

This paper is (as its title may indicate) trying to cope with a problem of political obligation, which we deem to be at the very centre of political thought. The history of philosophy has proven that coming up with an independent reasoning for the acceptance of a state, its institutions and its legal system is no easy task. We think that „traditional approaches,“ as we may call them, to the problem of political obligation inevitably fail for various reasons. With this background, we examine the principle of fairness, as an alternative and relatively new approach, and try to establish whether it can withstand a fire of critical scrutiny that has been brought upon it. First, we introduce and reconstruct it from works of John Rawls and George Klosko, and then we scrutinize the critical arguments brought by R. P. Wolff, Robert Nozick and M.B. A. Smith. The ultimate result of our investigation is that we really can hold the principle of fairness as the general foundation of political obligation, at least when we accept some presuppositions about moral theory, because arguments for it are, in the final analysis, sound.