the *HÉV* (*Helyi* Érdekű *Vasút*; literally, Local Interest Railway) at the end of the 1880s was a crucial step in this sense, emphasized both by Berend and Ránki (1961) and Beluszky (2002). Hauer (2010) outlines this regarding Vienna but places the time of mass movements towards the *Vororte* to the 1860–1890 period; the time gap manifests itself here as well.

However, as István Egyed (1937) also states, "the great growth falls to the time between 1880–1910" with relation to Budapest proper and "contemporaneously with the ebb of the growth of Budapest starts the strong development of the cities and municipalities around Budapest" (p. 82). While the first period of peripheral development is characterized by an influx from the countryside and accompanied by a greater growth on the side of Budapest, the second period shows migration from Budapest to the periphery and results in a shift of balance towards the peripheries, because of cheaper life, independent living, the development of transport infrastructure, and the factories that were established there, which offered work. Overall, the period of the most rapid increase seems to be not so much around the millennium but after 1920. Ferenc Harrer (1933) takes a slightly differing approach and links the in-

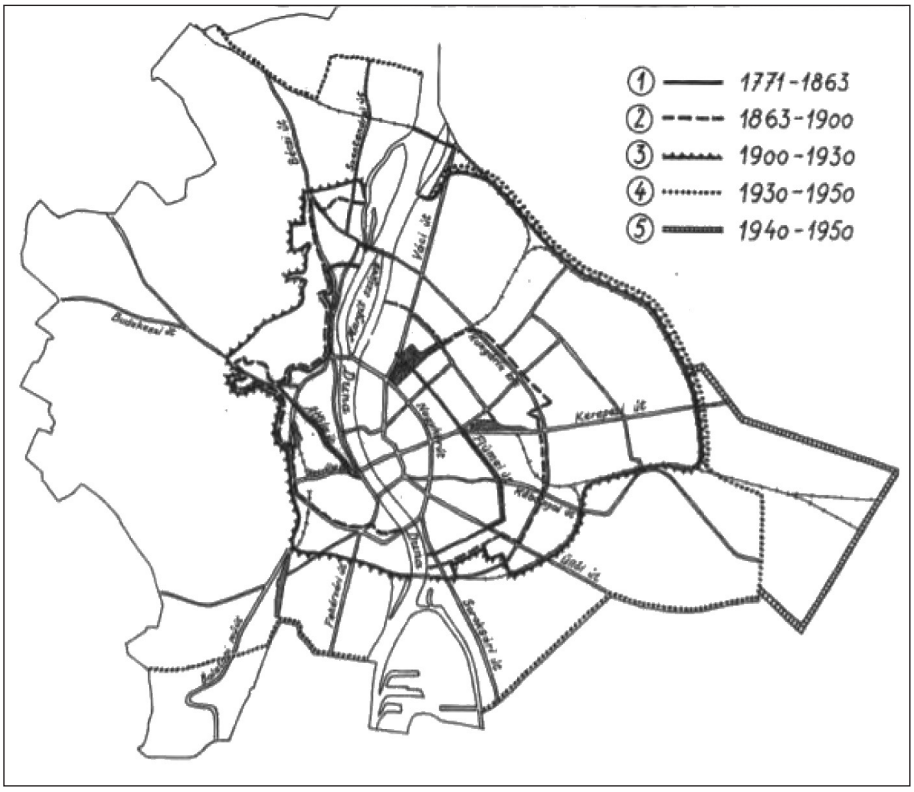


Figure 6: The evolution of the closed area of the Budapest octroi and city toll (Fabó 1996)

crease especially to the slow city regulation of Budapest and a mistaken land policy that encouraged tight settlement in the outer areas of the city. In contrast, land policy was scarcely regulated in the periphery and public transport was also extended. Szekeres (1996) approvingly quotes him but lists other reasons as well. He also makes a passing reference to "customs laws" that helped the development at the time of the unification and mentions the issue of the octroi and city tolls as important points of contention in the 1920s, with Budapest working to preserve these sources of income.

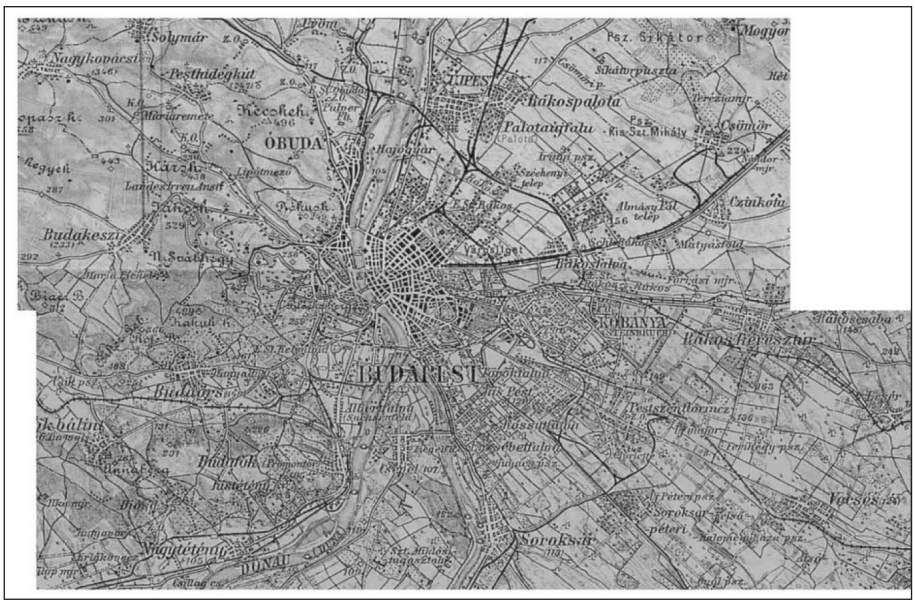
Here, it is especially instructive to compare Vienna and Budapest, as we can see similarities and differences at the same time. First, in Vienna, the annexation of the periphery (*Eingemeindung der Vororte*) took place in 1890–1892 in an environment in which the municipality was prepared even to give up on the *Verzehrungssteuer*. Yet it was the state that would not

comply, as these taxes were important even for the state's finances. Indeed, in the Austrian case, the administration of the octroi was more centralized; there was no room for a solution such as simply changing the name of the tax. This centralization, nonetheless, made possible the annexation as well, so that when Franz Joseph I expressed his wish for Vienna and the *Vororte* to be united in 1888, despite opposition from the latter, the matter was decided. Such a move would have been more difficult in Budapest, where, as we have seen, the city enjoyed more autonomy in its dealings; from 1923, the state completely relinquished its authority regarding the octroi (in Austria, the octroi was abolished in 1921). Moreover, the financial situation at the time was also much more precarious after 1920, even in relatively stable periods; therefore Budapest wanted to cling onto every possible source of revenue. Thus, in Vienna the octroi did not stand much in the way of annexation, but in Budapest it did. Aladár Pirovits (1936a), a critic of Greater Budapest, formulated it as follows: "It an epochal change that can only be induced by evolutions in the world economy, like the liberation of the serfs in 1848—when not in its scope then in its nature" (p. 4). He probably did not expect how prescient his words would sound in some 15 years.

Second, in Vienna the Linienwall was a relatively solid border from 1829 to 1890, and the area within it was mostly settled (see Figure 5). In contrast, the customs border in Budapest changed regularly. This was done by dividing the city into two halves, open and closed. In the open area, the city could exercisese less control due to the wide expanse of the area and the relative lack of customs infrastructure. Also, some payment policies were different. In the 1890s, the city decided to extend the closed area significantly (see Figure 6), especially in Zugló and Angyalföld, but also around Kőbánya and Ferencváros, citing increased settlement. However, in 1910 (see Figure 7), Zugló and other areas were still quite sparsely inhabited. The situation complicated efforts to create Greater Budapest, and opponents of the plan did not fail to mention this fact (Pirovits, 1936b), although by then the density had increased somewhat. I suggest this slow rate of settlement may not only have been for the reasons Harrer (1908) mentioned[25], but also for this extension of the closed zone of the octroi and city toll. This way, the octroi would have exacerbated the

[25] That is, because of mistaken land and building policies.

outward migration due to increasing prices, which also encouraged (more population in the peripheries) and discouraged (too low density) the plan of Greater Budapest.Overall, we can see an intriguing pattern: the octroi and the city toll was partly instituted to unify former existing duties and had been used after 1873 to help the dynamic progress of Budapest. For a period, it was not a formidable problem, but rather a crucial part of the city's revenue. However, in the long term, it encouraged lower-income populations to settle outside of the city proper, thus not only creating towns in the periphery, but also excluding them from city politics. Over time, these cities grew immensely, and the connection became an ever more pressing issue. Furthermore, these financial tools were supposed to harm commerce considerably (by increasing prices), and the municipality of Budapest had conflicts with the traders, industrialists, and the surrounding towns. However, the capital did not want to lose any of its octroi income. Thus, the very same instrument was an obstacle to solving the problem that it partially created, harming city planning and commerce in the process. I contend that it is true that the income from it helped Budapest, but I argue that it had adverse effects in the long term both for the city (especially



for its poorer inhabitants) and the country. Moreover, the artificial separation of Budapest and Pestkörnyék in the interwar era helped the ruling conservative forces (in both the national and also the municipal governments), as there was no serious alternative from the left as there may have been had Greater Budapest been realized earlier. Károly Szendy, mayor of Budapest between 1934 and 1944, wrote in his 1942 Study about Greater Budapest (Tanulmány Nagy-Budapestről) that the real reasons for the disadvantageous situation of municipal budgets are "the disabilities of the municipal tax system" (p. 235). Yet, when discussing the octroi and city tolls, he does not pass a remark on its possible abolition but lists possibilities where the tollhouses should be situated. Anyhow, it may be that he was right in one regard: Greater Budapest was indeed created with the "word of might" (Szendy, 1942, p. 6), of the communists in 1950, as it happened, just as Greater Vienna was with that of the emperor in 1890–1892 (for more information on the "word of might" in Vienna and its connection to the *Verzehrungssteuer*, see Sipos [2002]), but this word swept away the Budapest octroi and city tolls in the same instant.

Conclusion and outlook

I argue that the Budapest octroi and city toll influenced the development of Pest-Buda and later Budapest both as catalysts of processes and possibly as drivers of these. I showed that parallels may be drawn with the history of the Vienna Verzehrungssteuer, although these two do not completely overlap. This essay was primarily intended to highlight these aspects of the development of Greater Budapest. Thus, a more profound discussion of the historical antecedents of the octroi system and a more detailed study of its workings, at least in Budapest, is lacking.

Hopefully, the issues raised will be subject to further research as well, which is indeed needed in this area. For instance, a thorough analysis of the specific articles subject to tariffs and the tax rate may help bring about a better understanding of the financial and political issues surrounding the operation of the octroi in Budapest. By situating the topic of the Vienna and Budapest octroi system in the wider framework of taxation history

and urbanization processes, new insights are to be gathered. When analyzing the octroi systems of these two cities in more detail, special attention must also be paid to the differences between the administrative systems of Austria and Hungary after the Compromise of 1867. Exploring more profoundly the interrelations between these financial instruments and city development, as well as comparing Budapest and Vienna in this regard, will, in my opinion, unveil new connections and avenues through which one could gain a better understanding with respect to the mechanisms of city growth in the 19th and 20th centuries as well as the political and cultural motivations and processes surrounding them.

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An Antique Modernist

BÁLINT BEREMÉNYI

From the more than three millennia of pharaonic history, Akhenaten stands out in the popular imagination. Open most general histories of ancient Egypt, and you will find that the two decades of the Amarna Period are given more attention than most whole centuries that came before or after. This is for a number of reasons. One could suppose that this may be because the tomb of Tutankhamun, possibly the world's most well-known archaeological find, is closely linked to the period in question, or that Amarna is one of the very few well preserved urban settlements in Egypt. Still, Akhenaten is far from being simply thought of as Tutankhamun's predecessor (and possibly his father), and most pay little attention to city planning.

Indeed there seems to be some unique fascination with the era felt by both professional Egyptologists and the general public. In societies dominated by Abrahamic religions, Atenism seems to strike a chord with people as something very modern, regardless of how religious they are. Atenism has even been seen as the direct predecessor of Judaism, and thus the originator of monotheism: something revolutionary, with implications not just for the history of Egypt, but the whole world. "Akhenaten as originator of Judaeo-Christian monotheism has probably been the single most pervasive part of his myth" (p. 36), wrote the British Egyptologist Dominic Montserrat (2000), and when surveying Akhenaten's representations, one is inclined to agree. Connections between his religious views and Abrahamic

monotheism have been drawn by many. Sigmund Freud (1939), for example, hypothesized that Moses was "[i]n close contact with Pharaoh" and "was a convinced adherent of the new religion, whose basic principles he fully understood and had made his own" (p. 46).

Perhaps a more immediate and eye-caching factor is the art of the Amarna Period. Akhenaten is represented with prominent breasts, large thighs, a sagging belly, a slender face, and plump lips. This representation is radically different from those of the pharaohs who came before or after. The common image of the kings of Egypt is one of overpowering masculinity, while Akhenaten appears genderless, even feminine. Beyond style, the subject of the images is different as well. Akhenaten and his famous wife Nefertiti are shown in very intimate moments: they embrace, kiss, and play with their children. These actions resonate with the modern observer, and they certainly left a deep impression on Flinders Petrie, who wrote that the pharaoh "openly proclaims the domestic pleasures of a monogamist" (Montserrat, 2000, p. 3). Despite the fact that it is now well known that Akhenaten had at least one other wife besides Nefertiti,[26] this idea of modern monogamous love is still prevalent in the image of Akhenaten.

This all contributes to making the pharaoh a symbol of revolutionary thought and action, most often with positive connotations. This image is best summed up by a quotation from one of its main architects, the American Egyptologist Henry James Breasted (1937):

> Among the Hebrews, seven or eight hundred years later, we look for such men; but the modern world has yet adequately to value or even acquaint itself with this man, who in an age so remote and under conditions so adverse, became the *world's first idealist and the world's first individual* [emphasis added]. (p. 392)

As we shall see, the world did come to acquaint itself with Akhenaten.

The historical accuracy of the idea of the revolutionary pharaoh is very difficult to assess and not something I would like to do here. Instead, I want to look at Akhenaten as a cultural symbol, as a vehicle for modern ideas and expressions, for I believe that the main reason for the sheer amount of attention he has received are the layers of interpretation, imagination, and asso-

[26] Besides the famous Nefertiti, there is another woman who was undoubtedly a wife of Akhenaten. Her name was Kiya and she bore the title of Greatly Beloved Wife. This and other representations explicitly linking her with Akhenaten make it clear that she was no simple member of the harem (Dodson, 2016).

ciation he has been given by all those who engaged with him. This is not to say that the primary evidence is anything to scoff at, but simply that we know less than we write. Nor does this mean that the modern interpretations of the period are completely independent of very real archaeological and philological findings, only that the Amarna Period as a modern cultural symbol can be analyzed independently. As we have seen, Breasted, a respected scholar, contributed greatly to the myth of Akhenaten, even inspiring Freud, but also that historical findings, such as the existence of Akhenaten's secondary wife, are often ignored when the vision of authors demands so.

In other terms, I see two different, if not wholly independent, structures. Epistemologically speaking, we use mental structures of thought to grapple with history, meaning that when a scholar approaches the Amarna Period they cannot hope to gain completely objective information, but can only aim to refine the structure that is the web of theories they have about the period, so that it aligns more closely with the available sources. The other structure, the more fluid and artistic version of Akhenaten and Amarna in modern art and literature, is similar in many ways, and draws from scholarship, but the main difference is that its goal is not strictly accuracy and desire for truth, but whatever the minds it inhabits desire it to be. Something similar was argued by Paul John Frandsen (1993) when he said that "we are not just interested in 'truth' but in intellectual constructs. Thus, the door is open to interpretations that are, for example, artistic, or not "'strictly scientific'" (p. 241). The reason that I feel confident in calling this a cultural system is that there are definite similarities in the narratives and themes of these works, and they often rely on similar pools of extratextual knowledge or understanding. Of course, it may appear hard to find a qualitative difference between the two structures, as scholarship is greatly influenced by the culture and biases of its author, and as stated, literary Akhenatens are not completely disparate from the products of more academic approaches. With that said, one cannot quite say that the literary image of Akhenaten revolves around what little we know of the facts of the historical Akhenaten's life. Rather, he became a symbol that reflects more the conditions and thoughts of modern authors and audiences than historical reality. What I want to do here is assess, through three examples, the depictions of Akhenaten in 20th century literature, with a focus on one of the most prominent modern Akhenatens: the revolutionary.

First, then, giving a general outline of this system as it appears in modern stories is in order. Of course, not all of the following elements are included in every representation; there have been many Akhenatens, but my point is to show exactly how freely the man has been interpreted by modern inclinations.[27] Most plots start with Akhenaten as a prince who has already shown signs of irregular behavior. Then, after ascending the throne, he starts making his religious vision a reality and decides to leave Thebes to found the city of Akhetaten at modern day Amarna. Here, his revolution is short lived, as internal and external forces, such as the Amun priesthood and Asiatic military forces, put an end to it. Then, the old order is ultimately restored.

Most elements of this general outline have roots in past or present scholarly consensus, but as I have argued before, an accurate historical reconstruction is not the primary goal. Instead, this general structure provides a foundation for authors upon which they can build and elaborate their themes. To both present the variety of ways in which Akhenaten has been interpreted, and still showcase what I mean by a structure, I have chosen three works. They were all written in the 20th century, but by completely different men. For all three, Akhenaten represented a revolutionary, but how they use the pharaoh and his "modernity" as the vehicle for their ideas reflects their unique circumstances.

Mika Waltari's *The Egyptian* was published in 1945 with great success. It follows the life of Sinuhe, an Egyptian doctor who, after a childhood of disillusionment, wanders around the Eastern Mediterranean. Through him, Waltari presents a wide variety of cultures. When Sinuhe returns home to Egypt, he becomes the personal physician of Akhenaten and gets to witness his reforms and their failures. These are accompanied by difficulties in his private life. In the end, Sinuhe, after seeing so many aspects of the world and being so disappointed by them, cannot enjoy life. The deeply Christian Waltari, however, leaves some hope in the lingering remnants of Akhenaten's ideals.

Akhenaten: Dweller in Truth, written in 1985, is a novel by Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz. It consists of fictionalized testimonies by the contemporaries of Akhenaten, with the narrator and interviewer being Meri-

27 In fact, Montserrat (2000) counted at least 60 literary interpretations of Akhenaten.

amun, a very inquisitive young man who grows curious upon seeing the ruins of Akhetaten. The book is not simply historical fiction, but a historiographical novel; the testimonies differ widely on many points, and while a general outline of events can be discerned, the reader is the one who must ultimately decide whom to believe. Characters such as the High Priest of Amun have a very strong dislike of Akhenaten, while others, like his close friends, admire him greatly. With that said, I believe that the latter camp is ultimately shown to be more justified. This is perhaps best shown by the final lines of the book where Meriamun, the closest person the work has to an objective observer, admits to having a "growing fondness for the hymns of the One God" and "profound love for the beautiful Nefertiti" (p. 168). The very same is argued by Jonathan Keir (2014) based on examinations of Mahfouz's personal religious and moral views.

Minimalist composer Philip Glass' *Akhnaten*[28] is an opera that was written and composed in 1983. It is the final instalment in a trilogy of biographical works, including *Einstein on the Beach* about Albert Einstein, and *Satyagraha* about Mahatma Gandhi. The figure of Akhenaten is placed among these two, clearly depicted as a man of revolutionary vision. In Glass' own words: "I saw that if Einstein epitomized the man of Science, and Gandhi the man of Politics, then Akhnaten would be the man of Religion" (Montserrat, 2000, p. 179). However ambitious this message may be, Glass' *Akhenaten* is probably the least political work of those examined here. It is a fairly standard rendition of the plotline outlined above, with a revolutionary flair and a not too unusual presentation of the love between Akhenaten and Nefertiti. There is little to be found in terms of a deeper message; indeed, as an opera, the work stands out mainly because of its form and not its narrative substance. With that said, the fact that it focuses more on the raw emotional power of the Akhenaten myth should not be necessarily understood as a shortcoming, as it capitalizes on it with, to my mind, great success. The opera is very much worthy of closer examination, as it showcases some general themes, however common, and is a great example of the variety of forms through which Akhenaten has been represented.

[28] The libretto was co-written by Philip Glass, Robert Israel, Shalom Goldman, and Richard Riddell.

In all three works, the image of Akhenaten as "the world's first individual" is present to some extent. In *The Egyptian* and, in its more favorable accounts, *Dweller in Truth*, Akhenaten is shown breaking with the norms and possessing a truly revolutionary vision. In the case of Glass' opera, this perceived vision was the very inspiration for the work. His individuality is shown through his conflict with society, or even human nature.

The destructiveness and unchanging nature of mankind are among the central themes of Waltari's novel. Akhenaten tries to resist this nature by ignoring it. He is ultimately felled by reality, and his ideology is proven irreconcilable with his contemporary society. However, this is a noble mistake; Sinuhe cannot help but love him, and it is the world that is shown to be at fault, not the visionary. *Dweller in Truth* takes a similar approach. Akhenaten, as the title suggests, seems to find some deeper truth, which he tries to convey to those around him, and while he faces initial success, his pacifism leads not just to foreign attack but also internal strife, as he does not believe in punitive justice, resulting in state officials' corruption running rampant. He does not give up on his vision, however, for he believes it eternal. In *Akhnaten,* the Pharaoh's love of his wife and family distracts him from the pleas of allied nations in Syria. This is shown in Act III, where in the middle of the family's singing, the narrator reads excerpts from the Amarna letters[29] asking for aid. In all of these works, this internal strife and foreign threat leads to the pharaoh being ultimately betrayed by those around him.

Another aspect of Akhenaten's character, most likely born out of interpretations of Amarna art, is his femininity. In *The Egyptian*, Akhenaten's feminine appearance shows his physical and mental weakness and is often contrasted with the well-built and military-minded Horemheb. In *Dweller in Truth*, Akhenaten's woman-like appearance is a point of attack for his enemies, like the High Priest of Amun, who describes him as "a man of questionable birth, effeminate and grotesque" (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 13), while his supporters simply describe physical characteristics. The same theme may be found in the opera by Glass, where the role of Akhenaten is sung by a countertenor, a pitch that is unusually high, while those representing the traditional order, like Ay and Horemheb, have deeper voices. This contrast

[29] The Amarna Letters are a collection of cuneiform tablets found at Amarna. They record correspondence between certain pharaohs of the 18th dynasty and foreign rulers. Some of them have been interpreted as signs of the decline of Egyptian influence in the Levant under the reign of Akhenaten.

is most apparent in Act III, where right after Scene 1's *The Family*, which is sung by Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and their daughters, comes *Attack and Fall,* where the Ay and Horemheb lead an attack against the palace. In all three works then, though with slightly different connotations, Akhenaten's divergent gender expression becomes a symbol of his revolutionary nature, while traditional expressions of masculinity show traditional authority.

This political goodwill, even naivety, and effeminate presentation serve to in some part "dampen" Akhenaten's despotism. The office of pharaoh is the quintessential example of the oriental despot, and this strong perception may go against the core themes of these works. How can an absolute ruler, the one who sets society's direction, be a revolutionary? This issue is resolved either by distance (in the case of Waltari) or a retrospective view (in the case of Mahfouz). In Waltari's novel, the violent enforcement of Akhenaten's religious reforms is done by officers who are not true believers and go against the king's direct orders of non-violence. In *Dweller in Truth*, the story is told after his downfall, and he only exercises power in a peaceful and loving way. If anything, this tension is used as another vehicle for showing the noble nature of Akhenaten, for failing at tyranny can hardly be called a moral failure. *Akhnaten* is probably the work that faces this issue most head-on, by giving a violent feel to the scenes titled "Temple," where Akhenaten assaults the priests of Amun, and "Dance," the celebration of the founding of Akhetaten. The two scenes are even connected by a motif, and as Frandsen (1993) writes, "[f]or Glass, ecstatic jubilation and furious violence are the two sides of religious fervor" (p. 253).

This religious fervor is the main axis of the Akhenaten myth; the pharaoh's modernity comes from the modernity of not only his person, but also his religion. I have mentioned the fanciful associations of Atenism with the Abrahamic religions, as well as the figure of Akhenaten being a knower of some greater truth. In all three works, these ideas go hand in hand.

In Act II, Scene 4 of *Akhnaten,* titled "Hymn," the titular character sings parts from the famous Great Hymn to the Aten. This ancient work has been used to back theories about the origins of Judaism, as it seems to have a number of similarities with Psalm 104. Accordingly, after Akhenaten is done singing, the chorus sings the psalm in Hebrew.

Near the end of *The Egyptian*, Sinuhe, following the downfall and death of Akhenaten, struggles to keep the ideas of the king alive. He is ultimately

unsuccessful, but there is a glimmer of hope: in the imagination of the poor and the downtrodden, the door is left open for the survival of the ideas of unconditional love and equality. This seems to be an allusion to Christianity, which would not be surprising, considering the author's religious views and later novels about the early centuries of the religion.

In the novel by Mahfouz, Akhenaten's "One and Only God" seems not quite to be Aten. As he himself says "No. Not Aten, not the sun. He is above and beyond that. He is the One and Only God" (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 34). This again seems to be an allusion to Abrahamic monotheism. The fact that Akhenaten also says that "I only heard his voice in the merry dawn" (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 33) invokes Yahweh and Allah, as in Judaism and in Islam God is not depicted, and incarnation is rejected.[30] This connection is only made stronger by Akhenaten's use of Koranic vocabulary (Pinault, 1995).

In all three works, Akhenaten's religion and character are thus modernized. His "monotheism" is our monotheism, and he is exceptional exactly because he is ahead of his time. He is not just an Egyptian with unusual beliefs, but a prophet whose only fault is that he brought the inevitable a few centuries too early. This supposes a kind of primal dichotomy between ancient polytheism and modern Abrahamic monotheism. When the figure of Akhenaten is made to belong to one of these categories, he is put into the second one, and is seen as an extraordinary member of it. It is thus only natural that he is seen apart from his ancient Egyptian context and is easily imposed upon other ideas, such as modern religion and ideals of love and family.

Akhenaten died more than three millennia ago. His city was abandoned and name forgotten, until he was rediscovered in the 19th century. Perhaps it is inaccurate to say that *he* was rediscovered; rather, a few remnants of his reign were unearthed and narratives weaved around them. What I tried to show here is that these narratives are of interest because of how they relate to not only ancient events, but also modern minds; a pessimistic Finnish novelist, a politically conscious Egyptian, and an American composer

[30] The link between Akhenaten's religion and Islam is also present in another novel by Mahfouz, *Before the Throne* (first published in 1983). In the book, Osiris judges the rulers of Egypt in the afterlife, in chronological order from Menes to Sadat. Those already judged suitable to join the immortals, including Akhenaten, comment on those who come after them. When Akhenaten encounters the Muslim rulers of Egypt who came after him, he recognizes his own religious views in Islam.

looking for great figures and great ideas all used him to convey what was on their minds.

The name of Akhenaten symbolizes this perfectly. Egyptian was a language understood by no one for one and a half millennia. Then, tentative reconstruction began, and now a few things are known about it. Vowels were not written, and there is no agreement on the exact phonetic value of consonants. It is then not the name of Akhenaten itself that has been rediscovered, but a few questionable sounds strung together by others inserted for legibility. In this light the name of pharaoh Akhenaten is itself a *modern* construct made to be pronounceable by *modern* tongues. Still, it carries a seed from three millennia ago, and is more fascinating for it.

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The Efficiency of Constitutions: a Way of Measuring Democracy

LILI JUHÁSZ

Constitutions date way back, but even centuries-old constitutions tend to have a palpable impact on the present. Constitutions matter today because they are essential in achieving constitutionalism, which is the idea that the government's power is limited by the supreme laws of the land. Currently, several countries are facing a democratic backslide. Therefore, it is especially important to assess how constitutions can guide us in determining whether or not a country is democratic. The democratic backsliding was worsened by Covid-19, because during the pandemic some leaders increased their powers to an extent that cannot be justified; for example, in Hungary, the government ruled by decree. In Sri Lanka, the president postponed elections repeatedly and dissolved the parliament (Freedom House, 2021). These are good examples of why we should be aware of whether or not countries adhere to democratic principles, and why we should recognize what role constitutions play in this. In this article, I will argue that examining whether or not a constitution is able to function well defines whether or not the country can be considered a democracy.

Before arriving to this conclusion, I will look at the history of constitutions, why they matter, what they are, and what role they play in today's world. Then, I will attempt to give an answer to the main question of the essay: how and why is a constitution able to help in measuring how democratic a country is? Finally, I will look at some alternatives to the codified constitution.

Written in 1787, the Constitution of the United States was an early and successful attempt at ensuring checks and balances. This means that the three branches of government are separated, and no branch of government can become too powerful as there are limits and controls in place. Beyond that, written constitutions are often able to help in the establishment of a national identity, as it can be seen in the United Sates— "We the people" is still an important catchphrase for every American.

However, its importance goes way beyond its popularity and its role in defining national character. In America, only the Constitution was able to create a federal government that had actual power. During the earlier attempt—the Articles of Confederation of 1777—the government was not even able to raise taxes (Borgeaud, 1892). Another similar landmark legislation was France's constitution, where the third estate pushed for the Declaration of the Rights of the Man and of the Citizen to be written down in a code that set the tone for the later creation of the French Constitution of 1791 (Borgeaud, 1892). Slowly, the entire continental Europe followed suit in codifying their respective systems of rules. Constitutions matter today, as well. Good constitutions can guarantee rights and limit the power of the government. For example, the Constitution of the United States limits how many terms a president may have. Constrains like this help maintain democracy.

A written constitution is essentially a document that encompasses rules that are at the top of the hierarchy of laws, and it validates every other law that is implemented later. In fact, it is the very core of the legal system. In *The Concept of Law* (1961), HLA Hart divides the structure of law into two categories: primary and secondary rules. Primary rules are the laws that govern society, and by secondary rules, he means the people or bodies of authority that can legitimately enforce primary rules. The constitution is a great example of a primary rule.

A constitution is a crucial part of the legal system, but the question remains as to what exact role it plays today. Constitutions attempt to establish the rule of law, they ensure that there is no arbitrary ruling, and most importantly, they define what the government–citizen relationship is supposed to be like. Constitutions often declare what rights citizens have. All countries that respect the rule of law—even if they only pretend to—have constitutions. Some of these are codified (like in Germany), and some are

not (like in Great Britain). They are an essential part of the social contract that everyone in society accepts.

However, how exactly is a constitution able to help in measuring how democratic a country is? The answer lies in whether the constitution helps people in preserving their liberty, or on the contrary, is used as a power tool that supports the agenda of those who hold power and hinders people's liberty. To answer this question, I will analyze the example of the codified constitution, for it is more common than the uncodified constitution. First, I will elaborate on how a constitution is supposed to affect society's liberty when it works well. Then, I will show how constitutions sometimes do not amount to more than just words, when the core values that are established in them are not put into practice.

In my analysis of how a well-functioning constitution works, I will rely on Isaiah Berlin's (1969) definition of liberty, as it provides a useful distinction between two major types of freedoms. The first one is negative liberty, which defines freedom as the lack of interference from other people, institutions, or the state. That means that one's political liberty goes as far as one can act in a way that remains unobstructed by others, and people remain free from deliberate interference with their affairs. Berlin (1969) argues that we must have an area of our lives with which no authority can interfere under any circumstance. This concept of liberty can be linked to Thomas Hobbes' thoughts about political rights in *Leviathan* (1651/2010), in which he writes: "Liberty, or freedom, signifieth properly the absence of opposition (by opposition, I mean external impediments of motion)" (p. 188). He also notes that "freeman is he that, in those things which by his strength and wit he is able to do, is not hindered to do what he has a will to" (Hobbes, 1651/2010, p. 188). Negative liberty and the idea of constitutions have been closely related to each other from early on because a constitution is an effective tool of ensuring negative liberty.

The second concept is positive liberty, which means the freedom to act and do as we wish. Positive liberty means that we can be our "own masters" and we can choose what we want to do (Berlin, 1969). In other words, the decision is ours, as we are autonomous, rational beings. I think this distinction is useful because there are cases when only one type of liberty is present in society. For example, one might have positive liberty, for example codified rights, but the state might interfere with many aspects of life,

therefore, threatening negative liberty. Due to this reason, both forms of liberty are necessary to achieve a free society; neither one is sufficient in itself.

Before examining the codified constitution's effect on society's freedom, it is important to identify the stakeholders of this question: citizens, lawmakers, and judges. They are all affected differently by the presence of a codified constitution. First, I will look at how these stakeholders' negative liberty is influenced and then move on to whether their positive liberty is increased or hindered.

Negative liberty is when others only interfere with my liberty if I were to do something that hinders someone else's rights. In other words, negative liberty is in line with John Stuart Mill's harm principle (Robson, 1977). With codified constitutions in place, citizens should be protected from arbitrary interference from others, including the state. Constitutions usually guarantee that citizens cannot be indicted without a justified reason. It is true, however, that constitutions might prioritize some freedoms over others, and it depends on what each citizen deems important. For example, a constitution might favor citizens' freedom of speech as the most important governing law, which is an expression of positive freedom, since they are free to say anything that they want to. Nevertheless, this hinders other people's negative liberties, such as freedom from verbal harassment. Therefore, it is a challenging task to find the right balance, but generally, citizens' negative freedom is supposed to be protected by a codified constitution, as it guarantees that there are no unforeseeable interferences with their liberty.

The judges must be freer with a codified constitution that limits the executive power's interference with legal matters. Constitutions ensure that the executive and legislative branches do not interfere with a judge's liberty. Therefore, a judge is free to carry on with her profession, without worrying about depending on the government. The lawmakers face a similar situation to that of the judges, as generally their role is clearly defined in constitutions—no one can obstruct their work. To summarize, a codified constitution must be able to provide checks and balances for everyone.

Positive liberty means the freedom to do what you wish to do. It might seem that a codified constitution inherently interferes with citizens' positive liberty since it limits what people can do. However, the implementation of a constitution is actually a process of empowerment. It codifies people's

rights; therefore, it makes them official and protects them. Of course, the existence of such a set of laws will eventually lead to the limitation of positive liberties by playing the stakeholders against one another. However, this limitation can be regarded as necessary, since, as Larry Alexander (2010) argues, we are not perfect, and the written law is the best remedy to that. A well-functioning codified constitution helps the citizen's freedom since it can never be arbitrary. It clearly defines who shall govern, and its aim should be to stop unlimited authority. Therefore, if a codified constitution is paired with the guarantee that everyone is equal before the law, one can only face charges that are defined by law, and one can only be punished for crimes that were illegal at the time, then that constitution helps liberty, because people can predict what the consequences of their actions are. Even though most citizens are not aware of their rights, they are still there, and the constitution is accessible at any time.

Judges' positive liberty is compromised by a codified constitution. They cannot adjudicate as they wish; they have a strict framework within which they must operate. Judges are influenced to a great extent by the codified constitution that sets grounding legal principles protecting the citizens from arbitrary judgements. Criminal codes in civil law countries clearly state what the scale of punishment is, and in some countries, judges are even required to give the sentence that is in the mid-range, and if they do not, they are obligated to provide a longer explanation than usual.

Lawmakers' positive liberty is greatly hindered by a codified constitution. They cannot make laws that do not align with the principles of the constitution; their hands are tied. However, this is an advantage for most of society. For example, the citizens can rely on their constitution since they know that it is unlikely to change. Unfortunately, in a less ideal world, many of today's leaders find legal methods to bring about a constitutional revolution, amend the constitution easily, and adjust it according to their political agenda (Scheppele, 2015). In a more ideal scenario, the fact that lawmakers' positive liberty is limited should not be a concern, as their role is enabling the freedom of the citizens and representing them, so their positive liberty is much less crucial than that of the citizen. A constitution should be rigid enough, because it is not supposed to be as easily changed as other laws, but at the same time, the way of applying it should be responsive to today's society's issues.

So far, I have only considered constitutions that any rational citizen would accept since they serve the common good and help people in preserving their liberties. There are various countries where this is not the case, and if a constitution is not respected—that includes amending the constitution too often, politicizing its content, or simply not respecting people's rights—then it becomes questionable as to whether or not the country is a democracy. Constitutions do not always guarantee freedom. Even if a country has a well-written, codified constitution, that might not mean a lot. Autocratic leaders can bring about constitutional change, in which they entirely change or make definitions narrower, compromise the judiciary, and oppress their citizens by using legal methods such as amending or changing the constitution (Scheppele, 2015). For example, in Hungary, the Fidesz party won the two-thirds vote, which is what is required to change the constitution. Since then, the party has amended the constitution 12 times, then it went on to create an entirely new constitution (Scheppele, 2015). The Fourth Amendment threatened the checks and balances in place and compromised the independence of the Constitutional Court among other things. These actions contribute to Freedom House (2020) stating that there is a "stunning democratic breakdown" in nations like Hungary. In Poland, the Law and Justice party passed a judiciary reform in 2017. The reform included a law that gave the justice minister the right to appoint the presidents of the courts (Freedom World, 2021). Donald Trump's failure to admit that he lost the election shows that even in a country like the United States, democratic processes can be at risk.

As we already saw whether a constitution works well or not tells us about the state of democracy. The mere presence of a constitution does not guarantee a democratic society; the constitution must ensure that citizens' positive liberty is guaranteed while limiting arbitrary law-making and adjudication. To summarize what a working constitution should be able to achieve, see Table 1 below.

The codified constitution is only one example of how a democracy can guarantee citizens' freedom; there are other alternatives that are just as good, but whose instances are just less frequent. The United Kingdom is a great example. Its constitution is not codified, and it is not a single document. Instead, it has evolved together with the country since no regime change, war, or upheaval has compelled them to start again since the 17th

Stakeholders	Negative Liberty	Positive Liberty
Judges	↗	↘
Lawmakers	↗	↘
Citizens	↗	↗

Table 1: A well-functioning constitution's effect on liberty

century. Therefore, instead of being written from scratch, the UK Constitution is based on principles that have gradually developed and have remained true to British society. Establishing and then maintaining the rule of law and the sovereignty of the parliament are its core values, and it is successful at that—its primary rules are the rules made by the parliament and by the courts. Early attempts at limiting the king's power, such as the Magna Carta of 1215, the establishment of habeas corpus, and the Bill of Rights of 1689, all contributed to the country's legal development, and since they happened naturally as consequences of historical events, they were easily integrated into the way the United Kingdom approaches law. This is not the case with many codified constitutions that had to be put together after a regime change or war, like the Constitution of the United States, which had to be started from scratch. Moreover, an uncodified constitution can easily stay relevant and flexible, while codified constitutions must be amended (Dicey, 1885/1982). This flexibility and responsiveness to current societal changes is proved by the number of constitutional reforms that have occurred since 1997 or the case-by-case basis that evolves continuously. In conclusion, the Constitution of the United Kingdom grows organically, and the system has been working since 1688.

Some philosophers like Nozick have even started thinking about alternatives to both written and unwritten constitutions. In his book, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (1980), he offers a libertarian point of view and questions whether or not these documents are necessary at all. His premise is Locke's state of nature, in which people have perfect freedom and are governed by the law of nature. In this society, people are free to seek retribution privately and arrange reparations outside of a state-controlled system. He advocates for an ultra-minimal state, meaning that the state's role is supposed

to be as narrow as possible. In this night-watchman state, where the state almost solely concerns itself with the protection of property, protective associations would naturally arise. These associations would resolve clients' disputes if they pay for this service and develop like businesses. Nozick emphasizes that a paternalistic society in which people forget about the fact that there are other solutions to a problem that might not include the state is not the only option that we have at our disposal. However, this alternative is—and will probably continue to be—untested.

In this article, I examined why having a codified constitution does not ensure democracy. One must consider whether or not a given codified constitution is able to help people increase and preserve their liberties. In conclusion, a well-functioning codified constitution increases everyone's negative liberty and hinders judges' and lawmakers' positive liberty to some extent. The lawmaker's liberty is hindered immensely, and this contributes to achieving a more balanced power dynamic in society because inherently, lawmakers would have a lot more influence than citizens. Therefore, if we consider the overall increase in liberty in a democratic society, it is helped by the presence of a codified constitution, because even though judges' and lawmakers' positive liberty is restricted, they too are citizens. Therefore, their liberty is only hindered in their capacity in which they are supposed to serve the citizens, and the constitution ensures that this happens. If a constitution does not seem to fulfil this role, then democracy in that given country is threatened, and law becomes a tool for the powerful. We can and most likely will continue to see this happening.

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The Limits of Descriptive Self-Knowledge

BENJAMIN ALLEN

I. Introduction

To get to know oneself—why one acts and reacts to happenings in certain ways—is probably one of the most important projects one must embark on. For if we know ourselves— our values and dispositions—we can not only have a better idea of what to do with our lives to make them the best possible, but only once revealed can we decide which of our values and prejudices we want to affirm or discard, and how we might want to change ourselves for the better.

My aim is to outline a universal method of self-knowledge and to understand its limits. This method will be a first-person, individual approach, since I argue that any more general methods are at the very least incomplete. I will first answer whether or not we already have a method available to us that could be used for this purpose, namely introspection, defined here as "inwardly directed attention" (Goldman, 2006). That answer is no; recent research in linguistics shows us how introspection is at the very least unreliable and at most, non-existent (Gopnik, 1993). Since we do not have introspective access to ourselves, we need a new method, which I argue should center the scientific method on the subject. We observe ourselves act or react to an event, try to explain why, and then test that hypothesis ourselves.

This is by no means a bulletproof method, however. There is first the problem of time: how can one know whether or not one has changed or if a theory about them was falsified? Secondly, the problem of cognitive biases: can we be sure we are not cherry-picking evidence? Thirdly, any testing done will certainly be tainted to some extent by the predictions of hypotheses about ourselves: if I hypothesize that I generally dislike loud people, I might find myself being irritated by them in part because I have hypothesized just that. Finally, I remark on what this method leaves out, and what may be needed to fill in the gaps.

II. Why Individual?

I will first answer why a universal method of self-knowledge must be individual.

There are two ways one might seek self-knowledge through a more general level. One might (a) consult psychological findings or (b) accept some concept of an essential human nature.

(a) Psychology has two problems if we want to gain self-knowledge from it. (1) It is not necessarily universal. It could be that psychological findings are only relevant within a culture, or that some traits that are natural could be suppressed within a culture. (2) One cannot be sure what general traits apply to oneself. For even though it could be that overwhelmingly men prefer to work with things, while women prefer to work with humans (Su et al., 2009), many men become nurses while many women become engineers. Even though we can learn about ourselves through psychology, and it can play a large role in the approach I will sketch later, there will evidently be gaps in our knowledge if we do not use a more individual method.

(b) Trying to derive knowledge of oneself through a theory of human nature—like the idea that since humans are essentially rational creatures, I must be a rational creature—is the next conceivable way of knowing oneself. The problem with theories of essential human nature, however, is that this essence cannot exist. David Hull (1986) argues that this concept of human nature has been indefensible since the theory of evolution was first proposed. He posits that, given the subtlety of difference in species over time, any line between humans and animals is arbitrary. Moreover, since

species adapt to their environment, and humans live in every corner of the globe, human features vary widely. Any essence we propose will either have an exception or prove to be too permissive, and thus will include other species as well.

Faced with problems by these two modes of knowledge, we must then have a smaller scope: the individual.

III. Self-knowledge and the Scientific Method

If our focus is now on the individual, we must ask ourselves how a person can get to know something about themselves. However, what do we mean when we talk of self-knowledge? There seem to be two main groups of self-knowledge: (1) the descriptive and (2) the normative. The descriptive can be divided further into (1a) psychological knowledge of one's temperament, (1b) knowledge of what kind of being one is (i.e., what one's identity is), (1c) predictive knowledge of oneself, (1d) knowledge of the underlying mental processes that cause actions and mental states, and (1e) knowledge of mental states (fear, pain, etc.). The normative is concerned with (2a) what one should be doing or (2b) who one should aspire to be.

First, there are some obvious overlaps between the kinds of self-knowledge. For example, (1a) knowledge of one's temperament may easily lead to (1c) predictive knowledge of one's actions. If I am known to be hyperactive, one can infer that I may fidget while being forced to sit in place.

Second, there are not only overlaps but also interdependencies. When deliberating (2a) what one should do or (2b) who one should aim to be, we will be assessing the questions based on certain values we already hold, whether consciously or otherwise. One can only re-evaluate their values within the context of their other values. There is no unbiased space from where we can simply pick out values. Therefore, the normative "what should I do and who should I be" is bound up with the descriptive "who am I and what do I value?" Whether or not we should aspire to be a firefighter is based upon our pre-existing values, including how much we fear fire, how much of a duty we feel to keep our communities safe, how much we feel the need to risk ourselves for this, etc. Thus, if we are going to be influenced by our pre-existing values, it seems prudent to be conscious of

them and not to be misguided by feelings that may be more intense, but betray other, deeper values. If one is unconsciously guided by the allure of pleasure but really values meaningfulness, they could be worse off than if they had knowledge of their values.

We must take note that self-knowledge will not yield us any normative moral principles, however. Whether or not some individual has a moral duty to become a firefighter will not be answered here, as we are describing values, not investigating whether or not those values *should* be held. What we might answer is how satisfied one may be with themselves if they do become a firefighter.

We must next make clear the scope of this project, that is, which kinds of self-knowledge we are aiming at.

By self-knowledge I mean (1d) the underlying mental processes that guide our actions and determine our mental states.[31] I will refer to these as our values and dispositions. This also means that we will concern ourselves with (1a) psychological knowledge of one's temperament and (1c) predictive knowledge of oneself, because a temperament may be the cause of an action or mental state, and we can predict certain actions and mental states based on temperaments and other mental processes. The question is, how do we reveal these values and dispositions?

"Inwardly directed attention" (Goldman, 2006), otherwise known as introspection, has historically been the method of getting to know ourselves. John Locke (1689/1975: II.1.iv.) called it "internal sense," the perceptive faculty that allows us to inspect our own minds and helps us learn about ourselves, just as our "outer sense" helps us learn about objects and navigate the world. Just as my senses and cognition can help me uncover the mechanisms behind why the apple fell, so can I, by looking within myself, uncover the reason behind getting a sudden urge to chop down the apple tree. This intuitive feeling of diving into our consciousness puts oneself in a privileged position: *only* I can introspect myself, and consequently there is some knowledge about myself only I can access. Furthermore, introspection gives authoritative knowledge of oneself. If X told us they bought a picture because it looked nice, we would not contest their statement. Telling

[31] We must be careful regarding mental states, as they are sometimes repressed, ignored, or misinterpreted (Schwitzgebel, 2008). However, for the most part, we can tell whether a mental state is a positive or a negative one; the harder question is why?

X that their reason for buying it was different seems arbitrary, as if we had less of an idea of what we were talking about than them. However, is this assumption based in reality? Must we always know less about X's values than does X? Other than the experience of it, there is *a priori* no direct evidence for introspection, for we cannot objectively quantify such an experience that is by definition limited to the subject itself. Moreover, when assessing the truth of introspection, we cannot start from its experience, since that would be begging the question. The only other evidence we would have for introspection is whether or not it can predict how one will act or feel given certain circumstances. If we can define values (e.g., loyalty) and using introspection reliably predict how one will act in the future (staying by a friend or family member's side through thick and thin), we have good reason to adopt and adhere to it. If not, well, it may only be a mirage.

For example, if we were asked after shopping why we bought a particular shirt, we would most likely answer that we liked the color, the shape, or the material, as if we were retrieving the information out of some library inside our minds. However, when asked this, shoppers vastly underestimated other factors, such as where the clothing was in the shop (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977), and even explicitly denied its effect when asked about it. If we do have introspective access to our values and dispositions, it could prove unreliable as a method of self-knowledge given the above information. However, *do* we have such a method?

In a famous study (Gopnik, 1993), it was found that children could not attribute to themselves recent past false beliefs until they could do so to others. When shown a box that they thought had sweets in it, but was revealed to have pencils inside, children adamantly defended that they had always believed there to be pencils in the box. The ability to recognize past false beliefs came *only* when they were able to recognize them in others, by realizing that those others are also people with mental states of their own, and then interpreting their actions (Gopnik, 1993). To say that after gaining this ability we can introspect ourselves and interpret others is intuitive but suspicious; it is unlikely that two separate modes of knowing arise at the exact same time as one another. Why would two, essentially different modes of knowledge arise from one change? Is it not more likely that we learn to interpret others, and then turn this interpretation towards ourselves? The experience of introspecting, according to the aforementioned study, is an "illusion of expertise"—just

as a virtuoso completes millions of minute actions subconsciously, we are experts at interpreting mental states and do not realize the computation behind that interpretation. The only authority one would have over knowledge of one's own values would then stem from the fact that each of us spends the most time with ourselves and not from exclusive introspective access (Ryle, 1949). As Gopnik's 1993 study concludes, if we can only interpret our mental states, we can only indirectly access the reason for why we act in certain ways or value certain things, and thus only infer knowledge about ourselves.

If self-knowledge is interpretive, then it is also inductive; interpretation needs a context to work within, a set of individual facts from which one can infer general facts about one's values. For the case of human subjects, that context is action and mental states. What have I done and how has that, among other things, affected me? How we have acted and felt in the past and will do in the future is the source from which we can infer some trait about ourselves.

Take for example X, who has just broken up with Y, but X afterwards feels the urge to get back together with Y. How can they make sense of this? Are they in love with Y after all? Is X scared of big changes in their life? Remember, X cannot just introspect their beliefs. To get an answer they must interpret their actions. How did they react to other breakups? How did they react to other life-changing moments? If they have wanted to reverse change at a huge shift in their life many times before, it is reasonable for X to conclude that they may only fear change, especially if the latter part of their relationship was one of bore and no communication. Furthermore, it is probable that in the future, similarly large changes will also scare X.

It is important to note that this example is explicitly empirical in character: X has a way of testing some hypothesis about themself. It is for this reason that X can sometimes[32] incorporate psychology into self-knowledge; they can test whether or not a psychological principle holds true to them in particular! If X fears big changes, when encountering one, X will experience a certain mental state, thus either corroborating the hypothesis or falsifying it (Popper, 2002). Testability is the crux of this method, as it is to science itself. As it is conceivable that something untestable is true, we have

[32] I say sometimes because some psychological findings rely on the subject being unaware of what is being tested. One could not test whether the placement of the clothing would affect their opinion of it, as in Nisbett and Wilson (1977), because the whole point of that is to test the subconscious mechanisms at work.

no way of assessing that truth, and what is the aim of the scientific method if not (at the very least) the act of assessing whether a theory is true or not? If their theory was that X had magical "energy levels" that were "synchronized" with Y's "energy levels," making X want to get back together with Y, how would we test such a theory? Can we measure these levels? Can we tell who has what "kind" of energy? No, of course not. Such a theory should be avoided when trying to attain self-knowledge.

IV. Problems and Limitations

Though this method has many uses and can help us understand ourselves greatly, it is not without its drawbacks.

Suppose there is a theory about oneself, "T," which holds true for quite a while. Through many contexts and many states of mind, T was always a good explanation for an action or a reaction to something. However, one day, it no longer holds. Was it falsified or has the subject changed? We are in a kind of limbo. Since there is only one person we can measure things on ourselves and we are constantly in flux, everchanging in different respects (and at varying speeds), we cannot be sure of either. Nevertheless, it seems intuitive to say that if T has been a good theory for a while, but then starts getting falsified instead of corroborated for a meaningful stretch of time and in the relevant contexts, one or more of the subject's values and/or dispositions has changed. If on the other hand falsifications pop up in a more random fashion while our current theory T still remains corroborated in many situations, our theory should be considered falsified, and we should look for a better theory. In either case, however, one must look for a new theory. Thus, this is a smaller problem than it seems.

Furthermore, it can be hard to break free of cognitive biases. I might be narcissistic and think that I am a responsible person, citing all the times that I have acted responsibly, while those are outnumbered by the times I have been irresponsible. Other than being aware of these cognitive biases, it could be helpful to consult others and try and poke holes in the theory together, though others could carry with them their own biases. For example, a mother will most likely agree that their child is kind hearted, despite the truth of the matter.

The act of creating a theory about ourselves may also shape us according to the theory. For example, the performer who tells themselves that they are the very anxious type, despite being only slightly anxious previously, becomes the type they categorized themselves as. Though not a problem in the epistemological sense, it becomes a problem if we are committed to the reason we might want to attain self-knowledge in the first place: we want to better ourselves and our lives. Believing in such theories can sometimes make it hard to see their contingency, thus making it hard to change ourselves. All that can be done here is to keep this fact in mind and focus mainly on past evidence, with less emphasis on future evidence that could partly be a result of the hypothesis itself.

Finally, this method, viewed alone, is insulated. It does not accommodate the creation of new values since it only describes current ones and gives an opportunity to affirm or discard those. For example, one may say that the earlier remarks on changing values are wholly unhelpful. One does not wish to be told whether or not they have changed or whether or not a theory about them was falsified when they are in crisis. What is needed is some normative guidance, and there is undoubtedly a need for the art of creating new imperatives, new values, and new ideas. However, as long as we want the best lives for ourselves, these new values must be in dialogue with our current ones, expanding our conception of what is possible, but assessed through the lens of who we already are and what we already value, even if there are times when we are less certain about the latter.

V. Conclusion

The proposed method for knowledge of values and dispositions is scientific. It is interpretive; we infer hypotheses based on a set of evidence, which is one's previous actions and mental states. These hypotheses must be empirically testable. However, due to the changing nature of humans, it seems like we will never gain a full picture of ourselves, nor one that is fully uncontaminated by our own views of ourselves, views which we should always treat with caution and recognize to be contingent. However, while we will always, in some respect, be "strangers to ourselves" as Nietzsche said, at least we have the comforting guarantee that there will always be something to do.

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Describing Reality Scientifically

MÁRTON VIDA

In today's world we have an immense faith in science. Not only do we expect science to solve many of our practical problems, but also there is an increasing number of people who believe that it will fill the holes of human understanding that so far only religion or ideology have been able to (Denett, 1991). In contrast, others claim that certain attributes of reality are inherently inexplicable by science, such as consciousness, meaning, or the emergence of life (Nagel, 2012).

To nuance this debate, I will conceptualize scientific understanding. I will claim that while the use of the scientific method is a necessary condition to describe the world scientifically, it is not a sufficient one. For that, one's sole direct reason to apply the scientific method must be to best approximate reality. After providing my own definition, I will contrast science with another important mode of understanding: art. Eventually, I will hope to highlight what is at stake when one takes a scientific approach to reality, and what might be the possible limits of such an inquiry.

Under the scientific method we usually mean the following. One accepts the minimum amount of axioms necessary for doing empirical research. Having done the research, one infers findings from it through the truth-perseverance of logic. Even if I accept the rules of logical inference to be absolute (due to the limited scope of this essay), two issues still arise. First, anything that is found through this process is *considered* true because

we assume the axioms to be true. However, those axioms could still turn out to be false. Second, empirical research is always imperfect. Generally speaking it is mainly due to human limits, such as sample sizes, human error, or flaws in man-made equipment. However, should one deem human limits to be logically avoidable, the Humean epistemological circularity still stands: the mode of empirical research can only be determined by previous, similarly imperfect empirical studies (Kenny, 2012).

What follows from the two principal issues of the scientific method is that its use does not necessarily entail science. One may well use scientific methods to justify unscientific claims in any of the following two ways. First, one may accept scientific axioms primarily to serve one's own normative purposes (for instance the existence of God), and invoke the fact that there is always some arbitrariness in the establishment of axioms. Second, one may purposefully do flawed empirical research, then escape responsibility by claiming that empirical research is always imperfect. In order to exclude these instances from what we call scientific, I will apply the following definition of scientific inquiry: "One does scientific inquiry if and only if one applies a scientific method with the sole direct reason to approximate reality." Note here that this does not necessarily help us differentiate between good and bad science, but rather shows whether or not something is in fact science. In what follows, I will show how my definition applies in the case of natural and social sciences.

Let me start with the simpler case, natural science. When one scientifically studies, say, the electron, the direct reason one does this is that one believes that there is something in reality one wants to approximate with their description. One may well have long-term goals with one's description, such as the explanation of electricity. However, without a detachment from one's further reasons, one may well end up with a flawed description of the electron incapable of explaining electricity. Now let me turn to why I said "approximation." While one holds that there are electrons that exist independently of what one does or says, their existence is so complex that one can only make a simplified description of them (note here that contemporary quantum physics holds that a single electron moves in such a huge space that there is no place in the universe where it appears with a 0% probability). Yet the fact that one can make closer and closer approximations to this reality seems to entail that a reality exists independently

of one's reasons. So while one has no formula to measure the *exact* speed of any object, Lorenz's formula proved to be a better approximation than Newton's; therefore objects have speed despite the fact that one is unable to grasp it perfectly (Popper, 1971). This justifies the role of science as a means to approximate reality.

Social science is a bit more controversial. Many believe that social science cannot be value-free because social scientists either (1) study society to achieve certain normative goals or (2) study socially contingent—and therefore inherently normative—phenomena. I will deal with each objection separately. (1) It is true that many social scientists study certain aspects of society because they have long-term normative goals. Thomas Piketty for example is a French economist famous for collecting and analyzing a huge amount of empirical data on economic inequalities. It is no secret that he is also a great advocate of leftist economic policies (Piketty, 2021). Should this mean that his historical analysis of inequalities is not science? Obviously not. Such would amount to saying that Katalin Karikó's research on mRNA vaccine technology is unscientific because she had a further normative goal to save the human population from future pandemics. What matters is that they were both able to detach from their further normative goals to make the best possible approximation of reality. (2) Many claim that social science studies inherently normative phenomena, and therefore it cannot do value-free research. For if something is socially contingent, its description will necessarily entail a judgement on how it ought to exist (Finnis, 2011). However, this I believe is not true, for the claim that "person X believes it ought to be Y" is a positive claim, despite X making a normative one (Boghossian, 2011). So a social scientist may scientifically describe society by treating its normative beliefs as positive facts about it (Gardner, 2012).

Now I will briefly try to contrast my concept of science with that of art. I deem it relevant, because it will help clarify the uniqueness of scientific understanding. As I have shown, science aims to exclude the subjective element of our understanding of the world to the greatest extent possible. By this, its goal is to give a close and universal approximation of reality. In contrast, art represents the idea that there may well be nothing above and beyond our inherently subjective understanding of the world. As such, artists create their very own models for analyzing reality whenever they create art. This is why art is often defined as narration (Carroll, 1992). However,

is science, after all, not the narration of reality as well? The main difference is as follows. While science aims to code reality on reality's own terms, art aims to code reality on the artist's terms. I will briefly illustrate this. The periodic table is supposed to distinguish between elements that in fact exist and are different. In contrast, Pushkin's Onegin may tell us a story that never happened and is not told in an analytically sensible way. Yet its value derives from how it is narrated and what that can tell us about reality (Cravens, 2002).

Finally, I would like to show how the contrast I drew between art and science may help explain the possible limits of the latter. It is an increasingly popular viewpoint to deny the existence of free will and consciousness and claim that both are illusions developed through evolution (Harris, 2014). My first issue with such a claim is a mere logical one: in order to claim that X has an illusion, one already has to assume that X has a point of view (i.e., that X is conscious). My second objection, however, is more relevant to our discussion of art and science. Surely, the scientific assumption of cause and effect yields a deterministic account of reality in which free will and consciousness would hardly fit in. Yet we all feel to possess consciousness and free will and also assume all other human beings (even some animals) to have these attributes. Now it seems that we have a subjective belief that X exists, but our methods to describe reality objectively yield that X cannot exist. So which one is true? I think we can be more sure that there is a reality inside of our mind than there is a reality outside of it. So for me, it would be insensible to deny the existence of the former for the sake of the latter. However, in any case, this dilemma highlights what is at stake when we choose to describe reality scientifically and what its possible limits might be.

To conclude, I first rejected the idea that the use of the scientific method is in itself a sufficient condition for scientific inquiry. To complement the definition, I argued that it is necessary that one's sole direct reason to do scientific research is to make the closest possible approximation to reality. Then, I defended the view that such criteria may be applied not only to natural science, but also to social science. Having established my concept of science, I contrasted it with that of art. Finally, through the dilemma of consciousness and free will, I showed what is at stake in opting for a scientific approach to reality.

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