

TEACHING OF ECONOMIC SCIENCE IN THE CZECH LANDS IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE CLASH OF CAMERALISM AND THE CLASSICAL SCHOOL OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

Jaroslav Krameš

Abstract

The field of university study, through which economic science was presented in university teaching, was called political science (Politische Wissenschaften). They consisted of business science (Handlungswissenschaft), financial science (Finanzwissenschaft) and police science (Polizeywissenschaft). They were lectured together with other non-economic disciplines. In the last decade of the 18th century, physiocratism permeates through economic thought and economic policy. Along with it, the teachings of Adam Smith (1723 - 1790) permeates through economic thought and the teaching of economics. Václav Gustav Kopetz (1781–1857) worked at the University of Prague. A number of political science (Politische Wissenschaften) teachers took turns at the University (liceum in years 1782 - 1827) in Olomouc. They focused on non-economic subjects. The discrepancy between economic reality and the state of economic science has resulted in a decline in interest in economic science subjects. Gradually, cameralism is relegated to the sidelines, economic thought has been permeated by the classical school. However, a certain tradition of cameralism continued in teaching at universities in the Czech lands in the form of teaching of financial science (Finanzwissenschaft).

Key words: Cameralism, Classical School of Political Economy, University Teaching of Economic Science

JEL Code: B 100, A 100

Introduction

The first half of the nineteenth century constitutes a special stage in developing economic thinking in the Czech lands. The teachings of the representatives of economic thought in the Czech lands distinguished three basic systems. The mercantilist, physiocratic, and Smith's system. The physiocratic system influenced economic thought for a transitional period. In 1810, for example, one of the representatives of economic thought (Wenzel Gustav Kopetz /1784-1857/) considered Smith's system a synthesis of mercantilist and physiocratic systems. The teachings of the physiocrats have completely receded. Nevertheless, the influence of Cameralism continued to reverberate, and the teachings of Adam Smith were increasingly

prominent in economic thought. Following the easing of censorship imposed on professional economic literature, the nature of economic thought changed radically in favour of the classical school of political economy. Cameralism, however, retained a certain trace in the further development of the discipline of financial science. This discipline was part of the teaching of economic science until 1948.

Economic thought was disseminated mainly through the university discipline called political sciences (Politische Wissenschaften). They were to serve the power needs of the state. The study in the field was oriented towards the training of potential participants in land administration. The Cameralists viewed the economic process as an administrative process. The purpose of state policy and political sciences was to be fulfilled through the principle of population. Cameralism was associated with the idea of state interference in the economy, which was merged with the idea of governance. The teachings of Adam Smith were oriented towards investigating the nature and origin of the wealth of nations, which led to the idea of economic liberalism. This was inconsistent with state interference in the economy.

The situation in the development of economic thought in the Czech lands led to a decline in interest in economic science, which was overshadowed by other fields of study. This paper focuses on the peculiarities of the development of economic thought in the first half of the 19th century in the Czech lands and the example of the teachings of Wenzel Gustav Kopetz.

There is a plethora of literature on Cameralism in Central Europe. See, for example (Khavanova, 2017), (Krames, 2010), (Krames, 2017), (Magnusson, 2021), (Szantay, 2021), (Szabo, 2018), (Tribe, 1984).

1 Cameralism and Political Science

The external form of Cameralism in the first half of the 19th century was shaped by the university branch of education called political science (Politische Wissenschaften). It consisted of police science (Polizeiwissenschaft), business science (Handlungswissenschaft), and financial science (Finanzwissenschaft). In 1804, two more disciplines were assigned to political science professors: Political Science of Laws /politische Gesetzkunde/ and, in 1808, the Serious Political Offences /Schwere politische Übertretungen/. The lectures were given during the summer semester in the fourth year of studies at the University of Prague.

Late Cameralism was infiltrated by some theories and new understandings of the content of concepts that went beyond the limits of mercantilism. It was the concept of wealth as the sum of goods (and not money identified with precious metals) or Hume's quantitative theory of

money. The relationship between agriculture and manufacturing is also mediated by trade, which is governed by the principles of competition. On the other hand, Cameralism conserved economic thought and prevented the more intense influence of the teachings of the classical school of political economy.

Political science professors were considered part of the bureaucratic hierarchy. The content of the political science course was prescribed, and the professors were obliged to follow the content of Sonnenfels' textbook(*Grundsätze der Polizey-, Handlungs- und Finanzwissenschaft. Fundamentals of Police, Business, and Financial Science*), which was published a total of eight times. Joseph von Sonnenfels (1733-1817) was, at the same time, personal support at court for his pupils as a professor at the University of Prague or the Olomouc University. For example, when Butschek or Schulz came into conflict with Catholic circles in the university administration, J. Sonnenfels defended his pupils in court. The department of political science at the University of Vienna trained potential political science professors at other universities in Austria. After the deaths of Professors Sonnenfels, Butschek, and Schulz, the situation at the department changed.

Late Cameralism reflected the power and economic needs of the state. The principle of population formed the basis of their fulfilment. The principle of population was the so-called ultimate purpose of both political science and the state's politics.

2 Spiritual Environment

Late Cameralism in the Czech lands had already passed its peak in the first half of the nineteenth century. Joseph von Sonnenfels died. Their pupils, J. Butschek (1741-1821), professor of political science at the University of Prague, and Leopold Ludwig Schulz (1743-1814), professor of political science at the University of Olomouc, also died.

Professor Butschek was replaced at the University of Prague by Professor Wenzel Gustav Kopetz (1784-1857), a pupil of Professor H. J. Watteroth. Professor Schulz was succeeded by several individuals who, although they were obliged to teach, among other things, political science and, within it, business science, their professional interest was already directed towards other fields such as statistics and serious police offences or political law. They were pupils of Heinrich Joseph Watteroth (1756-1819). H. J. Watteroth replaced Professor Sonnenfels at the department of political science at the University of Vienna. Watteroth was speaking against the teachings of J. Sonnenfels and opposed those of A. Smith, but he could

not write a textbook that reflected the influence of the classical school of political economy. Therefore, Sonnenfels' textbook remained the required textbook.

The content and forms of teaching were subject to the supervision of the authorities, and professional literature was under strict censorship. Nevertheless, the required textbook continued to be the Sonnenfels' textbook. Yet the situation in the teaching of economics changed. In contrast to the last third of the eighteenth century, when teaching in Austrian universities was entirely subject to the ideas prescribed by Sonnenfels' textbook, in the nineteenth century, the situation changed after the arrival of professors H. J. Watteroth at the department of political science at the University of Vienna and Professor Johann Nepomuk Zizius (1772-1824) at the department of statistics.

The principle of population collided with economic reality in the first half of the 19th century, with relative overpopulation and the business of machine-based mass production. In business science - Handlungswissenschaft - the population principle was manifested in the state's support for maximising employment, which in practice sometimes led to the authorities trying to prevent the replacement of labour by machines.

The general principles for public administration and legislation, including the economic policy of the state based on the population principle, clashed with the business objectives of business entities. The principle of population and other principles based on it appeared (and were so criticized) as "invented". Smith's system was based on examining natural laws, which were understood to be universal and eternal, and which governed economic life. Therefore, according to the critics of Cameralism, there is no need to invent principles for national economic policy. There is no need to derive them from the needs of the state because national economic science derives them from itself. Economic life develops based on its own principles. The state's role is to remove obstacles that stand "in the way" of the harmonious functioning of natural laws. The purpose or object of political science should not be derived from the needs of the state. A second subject enters the centre of political science - the nation and the national economy. The national economy becomes part of the political science curriculum. The path of making economic science independent within political science and exempting it from non-economic disciplines is being taken. The process culminated in the first half of the 20th century when the national economy became an independent field of study at universities in the Czech lands.

The critique of Cameralism, which grew stronger and stronger during the following decades of the first half of the 19th century, turned into an attempt to synthesize both systems. For example, Professor Kopetz saw Smith's system (the industrial system) as a synthesis of the

mercantile and physiocratic systems (Braf, 1923: 15). The teachings of A. Smith appeared as a special part of the *Staatswirtschaftslehre*, as Professor Kopetz of the University of Prague called his lectures.

The penetration of classical school ideas was hindered by censorship and other authorities' measures. For example, students were forbidden to study at foreign universities, and the number of international students at Austrian universities was also limited. In the period in question, between 0 and 2 students (rarely 3 students) studied at the University of Prague each year (according to the catalogues of students of the Faculty of Law of the University of Prague). Domestic and foreign economic literature was censored. The import of foreign economic literature was banned. Examples were the authors George Franz August Count Buquoy (1781 - 1851) and Lexa of Aehrenthal (1733 - 1824). Both of them transfer the ideas of the representatives of the classical school into their essays. However, they had to publish their writings not in Austria but abroad. Nevertheless, the authorities showed some tolerance for criticism of Sonnenfels' textbook. This loophole allowed some, albeit limited, penetration of the ideas of the classical school of political economy (especially the teachings of Adam Smith) into Austria.

There was a certain decline in interest in economic doctrine. Professors of political science in economic science published almost no outputs and still boasted about it. They shifted their attention to the other fields assigned to political science professors - the political science of law (*die politische Gesetzkunde*) and serious police offences (*die schwere Polizeiübertretungen*). During the reign of Emperor Franz II (1792 - 1835), the ideological conditions were arranged "the old way", and Joseph Sonnenfels' textbook remained the required textbook for teaching political science at Austrian universities and the University of Prague and was used for this purpose in Olomouc until 1848. Karl Thomas Richter (1837-1878), a professor of political science at the University of Prague, captured the spirit of the first half of the 19th century with the opinion of Emperor Francis II. (1792 – 1835). He stated: "*Ich will keine gescheiten, ich will gute Bürger*" (*I want no scholars, I want good citizens*) see (Richter, 1869: 17).

3 Teachings of Wenzel G. Kopetz

W. G. Kopetz calls his lectures *Staatswirtschaftslehre*. The starting point of his doctrine is Cameralistic. It consists of the needs of the state and the costs that are necessary to cover the expenditure of the state.

The original source of state revenue was the sovereign's gifts and indirect taxes. The revenue was managed by an office called camera - Czech chamber, hence cameralist science. The cameralist science par excellence was financial science. In the first half of the 19th century, according to Kopetz, the financial source of the state was not only gifts and indirect taxes but also national wealth (Nationalvermögen) and national income (National Einkommen). According to Kopetz, the state has two goals. Firstly, government revenue and expenditure on administration, health, military, etc. (the subject of financial science), and secondly, influences the level of national wealth and income. This activity is the subject of "industrial policy", formerly business science. The shift lies in the fact that, according to Kopetz, the cameralist sciences (originally financial science and commercial science) dealt with the action of the state on national wealth but did not deal with the creation, distribution, exchange, and consumption of goods, nor did they investigate the nature and origin of wealth. This issue was a given for the cameralist sciences. According to Kopetz, the national economic process was an administrative process. But Kopetz is convinced that from the so-called general part of the *Staatwirtschaftslehre*, which deals with the operation of the universal and always valid natural laws governing the creation, distribution, exchange, and consumption of wealth, the principles governing financial and industrial policy can be deduced. He thus sets aside a separate, distinct section, which he calls the *Volkswirtschaftslehre*, which forms a separate and logically closed part of the *Staatwirtschaftslehre*. He ran into a problem in the teaching system. According to Koptz, the general part - the *Volkswirtschaftslehre* - should precede the industrial policy with financial policy. According to the Austrian curriculum, however, the principles according to which the state influences the economy are part of the so-called police science, which precedes the *Staatwirtschaftslehre*. The picture of modern economic science followed a complicated path.

W. G. Kopetz states that the teachings of A. Smith (in Kopetz's expression "the new science") penetrated Germany in 1815 (Bráf, 1923: 15), and he called it an "industrial system" (Bráf, 1923: 15). The first translation of A. Smith's work into German was published in 1776 and 1778 by Johann Friedrich Schiller, but remained outside the attention of the scholarly community at this time. The translation by Christian Garve (1742-1798) in 1794 attracted attention. Professor Kopetz became acquainted with the teachings of A. Smith through German followers of A. Smith's teachings (L. H. von *Jakob* /1759-1827/, G . *Hufeland* /1760-1817/, C . J. *Kraus* /1753-1807/). He was also strongly influenced by the writings of K. H. Rau. The interpretation of Smith's teachings by Johann Nepomuk Zizio (1772-1824) was particularly influential in Austria. W. G. Kopetz published *Vorträge über die Nationalökonomie, Finanz-*

und Polizeiwissenschaftin the field of economics. Teaching guide. *Ueber die praktische Anwenbarkeit der nationalökonomischen Lehrsätze auf den bestehenden Zustand der europäischen Staaten*. They were published in the journal Hesperus in 1819.

However, he stood out as the author of *Oesterreichische politische Gesetzkunde oder systematische Darstellung der politischen Verwaltung in den deutschen, böhmischen, galizischen Provinzen des österreichischen Kaisertums*, which was promoted to an officially required textbook for the field of "political law science" (politische Gesetzkunde). Shortly afterwards, in 1819, he published a second volume, becoming a required textbook. These writings have not lost their significance for valuable historical knowledge and are still a sought-after source of information. In 1829 and 1830, he supplemented the subject with other writings recognized by the professional public. *Allgemeine österreichische Gewerbgesetzkunde oder systematische Darstellung der gesetzlichen Verfassung der Manufaktur- und Handelsgewerb in den deutschen, böhmischen und galizischen, italienischen und ungarischen Provinzen des österreichischen kaiserstaates*. Two parts. Wien: F. Volcke.

3.1 Professors of Political Science in Olomouc

A similar departure from political science to "political law", "serious political offences" (schwere politische Übertretungen), or statistics can also be observed among professors of political science at the university (or lyceum) in Olomouc. Let us give an overview:

Table 1: Overview of professors of political science at the University of Olomouc (lyceum) from 1772 to 1855

Name	Period of work at the department
Leopold Ludwig Schulz von Straszniczki (1743 – 1814)	1772 - 1789
Franz Christoff von Passy (1763 – 1837)	1789 -1815
Joseph Rohrer (1769 – 1828)	1815 - 1820
Gustav Franz von Schreiner (1793 – 1872)	1820 - 1828
Hieronymus von Scari zu Cronhof (1798 – 1845)	1828 - 1843
Johann Koppel (1808 – 1866)	1843 -1855

Source: The table is based on the lists of lecturers at the University of Olomouc (lyceum). Printed lists of lectures of the University of Olomouc (and lyceum) from individual years. *Praelectiones ordinariae (1775 – 1855)*. Kept by: Regional archive in Opava - branch Olomouc. Karton 544. Fund of Olomouc University.

Franz Christoff von Passy, a pupil of Sonnenfels, focused his professional interest on statistics, published a map of Moravia and Silesia, and lectured on general history according to his own textbooks. Rohrer specialized in statistics. In addition to political science, Gustav Franz von Schreiner lectured on political law, grave political offences, statistics of the Austrian states, Austrian state law, and more. Hieronymus von Scari zu Cronhof, professor of political science, dealt with political legislation and statistics. Finally, Johann Koppel turned his attention to political law and serious political offences at the expense of political science.

Conclusion

Economic thought in the first half of the 19th century in the Czech lands differs from the preceding and following stages. There is an overt Cameralism represented by the obligatory textbook of J. Sonnenfels *Grundsätze der Polizei-, Handlungs- und Finanzwissenschaft*. The population principle on which the textbook is based runs up against economic realities such as relative overpopulation, preventing the introduction of machines into production to replace human labour. The population principle is considered the basis from which the power and economic needs of the state are met. In practice, administrative officials' assumption of the management of economic processes (state intervention in the economy by regulation and regimentation) clashes with the concept of "new science", as W. G. Kopetz called Adam Smith's teachings. The state is pushed out of theory. The theory is private economics. National economic policy is based on economic liberalism and not on influencing the operation of the economy by the state. The population principle thus appears as a "made-up", artificial principle.

Kopetz calls his lectures "Staatswirtschaftslehre". According to Kopetz, the state is pursuing two main goals with its interventions in the economy. On the one hand, it is budget revenues and expenditures /problems of financial science/. On the other hand, it is the purposeful influence of the level of "national income" and "national wealth". The issue is the subject of industrial policy. A. Smith's teaching is called Volkswirtschaft. The composition or system of teaching traditionally given by the interpretation of first police science, then business science, and then financial science is criticized by Kopetz. Professor Kopetz's Cameralism did not deal with the nature and origin of the wealth of nations. He considered the issue as given. The population principle appeared to critics of Cameralism as "invented". The general part of the Staatswirtschaftslehre lectures, which consisted of the theory of the national economy (the teachings of A. Smith), should methodologically precede the special lectures on industrial

policy and financial policy. However, this perspective was traditionally adopted by police science in teaching.

The conflict situation, the influence of the "new science," and the position of Cameralism led to a temporary retreat of professors' interest in political science. They preferred other disciplines such as serious police offences, statistics, or political law. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the sciences system was temporarily established. Police science (which also included national economic policy), national economy (essentially national economic theory), and financial science.

Acknowledgment

This paper was supported by the foundation "Nadání Josefa, Marie and Zdeňky Hlávkových"

References

1. Aehrenthal, Lexa von 1819, *Die Staatswirtschaft nach Naturgesetzen*. Leipzig: J. M. Brockhaus
2. Aehrenthal, Lexa von (1801 – 1802). *Staatswirtschaftliche Aufsätze in strenger Beziehung auf Zeitumstände und besonderer Rücksicht auf Böhmen*. I. II. III. Leipzig: J. M. Brockhaus/?
3. Bráf, A. (1923) *Listy o studium národohospodárském*. Collected works. Life and work, St. II. Prague: Vesmír
4. Buquoy, G. 1815. *Die Theorie die Nationalwirtschaft nach einem neuen Pläne und mehreren eigenen Ansichten dargestellt*. Leipzig: Verlag Breitkopf und Härtel.
5. Khavanova, O. (Apr. 2017) *Joseph von Sonnenfels's Courses and the Making of the Habsburg Bureaucracy*, AUSTRIAN HISTORY YEARBOOK, Volume: 48 , Pages.54-73
6. Kopetz, G. (1784-1846) *Staatswirtschaft*. Kopetz fund Václav Gustav Literary Archive of the National Literature Memorial, cardboard 27 / D / 1, (4 / B / 2), Kopetz Gustav 1784-1846.
7. Krames, J. (2010) *Education of political Economy and economic Thought in the Czech Lands in the first Half of the 19th Century*. POLITICKA EKONOMIE, Volume 58, Issue: 5, Pages. 641-656
8. Magnusson, L (Jun 2021) *Cameralism as Sonderweg of German Mercantilism?* HISTORY OF POLITICAL ECONOMY, Volume: 53, Issue: 3, Pages 389-405
9. *Praelectiones ordinariae (1775 – 1855)*. Saved: Provincial Archive in Opava - Olomouc branch. Cardboard 544. Olomouc University Fund.

10. Richter, Karl, Thomas, 1869, *Ueber das Studium der Volkswirtschafts in Oesterreich (Antritts – Tede bei Eröffnung der Vorlesungen über Volkswirtschaft an der Prager Universität)*, Prague: H. Dominicus publishing house
11. Szabo, F. A. J. (apr. 2018). *Cameralism, Josephinism, and Enlightenment: The Dynamic of Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1740-92*, Austrian history Yearbook, Volume: 49 , Pages.1-14
12. Szantay, A. (jun 2021) *Cameralism in the Habsburg Monarchy and Hungary* HISTORY OF POLITICAL ECONOMY, Volume: 53, Issue: 3, Pages.551-569
13. Tribe, K. (1984). *Cameralism and the Science of Government* 1984 | JOURNAL OF MODERN HISTORY, Volume: 56 Issue: 2, Pages: .263-284
14. Constantin von Wurzbach (1886) *Watteroth, Heinrich Joseph*. In: *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*. 53. Theil. Kaiserlich-königliche Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, Vienna, p. 152 f. (digital copy)
15. Zizius, J. N. 1811. *Oekonomisch-politische Betrachtungen über die Handelsbilanz*. Wien – Triest.

Contact

Jaroslav Krameš

Prague University of Economics and Business, Prague, Faculty of Business Administration, Department of Managerial Economics

Sq. W. Churchill 1938/4, 130 67 Prague 3, Czech

RepublicKrames@vse.cz