<https://helda.helsinki.fi>

From Fatherly Government to an Economic State : Late Cameralists on Natural Rights, Freedom, and Pursuit of Happiness

Nokkala, Ere

2021-06

Nokkala , E 2021 , ' From Fatherly Government to an Economic State : Late Cameralists on Natural Rights, Freedom, and Pursuit of Happiness ' , History of Political Economy , vol. 53 , no. 3 , pp. 479-495 . <https://doi.org/10.1215/00182702-8993344>

<http://hdl.handle.net/10138/339041>

<https://doi.org/10.1215/00182702-8993344>

acceptedVersion

Downloaded from Helda, University of Helsinki institutional repository.

This is an electronic reprint of the original article.

This reprint may differ from the original in pagination and typographic detail.

Please cite the original version.

From Fatherly Government to an Economic State: Late Cameralists on Natural Rights, Freedom and Pursuit of Happiness

Introduction

The aim of this article is to reinterpret late cameralists' contribution to the reorientation of cameral sciences in the second half of the eighteenth century. This article emphasizes the conceptual changes to the central concept of happiness during the second half of the eighteenth century that resulted from the rethinking of the natural law foundations of the discipline. I argue that cameral sciences progressed from princely household management to a political theory of the economic state.

Whereas a massive amount of scholarship has explored the liberal and republican political and economic thought, relatively little attention has been paid to this form of Continental political economy. Late cameralism, or universal cameralism, developed concurrently with French physiocracy and British political economy as a porous pan-European political and economic discourse. Histories of political economy have been written predominantly from an Anglophone perspective, from which cameralism has usually been associated with Germanic landlocked protectionism, planned economy, and social welfare. Today, when cameralism is mentioned in a positive light, it is usually by the defenders of the welfare state who recognize the cameralists as their predecessors (Magnusson 2020) or by researchers critical of the conditions created by free trade and classical economics who see the cameralists as early advocates of development economics (Reinert 2007: 1).

There are several approaches to cameralism in historiographical research. The first and the most common approach is to treat cameralism as a German version of mercantilism. Although it has been challenged repeatedly (Simon 2014), this is still the dominant interpretation, especially in textbooks. The work of Eli Heckscher ([1931] 1955) has strongly influenced these interpretations. Recent studies have successfully argued that cameralism had a wider influence than previously believed. What was earlier considered a distinctly German phenomenon is now identified as having been present in Spain, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and even England (Seppel and Tribe 2017; Rössner 2016; Dodsworth 2008; Cunha 2011; Adam 2006; Lluch 2002). The point is not only that the cameralists were read abroad but also that cameralists were deeply involved in European debates. For example, Johann Friedrich von Pfeiffer (1718–1787) knew and used the works of John Locke, Adam Smith, and Antonio Genovesi (Frambach 2011: 98). This article emphasizes that cameralism did not develop as a purely German phenomenon.

Section 1 explores the primary context(s) of cameralism by concentrating on the relationship between the princely chamber, cameral sciences and cameralists. For the majority of scholars, cameralism is associated with the theory and practice of a tutelary absolutist interventionist state that forcefully guided its subjects to their happiness. According to this view, cameralism posed no theoretical limits to the tasks of the state. On the contrary, the tasks of the state encompassed all aspects of the lives of the subjects (Kaufman 1999; Moggach 2009). I suggest instead that leading late cameralists, Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi (1717–1771) and Pfeiffer, were not one-sided defenders of a tutelary interventionist state. Considering cameralists as interventionists is a backward-looking interpretation (Garner 2017: 134). The roots of cameralism are in the

princely chamber and originally cameralists were primarily interested in increasing the wealth of their rulers. However, significant conceptual changes took place in cameral sciences—including redescribing happiness in terms of freedom—during the second half of the eighteenth century, when the focus of the cameral sciences shifted from filling the prince’s treasury to fostering the idea of an economically active citizen in pursuit of his happiness. Individual householders formed the basis for an economic state. Paradoxically, if cameralism were understood as it is now in some of the secondary literature, the leading cameralist, Justi, would not fit into this category. Instead of favoring a landlocked authoritarian monarchy, his aim was to turn Prussia into a trading nation founded on natural rights that had their roots in human passions and instincts (Nokkala 2019).

In section 2 I argue that late cameralists’ philosophical justification of the commercial society employed the language of natural rights, which itself was European, transnational, and international in its character. There has been a notable growth of interest in cameralism among historians and the conceptual changes that occurred in the cameralist literature in the second half of the eighteenth-century have been recognized (Cunha 2017; Stolleis 1988). Still an account that does full justice to the complexity of the intellectual and political context in which cameralist thinking emerged is missing. Recent scholarly literature on cameralism argues that while the “philosophical foundations” of cameralism have been exhaustively explored, the actual influence of cameralism on statecraft has been underestimated (Seppel 2017: 2). On the contrary this article argues that, the philosophical underpinnings of cameralism in natural law have been continuously misunderstood and misinterpreted (Nokkala 2019). Cameralists have been considered to be advocates of Christian Wolff’s (1679–1754) rationalist, traditionalist and

paternalistic natural law. However, I emphasize that late cameralists were anti-Wolffian and favoured the empiricist natural law that put the emphasis on passions and instincts.

In section 3 I analyze the changing concepts of freedom and happiness. As argued in section 1, cameral sciences were originally tightly bound with rulers' happiness. However, once cameralists started to associate natural rights with the necessity of satisfying economic interests and needs, they started to use natural law to legitimize the pursuit for self-interest. Happiness understood as satisfaction of needs, was seen as a result of economic activity. According to late cameralists, citizens had a right to guide themselves to happiness. The entangled concepts of natural rights, freedom and happiness provided the basis for late cameralists' commercial society. They were the foundation of the political theory of the economic state.

In this article I apply the method of conceptual history and approach cameralism on its own terms, analyzing the contemporary usage of the camera-related discourse.¹ This involves analyzing the cameral sciences independently of later interpretative frameworks. In this respect the most central concepts of the cameralistic discourse—namely, natural law, freedom and happiness (*Glückseligkeit*)—are of great significance. *Glückseligkeit* is a concept difficult to translate into English due to its many connotations, one of them having a clear link to the conception of welfare (Magnusson 2020). However, in scholarly literature “happiness” is

¹ The methodological framework of this article has been inspired by the rapprochements between the contextual intellectual history often known as “Cambridge School” and *Begriffsgeschichte*. For combining contextualist, rhetorical and diachronic approaches on conceptual usage and change, see Richter 1995. My aim is to recover the conceptual changes by examining innovative language use. Recognising innovative language use, such as Justi's and Pfeiffer's, requires reconstructing the conventions and contexts of cameralists within which the redescriptions take place.

commonly used as the translation of *Glückseligkeit*. When the cameralists were dealing with concepts such as the common good, the happiness of the state, and the happiness of the citizens, their central questions were: Whose happiness was the cameralist most concerned about? Was it that of the state, the subjects, or the prince? Who decided what is happiness?

Cameralism was not a rigid and coherent economic doctrine that can be easily defined. It was a porous language of politics and economics that was constantly contested (Nokkala and Miller 2020). This instability of meaning is the basis for Lars Magnusson's treatment of mercantilism. Magnusson explores mercantilism as a set of discourses whose most central concepts constantly gained new meanings. Magnusson points out that when mercantilism is not analyzed as a coherent doctrine of economics, it becomes possible to detect conceptual changes and innovations that took place in the writings of the mercantilists (Magnusson 2016: x). Instead of treating cameralism as one universal concept, we can gain a proper historical understanding of the cameralists by tracing their self-reflections. A historical approach along these lines leaves behind the ahistorical and static notion of cameralism in order to examine the different ways in which cameralists conceived of themselves and articulated the tasks of the cameral sciences (Nokkala and Miller 2020).

1. The Primary Context of Cameralism: Cameral Sciences and Cameralists

Julius Bernhard von Rohr (1688–1742) used the concept cameral and state science (*Cameral und Staatswissenschaft*) as early as in 1716 (1716: 2). In 1727 the cameral sciences became an

academic discipline when Prussia's Frederick William I founded the chair of *oeconomic*, police², and cameral sciences in Frankfurt an der Oder and in Halle. The first chairholders were Simon Peter Gasser (1676–1745) and Justus Christoph Dithmar (1678–1737). The establishment of these chairs was part of the centralizing efforts to form stronger Prussian state. The aim was to replace the agents of the provincial judicial and administrative estates with cameralists, professional administrators who were loyal servants of the king and the central administration (Stollberg-Rilinger 1986: 77–78).

In 1741 a chair was established in Uppsala for jurisprudence, *oeconomia*, and commerce. Anders Berch (1711–1774), the first appointed professor, was inspired by the German and Austrian cameralists, such as Veit Ludwig von Seckendorf (1626–1692), Justus Dithmar (1677–1737), and Theodor Ludwig Lau (1670–1740); Lisbet Koerner argues that the chair in Uppsala was a chair in cameralism (1999: 103). Berch's Swedish textbook *Introduction to General Householding* (*Inledning til almänna hushållningen*, 1747) was translated into German (Berch 1747; Berch 1763; Magnusson 1987: 415). According to Koerner, Carl von Linné's (1707–1778), better known as Linnaeus, views are best understood within the framework of cameralism (1999: 103). In Vienna the first chair was established in 1763 and first awarded to Joseph von Sonnenfels (1732/1733–1817). In 1768, a chair of the cameral sciences was founded in Milan. The most important cameralists active in Milan were Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794) and Pietro Verri (1728–1797) (Capra 2002; Ortolja-Baird 2020; Reinert 2018). Verri's Viennese period was of crucial importance to his education (Capra 2002).

² In the eighteenth-century context, police (*Policey*) meant social and economic policy including all activities of the state.

Initially the cameral sciences were concerned with questions of monarchy and administration. The cameralists were administrators in territories subject to rulers, and the political arguments in their writings reflected their allegiances. But as cameralism turned into an academic and theoretical discipline, the nature of the cameral sciences changed. Slowly, they moved towards the state economy (*Staatswirtschaft*), which focused on the theory and practice of the total happiness of the state and the total happiness of the citizens.³ Cameralism became a university discipline with a normative academic discourse that developed independently from the context of the princely chamber. Its primary context became the university (Tribe 2006: 525; [1988] 2017). According to Pierangelo Schiera, cameralism presented a shift from the art of government to the sciences of the state (*Staatswissenschaft*). Sciences of state were no more directly bound to the person of the sovereign; they were instead aimed at a systematic knowledge of the state sciences beyond the empirical reality of the princely chamber (Schiera 1968: 453). Wakefield argues that the main context of cameral sciences never truly shifted from the princely chamber to the university—the cameral sciences did not separate themselves from the fiscal administration. Rather, cameralists are best seen as fiscal propagandists, skillful rhetoricians, who were selfishly promoting their profession (Wakefield 2009: 137–138; Wakefield 2014). However, it is worth noting that in his recent work Wakefield has argued that cameral sciences were not a discipline but an aspiring faculty. Therefore, in Wakefield’s view, characterizing cameralism as political economic theory or a German form of mercantilism is misleading (Wakefield 2019: 662).

My interpretation of the cameralists is close to that of Keith Tribe and Schiera. The cameral sciences did become an academic discipline, and they did separate from the fiscal administration.

³ When James Steuart’s *Political Economy* was translated into German in 1769 it was titled *Staats-Wirtschaft* (State economy).

Furthermore, the ambition of founding a faculty of cameral sciences was entangled with developing a political theory of an economic state. To prove my point, it is necessary to study cameralists' own self-reflections. The cameralists considered themselves cameralists. Self-confidently, Justi argues that in the future, ten times more professional cameralists than lawyers would be needed (1755: 10–11), which explains why there would be need for a whole new faculty of cameralism. Cameralism—or better, the cameral sciences—differs from mercantilism in that the cameralists formed their own distinctive group, unlike seventeenth- and eighteenth-century mercantilists. Therefore, it is important to explore cameralism in its own historical terms with the aim of understanding how cameralists themselves understood the character of their activity, how this understanding varied from university to university and from state to state, and the significant changes in the manner in which the cameralists understood their own science.

Cameralism is an analytical concept used to analyze the discourse and practice of statecraft advocated by the cameralists in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The concept of a cameralist was already in use by the seventeenth century. The chamber of the prince (*camera principis*) is key to understanding the etymology of the camera-related concepts. The origin of the chamber (*Kammer*) as a specialized, collegial body dedicated to administering the sovereign's finances has been the subject of considerable debate. As Wakefield notes, in the 1910s, Melle Klinkenborg identified the chamber as the key site of the fiscal-political direction in Brandenburg. Gerhard Oestreich and Werner Ohnsorge extended Klinkenborg's interpretation to cover other German territories as well, arguing that it provided a basis for the secret councils. The secret sphere of sovereign governance, centering around princely finances, had emerged in the chamber during the second half of the sixteenth century. By the seventeenth century, most

German territories had developed chambers to manage the private affairs of rulers, from the dukes to the emperors. By the second half of the seventeenth century, the experts of the chamber became known as a distinct group called the cameralists (Wakefield 2009: 16–17).

One of the most popular analogies employed by seventeenth-century cameralists was to compare the role of the prince in a state with that of a father. The economy of the family, or householding, was in the hands of the prince. Prominent proponents of this view, Veit Ludwig Seckendorff (1626–1692) and Wilhelm von Schröder (1640–1688), like so many of their contemporaries understood *oeconomia* to be synonymous with the concept of household management. According to Schröder, a prince was really like a father, and his subjects were, insofar as they have to be governed, his children (Tribe 2006: 529). A prince was comparable to a father who guided his family towards happiness. This kind of fatherly government (*väterliche Regierung*), the idea that subjects were comparable with adolescent children, was precisely that which Kant later criticized as the greatest conceivable despotism (1793: 290–291). However, the political and economic discourse of cameral sciences shifted radically away from this conception from the 1750s onwards as the universal cameralists entered the stage.

2. Natural Law, Natural Rights and the Legitimate Self-Interest

It is symptomatic that the studies underestimating the changes that took place in the cameral sciences in the 1750s and 1760s overlook the works of the late cameralists where they sought to lay new theoretical foundations for the cameral sciences. These works include Justi's *Groundwork of a Good Government* (1759) and *Nature and Essence of States* (1760) and Pfeiffer's monumental *Principles of Universal Cameral Science* (1783). In these works Justi and

Pfeiffer elaborated their views on natural law, which provided the political philosophy of the cameral sciences (Justi 1759; 1771; Pfeiffer 1783). If one overlooks these works, one ends up with a reductionist view of cameralism. The case concerning cameralist accounts of foreign policy, international order, and free trade have suffered from this simplifying approach.

Cameralists' books on these topics are often treated separately from the framework of the cameral sciences. In short, since cameralism has been typecast as paternalistic, authoritarian, and protectionist, the cameralists works that do not fit this stereotype have often been neglected, although cameralists themselves did include all those neglected fields in the universal cameral sciences.

From the 1750s onward, the textbooks of the cameral sciences were theoretically nuanced, politically loaded, and aimed at extensive social and economic reforms. Moreover, it can be argued that academic cameralists were entirely familiar with the idea that human beings can be the best judges of their own interests and that free trade and other non-governed activity is in many circumstances the most efficient way to foster the common good (Priddat 2008; Rössner 2016). During the second half of the eighteenth century, the cameralists began to classify themselves as universal cameralists (*Universal-Cameralist*) and particular cameralists (*Particular-Cameralist*) (Justi 1755: preface). Albion Small and Kurt Zielenziger use the concept of “cameralists of the bureaus” to describe particular cameralists, as distinguished from the proper cameralists, whom they call “cameralists of the books” (Small 1909: 6; Zielenziger 1914: 86–87; Wakefield 2009: 4). In the language of the mid-eighteenth century, the universal cameralists were the ones who were interested in the interconnectedness of all the cameral sciences. Furthermore, they wanted to justify cameral sciences theoretically (Dreitzel 1998). For

instance, Pfeiffer divided universal cameral sciences into politics, police, state economy, and finance science (Pfeiffer 1783). The universal cameral science developed by Justi and Pfeiffer was built on a changing notion of natural law. Instead of putting the emphasis on duties, they referred to natural rights that were associated with the necessity of satisfying economic interests and needs (Dreitzel 1998: 170)

It is no surprise that natural law was meant to provide the theoretical justification for the cameral sciences. Natural law was the most significant tradition of ethics, politics, and philosophy of law in the early modern era. Natural law was not only part of jurisprudence; it was the most philosophical part of jurisprudence as well as part of the common education of lawyers, philosophers, and theologians alike. Political theories were built on natural law, and it is fair to state that natural law was at the heart of all societal thought in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Natural law was ubiquitous (Haakonssen 2012). It is important to keep in mind that natural law, not unlike mercantilism and cameralism, was also a changing discourse. The most important concepts of natural law, such as happiness and sociability, gained new meanings over time.

The second half of eighteenth century witnessed the rise of the idea of commercial society and emergence of “economics” as a sciences (Winch 1973). The Scottish case is often acknowledged, whereby the idea of commercial society is considered as a British phenomenon (Berry 2013). However, political economy and new ideas of commercial society were built on anthropology and moral philosophy that had been adopted from natural law. In this respect, the Scottish Enlightenment and cameralists were alike (Bödeker and Hont 1995: 80–89; Cardoso

2015). The question is: What kind of natural law provided the foundation for political economy and for the new ideas of commercial society? With few exceptions, the current scholarly literature argues that cameral scientists advocated the natural law of rationalist philosopher Christian Wolff. Even in the most recent literature, one can read that the conceptual framework of the cameralists was built on the natural law of Wolff (Backhaus 2009: 11, 14; Backhaus 2016: 72–78). In my view, the main reason why the late cameralists have been considered Wolffians—and, by extension, paternalists—is the central role that the concept of happiness (*Glückseligkeit*) played in their political and economic thinking. Because Wolff was the most influential philosopher of his time and famous for his conception of happiness, it is easy to assume that the cameralists must have taken the concept from him. Wolff was a conservative thinker who supported absolutism. His natural law was rational and intellectual. Wolff ended up legitimizing a paternalistic conception of the foundation of societies and argued for the idea of a philosopher-king. The goal of the king was to guide the subjects (who were incapable of finding their own happiness) toward happiness (Grunert 2005; Haakonssen 2006;). When Wolff described his ideal state, he used the concepts of fatherly government (*imperium paternale, Väterliche Regierung*). In sum, there is little doubt regarding the paternalistic nature of Wolff’s ideal state. Neither does he set any theoretical limits on the actions of the state (Wolff [1721] 1747: 200–201, §264).

Universal cameralists aimed to replace Wolffianism with a new, empirically motivated version of natural law. Closer analysis reveals that Justi and Pfeiffer were among the most ardent critics of Wolff’s philosophy, including Wolff’s views on natural law. Justi supported a natural law that had its origin in passions (Nokkala 2010; 2019). We know that he had studied Johann Jacob Schmauss’s (1690–1757) *New System* (1754) in detail. In his *Nature and Essence of States*, Justi

openly took the side of Schmauss and stated that, despite the apparently devastating criticism leveled against it, the main concept of Schmauss's natural jurisprudence was correct (Justi [1760] 1771: 384–385). Schmauss had argued in his natural law that moral actions of man were not in the first place motivated by reason but by passions, instincts, and interests. Those were the mainsprings of human beings (Schmauss 1754; Nokkala 2010). Building on Schmauss's ideas of natural rights, Justi legitimized the pursuit for self-interest. Self-interest was the moving force for commerce, consumption, for different types of occupations and for the economy understood as the “nourishing state” (*Nahrungstand*). For this very reason, Justi argued, self-interest should not be overregulated (Justi 1760, vol 1: 555–556).

Pfeiffer wrote a lengthy review (91 pages) of Justi's *Nature and Essence of States* in which he stated his agreement with Schmauss's and Justi's conception of natural rights. He went further than Schmauss's and Justi's conception of natural rights and argued that everything that is part of our nature is our own property. Our natural rights belong to that which everyone has from nature – the right to be what we are and the right to all of your parts and powers, which we can use for our benefit and self-preservation. Pfeiffer emphasized that the right to defend one's person and rights is as natural as the rights themselves. Without the right of resistance, the rights would cease to be. Therefore, every person has the right to defend himself and his correlate rights by any means (Pfeiffer 1782: 178). Pfeiffer had adopted Locke's idea of the ownership of one's own person (Dreitzel 1998, 156; Frambach 2011: 98). He shared Justi's evaluation of self-interest as the mainspring of economic activity (Pfeiffer 1780: 12). For him, self-interest was the magical cure that put everything into motion and maintained the movement (Pfeiffer 1783: 406). Human actions were motivated in the first place not by concerns for the well-being of the others but by

self-love, self-interest, and passions (Frambach 2011: 101). Justi and Pfeiffer did not believe that the economy of the state could function without direction. Not everyone would be able to recognize their own true interests (Wakefield 2019: 669). However, the idea of unalienable rights was the basis for the universal cameral sciences. Rights were associated with needs, and whenever Pfeiffer—not unlike Justi—discussed happiness and the satisfaction of needs, he had the economy understood as the “nourishing state” (*Nahrungsstand*) in mind (Frambach 2011: 103).

3. The Changing Concepts of Happiness and Freedom

Pfeiffer argued that man possesses the natural right to freedom (Frambach 2011: 101). Thereby, he intimately associates freedom and happiness. According to Pfeiffer, happiness consisted

Of a true and sensible liberty, which is—for both the ordering and obeying—subjected to compulsion of wise and just laws; Of a large quantity of healthy, well-bred, diligent, skilful people; Of an excellent culture of the surface of the ground, and numerous well chosen and sufficiently fed livestock herds; Of the finding and sensible use of the products from the underground; Of the most proper flourishing manufactories and factories; Of well established domestic action and foreign trade; Of a good connection of the whole national economy; Of cheap and fair distributed burdens from taxes on the properties, mines, well established customs duties, trade and capitation taxes; Of an external safety against all hostile attacks; Of an inward safety against disturbances, fraud, contempt, compulsion of conscience and other oppressions. (Pfeiffer 1780: 343–344)⁴

⁴ The translation is by Hans Frambach in Frambach 2011: 112.

Pfeiffer's view on freedom and happiness echoed that of Justi, who redescribed happiness in terms of freedom. According to Justi, happiness consisted of freedom, security, and wealth, and every government was responsible for providing these for its subjects. He accomplished this redescription in the second edition of his *State Economy* in 1758, which differs significantly from the first edition of 1755. The changes were a reflection of Justi's reading of Montesquieu (Nokkala 2019: 36). Justi's conception of freedom was negative: freedom was the absence of constraint. Subjects were right to oppose a state that did not serve the main aim of happiness (Schmidt am Busch 2009). If the practiced politics did not serve the happiness of the families and interfered with the inner freedom of families, such politics could be criticized. Therefore, the concept of happiness became a criterion for evaluating the politics practiced, and its role in the politicization of the German Enlightenment should not be underestimated (Dreitzel 1987: 172).

The area where the state could not interfere was the male sphere within the family. When Justi spoke of the freedom of the family, he meant the sphere of male power (Hull 1996: 190). The householder was not a woman, maid, child, or servant but a male householder who had managed to establish his own household (Justi [1760] 1771: 415). Justi stressed that if the peace and quiet that families require for their happiness is to exist, then neither the government nor, especially, the police can interfere with the government of the families. Having the authorities govern the family could not occur without uncovering the inner affairs of every family, which according to Justi was the worst form of despotism and contradicted every reasonable concept of civil freedom. Instead of peace and quiet, this interference would always cause the opposite, because it would halt all subjection, without which no peace and quiet is possible. Therefore, the only thing that police and civil laws can and should do is to support and encourage domestic

government (Justi 1760, 2: 102–103). Furthermore, Justi emphasized the connection between a flourishing economy and a mild government that allowed citizens to engage in innocent actions and granted them a complete freedom of conscience. Without civil freedom and freedom of conscience, expansion and growth of economy would be halted; the population would not increase and manufacturers would not flourish (Justi 1760, 1:330–331).

According to Justi and Pfeiffer, a citizen (*Bürger*) was free when he could follow his will without restrictions. The only exceptions to this conception were just laws (Justi 1759: 20; Pfeiffer 178: 343–344). Justi and Pfeiffer's definition of civil freedom was clearly influenced by Montesquieu's idea that individuals might have the right to do everything the law allows (Montesquieu [1748] 1979: 292). This represented a new way of thinking about law. Freedom no longer consisted of the freedom of estates, the privileges of corporations, or other political bodies. Rather, freedom began to be understood as the freedom of individuals. The concept of freedom thus denoted the absence of an arbitrary power. This position presents a significant conceptual shift away from corporative liberties of the estates towards civil freedom echoing the belief that the freedom of citizens, especially their economic freedom, would be the best means of encouraging the economy of a state to flourish. Justi argued that the happiness of the citizens, their security, "inner strength," and freedom were necessary for a flourishing society and especially for the success of the economy. He emphasized that a wise government does not need to arrange any special means of support for the growth of commerce and of economy, other than they shall not do anything else than to clear away obstacles that are present in the constitution of the state and in the condition of the commonwealth. When human beings have the freedom to act according to their insight and find no obstacles thereby, they are inclined to support their

happiness (Justi 1761/64, 1:187). Thus, for Justi, it was not the ruler who guided the citizens to happiness. Citizens as reasonable beings had the right to guide themselves to their own happiness (Justi 1761/64, 2:185). It is noteworthy that Justi speaks of the *right* to guide oneself to happiness.

The redescription of the concept of happiness represented a departure from the argument that the interests of the subjects and of the prince would be the same as argued by seventeenth-century cameralists. Justi attacked this principle and argued that, although these interests often went hand in hand, it was thoroughly possible for the prince to mistreat the subjects in the name of his own cameral interest. Hence, Justi distinguished the finances of the prince, his household, from the state economy (*Staatswirtschaft*). The prince was the head of the family with respect to his own finances but not the head of the state's finances. Justi defined the happiness of the state as the happiness of the families that populated the country, and the prince's own finances were part of that happiness. However, his happiness was not equal to the happiness of the state (Justi [1760] 1771: 76–82). Therefore, the happiness of the state was no longer associated with the person of the prince, as only a despot would place his own happiness first. In other words, Justi's view was that the prince should be able to differentiate his will as a ruler and as a householder (Justi [1760] 1771: 69). Householders satisfying their needs and pursuing for happiness were, according to the late cameralists, the main engine of an economic state.

Conclusion

In this article, I have argued that understanding the political philosophical underpinnings of universal cameral sciences, as they were formulated using the language of natural law, enables a

reinterpretation of the reorientation of the cameral sciences in the second half of the eighteenth century. The shift from duties based on natural law to an emphasis on inalienable natural rights helped the universal cameralists build a political theory of an economic state, which relied on the motivating forces of legitimate self-interest and passions. The late cameralists redescribed happiness in terms of freedom, thereby accomplishing a shift from cameral sciences' legitimization of fatherly rule to a political thought that had its legitimacy in the provision of freedom, security, and wealth to householders, who in their part were the main agents and movers of the economic state.

Reference List

- Adam, Ulrich. 2006. *The Political Economy of J.H.G von Justi*. Frankfurt, Peter Lang.
- Backhaus, Jürgen. 2009. "From Wolff to Justi." In *The Beginnings of Political Economy: Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi*, edited by Jürgen Backhaus, 1–18. Boston, MA: Springer.
- Backhaus, Jürgen. 2016. "Mercantilism and Cameralism: Two Very Different Variations of the Same Theme." In *Economic Growth and the Origins of Modern Political Economy. Economic Reasons of State, 1500–2000*, edited by Philipp R. Rössner, 72–78. London, UK: Routledge.
- Berch, Anders. 1747. *Inledning til almänna hushållningen, innefattande grunden til politie, oeconomie och cameral wetenskaperne: til deras tjänst, som biwista de almänne föreläsningar inrättad*. Stockholm, Sweden: Salvius.
- Berch, Anders. 1763. *Einleitung zur allgemeinen Haushaltung: in sich fassend die Grundsätze der Polizey-Oeconomie- und Cameralwissenschaften*. Halle: Curts.
- Berry, Christopher 2013. *The Idea of Commercial Society in the Scottish Enlightenment*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bödeker, Hans Erich, and Istvan Hont. 1995. "Naturrecht, Politische Ökonomie und Geschichte der Menschheit: Der Diskurs über Politik und Gesellschaft in der Frühen Neuzeit." In *Naturrecht—Spätaufklärung—Revolution*, edited by Otto Dann and Diethelm Klippel, 80–89. Hamburg, Germany: Meiner.

- Capra, Carlo. 2002. *I progressi della ragione: Vita di Pietro Verri*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Cardoso, José Luís. 2015. "Liberalism and Enlightened Political Economy." *The European Journal of the History of Economic Thought* 22: 934–948.
- Cunha, Alexandre Mendes. 2011. "Polizei and the System of Public Finance: Tracing the Impact of Cameralism in Eighteenth-Century Portugal." In *The Dissemination of Economic Ideas*, edited by Heinz D. Kurz, Tamotsu Nishizawa, and Keith Tribe, 65–83. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Cunha, Alexander Mendes 2017. "A Previously Unnoticed Swiss Connection in the Dissemination of Cameralist Ideas during the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century." *History of Political Economy* 49: 497–530.
- Dodsworth, F.M. 2008. "The Idea of Police in Eighteenth-Century England: Discipline, Reformation, Superintendence, c. 1780–1800." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 69: 583–604.
- Dreitzel, Horst. 1987. "Justis Beitrag zur Politisierung der deutschen Aufklärung." In *Aufklärung als Politisierung: Politisierung der Aufklärung*, edited by Hans Erich Bödeker and Ulrich Hermann, 158–177. Hamburg, Germany: Meiner.
- Dreitzel, Horst. 1998. "Universal-Kameral-Wissenschaft als politische Theorie. Johann Friedrich von Pfeiffer (1718–1787)." In *Aufklärung als praktische Philosophie: Werner Schneiders zum 65. Geburtstag*, edited by Frank Grunert and Friedrich Vollhardt, 149–171. Tübingen, Germany: Max Niemeyer Verlag.
- Framback, Hans. 2011. "Cameralism and Physiocracy as the Two Sides of a Coin." In *Physiocracy, Antiphiocracy and Pfeiffer*, edited by Jürgen Georg Backhaus, 97–113.
- Garner, Guillaume. 2017. "Cameralist Theoretical Writings on Manufacturing and Administrative Practice in the German Principalities: Conflict and Coherence." In *Cameralism in Practice: State Administration and Economy in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Marten Seppel and Keith Tribe, 133–154. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer.
- Grunert, Frank. 2005. "Absolutism(s): Necessary Ambivalences in the Political Theory of Christian Wolff." *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 73: 141–152.
- Haakonssen, Knud. 2006. "German Natural Law." In *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, edited by Mark Goldie and Robert Wokler, 251–290. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Haakonssen, Knud. 2012. "Enlightenment and the Ubiquity of Natural Law." *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Gesellschaft zur Erforschung des 18. Jahrhunderts* 27: 45–57.
- Heckscher, Eli. (1931) 1955. *Mercantilism*. London, UK: Allen & Unwin.

- Hull, Isabel V. 1996. *Sexuality, State, and Civil Society in Germany, 1700–1815*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Justi, Johann. 1755. *Abhandlung von den Mitteln die Erkenntniß in den Oeconomischen und Cameral-Wissenschaften*. Göttingen.
- Justi, Johann. (1755) 1758. *Staatswirthschaft oder Systematische Abhandlung aller Oeconomischen und Cameral-Wissenschaften*. Leipzig, Germany: Breitkopf.
- Justi, Johann. 1759. *Der Grundriß einer guten Regierung*. Frankfurt, Germany: Garbe.
- Justi, Johann. 1760. *Die Grundfeste zu der Macht und Glückseligkeit der Staaten*. 2 vols. Königsberg: Hartung.
- Justi, Johann. (1760) 1771. *Natur und Wesen der Staaten als die Quelle aller Regierungswissenschaften und Gesetze*. Berlin, Germany: Haude und Spener.
- Justi, Johann. 1761–1764. *Gesammlete Politische und Finanzschriften über wichtige Gegenstände der Staatskunst, der Kriegswissenschaften und des Cameral- und Finanzwesens*. 3 vols. Copenhagen, Denmark: Rothe.
- Kant, Immanuel. 1793. “Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis.” In *Akademie Ausgabe von Immanuel Kants Gesammelten Werken*, vol 8 (Abhandlungen nach 1781), 273–314. <https://korpora.zim.uni-duisburg-essen.de/kant/aa08/290.html> (accessed May 27, 2019).
- Kaufman, Alexander. 1999. *Welfare in the Kantian State*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Koerner, Lisbet. 1999. *Linnaeus: Nature and Nation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lluch, Ernest. 2002. “Der Kameralismus, ein vieldimensionales Lehrgebäude: Seine Rezeption bei Adam Smith und im Spanien des 18. Jahrhunderts.” *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 41: 133–156.
- Magnusson, Lars. 1987. “Mercantilism and Reform Mercantilism: The Rise of Economic Discourse in Sweden during the Eighteenth Century.” *History of Political Economy* 19: 415–433.
- Magnusson, Lars. 2016. *The Political Economy of Mercantilism*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Magnusson, Lars. 2020. “On Happiness. Welfare in Cameralist Discourse in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.” In *Cameralism and the Enlightenment. Happiness. Governance and Reform in Transnational Perspective*, edited by Ere Nokkala and Nicholas B. Miller, 23–46. London, UK: Routledge.
- Moggach, Douglas. 2009. “Freedom and Perfection. German Debates on the State in the Eighteenth Century.” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 42: 1003–23.

- Montesquieu, Charles de Secondat. (1748) 1979. *De l'esprit des lois*, edited by V. Goldschmidt. Paris, France: Garnier-Flammarion.
- Nokkala, Ere. 2010. "Passion as the Foundation of Natural Law in the German Enlightenment: Johann Jacob Schmauss and J.H.G. von Justi." *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire* 17: 113–123.
- Nokkala, Ere. 2019. *From Natural Law to Political Economy: Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi on State, Commerce and International Order*. Münster, Germany: Lit Verlag.
- Nokkala, Ere, and Miller, Nicholas B. 2020. "Introduction." In *Cameralism and the Enlightenment: Happiness, Governance and Reform in Transnational Perspective*, edited by Ere Nokkala and Nicholas B. Miller, 1–20. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ortolja-Baird, Alexandra. 2020. "Cesare Beccaria as Functionary, Lecturer, Cameralist?: Interpreting Cameralism in Habsburg Lombardy." In *Cameralism and the Enlightenment: Happiness, Governance and Reform in Transnational Perspective*, edited by Ere Nokkala and Nicholas B. Miller, 173–200. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Pfeiffer, Johann Friedrich von. 1780. *Der Antiphysiocrat oder umständliche Untersuchung des sogenannten Physiocratischen Systems*. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Eßlinger.
- Pfeiffer, Johann Friedrich von. 1782. *Berichtigungen berühmter Staats-, Finanz-, Policei-, Cameral-, Commerz und ökonomischer Schriften dieses Jahrhunderts*. Vol. 2. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Eßlinger.
- Pfeiffer, Johann Friedrich von. 1783. *Grundsätze der Universal-Kameral-Wissenschaft*. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Eßlinger.
- Priddat, Birger P. 2008. "Kameralismus als paradoxe Konzeption der gleichzeitigen Stärkung von Markt und Staat: Komplexe Theorieanlagen im deutschen 18. Jahrhundert." *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 31: 249–263.
- Reinert, Erik S. 2007. *How Rich Countries Got Rich ... and Why Poor Countries Stay Poor*. London, UK: Constable, 2007.
- Reinert, Sophus. 2018. *The Academy of Fisticuffs: Political Economy and Commercial Society in Enlightenment Italy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Richter, Melvin. 1995. *The History of Social and Political Concepts: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Rohr, Julius Bernhard von. 1716. *Compendieuse Haushaltungs-Bibliothek*. Leipzig, Germany: Johann Christian Martini.
- Rössner, Philipp R. 2016. "New Inroads into Well-Known Territory? On the Virtues of Re-discovering Pre-classical Political Economy." In *Economic Growth and the Origins of Modern Political Economy: Economic Reasons of State, 1500–2000*, edited by Philipp R. Rössner, 3–25. London, UK: Routledge.

- Schiera, Pierangelo. 1968. *Dall' arte del governo alle scienze dello Stato: Il cameralismo e l'assolutismo Tedesco*. Milan, Italy: A. Giuffrè.
- Schmauss, Johann Jacob. 1754. *Neues Systema des Naturrechts*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck.
- Schmidt am Busch, Hans-Cristoph. 2009. "Cameralism as 'Political Metaphysics': Human Nature, the State, and Natural Law in the Thought of Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi." *European Journal of the History of Economic Thought* 16: 409–430.
- Seppel, Marten. 2017. "Introduction: Cameralism in Practice." In *Cameralism in Practice: State Administration and Economy in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Marten Seppel and Keith Tribe, 1–16. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer.
- Simon, Thomas. 2014. "Merkantilismus und Kameralismus: Zur Tragfähigkeit des Merkantilismusbegriffs und seiner Abgrenzung zum deutschen 'Kameralismus'." In *Merkantilismus: Wiederaufnahme einer Debatte*, edited by Moritz Isenmann, 65–82. Stuttgart, Germany: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Small, Albion W. 1909. *The Cameralists: The Pioneers of German Social Polity*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.
- Stolleis, Michael. 1988. *Geschichte des öffentlichen Rechts in Deutschland*. Vol. 1. München: C. H. Beck.
- Stollberg-Rilinger, Barbara. *Der Staat als Maschine: Zur politischen Metaphorik des absoluten Fürstentums*. Berlin, Germany: Duncker & Humblot.
- Tribe, Keith. 2006. "Cameralism and the Sciences of the State." In *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, edited by Mark Goldie and Robert Wokler, 525–546. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Tribe, Keith (1988) 2017. *Governing Economy: The Reformation of German Economic Discourse 1750–1840*. Exeter, UK: Threshold Press.
- Wakefield, Andre. 2009. *The Disordered Police State: German Cameralism as Science and Practice*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.
- Wakefield, Andre. 2014. "Cameralism: A German Alternative to Mercantilism." In *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and its Empire*, edited by Philip J. Stern and Carl Wennerlind, 134–150. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Wakefield, Andre. 2019. "Cameralism, Physiocracy and Antiphiysiocracy in the Germanies." In *The Economic Turn: Recasting Political Economy in Enlightenment Europe* edited by Steven L. Kaplan and Sophus Reinert, 657–676. London, UK: Anthem Press.
- Winch, Donald 1973. "The Emergence of Economics as a Science, 1750–1870." In *The Fontana Economic History of Europe: The Industrial Revolution*, edited by Carlo M. Cipolla, 507–573. Glasgow, UK: Fontana.

Wolff, Christian. (1721) 1747. *Vernünfftige Gedancken von dem Gesellschaftlichen Leben der Menschen*. Frankfurt, Germany: Renger.

Zielenziger, Kurt. 1914. *Die alten Kameralisten: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Nationalökonomien und zum Problem des Merkantilismus*. Jena: Fischer.