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Kondylis's Konservativismus Second Part

Part Two of a Review by Nigel Carlsbad

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III. Conservatism, dictatorship, and the social question. The birth of sociology.

The themes of dictatorship, Caesarism, Bonapartism, etc. were ripe in the conservative canon. There is Juan Donoso Cortes' speech on dictatorship, made famous by Carl Schmitt. Kondylis devotes a chapter to this question, because he sees it as both an important conservative doctrinal innovation and a central aporia within the conservative vision: how does one use the "demiurge" of voluntaristic sovereignty to declare an existential state of emergency, restore an older order from the top down, yet at the same time recede and relinquish this very same voluntaristic sovereignty at the end of the process, leaving only (at least an approximation of) the *societas civilis* with its divinely ordained and undivided body politic. The neoabsolutist era of Baron Alexander von Bach in Austria from 1849 to 1860 was an imperfect example, but as a whole the problem could not be given a satisfactory solution.

In the anti-absolutist struggle, conservative activism appeared as the exercise of the right of resistance by noble frondeurs; in the struggle against revolution, it takes the form of reaction and dictatorship. In the former case, the *societas* was still largely intact, and conservative activism was directed at the danger from above. In the latter case, on the contrary, the danger came from below, and the meanwhile considerably weakened *societas civilis* or noble social rule sought support from the monarchy, which was equipped with the means of modern statehood and was also in danger. The prerequisite for a policy of reaction and dictatorship was, in other words, the described change in noble attitudes toward the crown after 1789; reaction and dictatorship became possible when the monarch at the head of the state apparatus sided with the nobility; a dictatorship of the nobility over absolutism on a pre-state basis could not be conceived, but a dictatorship over the revolution serving noble interests and based on the

existing absolutist foundation could. From this point of view, reaction and dictatorship were the natural aims or behaviors of conservatism in a certain historical situation in which it had to fight with its back against the wall.

Thus, Heinrich Leo could very explicitly state: "We should never fail to recognize the blessing of an organically formed life of the people; but where such a life becomes impossible in any way, and the nature of time and circumstances demand mechanical behavior, we should blame it only in so far as the arrogance and willfulness of man make it necessary; but we should recognize the power and strength which a community is capable of proving in the production and formation of such mechanical forms of life." Even Leopold von Gerlach had to concede that Louis-Napoleon, insofar as he was acting against socialism and radical republicanism, was "not entirely without legal title." If the people fell into vice, it was permissible for a ruler to chastise them by dispensing with legality in order to restore legitimacy.

That said, for conservatives, dictatorship could only be *provisional*, i.e. dictatorship in the classical sense. For the monarch symbolically unites in himself all the rights, so if they are partially abrogated, they do not cease to exist for that reason, but simply return to their source, where they can remain until they can be returned to their individual holders. In this sense, the king is the natural dictator in a monarchy when an emergency arises.

Kondylis cites an essay by a French lawyer who turned from moderate liberal to ultra-royalist - Charles Cottu, and his *De la nécessité d'une dictature* (1830). What is remarkable about Cottu is his very blunt and *realpolitiker* language, which deserves to be quoted:

The history of each people is only the history of the efforts of each of the classes that make up this people to seize power; as the history of the world is only the history of the efforts of different peoples to mutually enslave each other. I will therefore not deny that a nation cannot say, when it pleases: "I want another government." But then once the established order comes to be disregarded, a king can say in his turn: "I want another measure of authority." And the poor can also say: "We don't want any more rich; we no longer want capitalists possessing 15 or 20 millions; we no longer want land, castles, rents, nor especially the right of heredity, which attributes, to certain children who did nothing but to be born, goods sufficient to feed whole families."

Force, blind force then decides all pretensions; but, until the day when his terrible voice makes itself heard, these various pretensions are as well founded as each other. There is no more reason, in the eyes of the people, why there should be the rich, just as there is no

reason, in the eyes of the rich, for there to be noble and privileged. All particular rights are held together by a chain attached to legitimate power. Neither the right of property, nor the right of heredity, nor any civil right, are written on the vault of heaven nor in the conscience of men. They are all the result of social law; and when this law is broken, then everything is challenged: the field of theory is open to everyone; each citizen is free to seek new combinations of public order; and it becomes as legitimate to order the pooling of all private property as to establish any other form of government.

It was rare to find the position expressed with such pure pragmatism, but it illustrates the problem very neatly: the demiurgic arrival of sovereign dictatorship completely destroys the pretense to there being a divine, natural, organic order. There is no *societas civilis* at all in the proper sense, but a government held together by mechanical solidarity and a preponderance of power behind a binding will that establishes "social law," which is an autonomous decision that does not emanate from any higher source but itself. Dictatorship could save conservatism in the short run while introducing long-run problems of historical relativism.

In the meantime, conservatives contributed another distinct aspect to their fight against the liberal enemy: a heightened focus on the social question, urban poverty, and destitution. It is well known that Joseph de Maistre was a strong influence on both Henri de Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte. The term proletariat was first introduced into the German language (as "Proletair") in 1835 by Franz von Baader, a Catholic conservative. His proposed solution was adding chambers for representatives of the workers to the provincial estates, as well as enhanced missionary and charitable work by priests, even to appoint priests as district administrators. Thomas Carlyle was preoccupied with what he called the "condition of England question," and looked forward to the "captains of industry" introducing an industrialized manorialism. There was no shortage of denunciations against the money power, usurers, the infiltration of eudaimonic-utilitarian doctrines into state administration, and the ascendancy of commerce over patriarchal charity and military valor.

Hence the emphasis on property as a "living" source of duty, as opposed to "dead matter." The "living" aspect of property, however, does not stem from a sentimental inclination, but rather from the notion of the unity that landed property and the people under the patriarchal rule of the oikos as traditionally formed. As Justus Moser noted, the old "real" concept of property also included seigniorial rights, and the separation of these two aspects, which characterizes the new bourgeois concept of property, "has in fact a greater impact on the state and on a purely good theory of the state, than one might believe." According to the legal conception of the *societas civilis*, property in the "old genuine" sense forms a "moral-religious principle",

since its human aspects, i.e. the patriarchal human interrelations connected with it, help to eliminate that egoism by "love," which is inherent to every property as a product of the fall of man. Following the old ethically oriented concept of politics can thus be asserted: "Property is itself a political concept, an office instituted by God to preserve His law and the kingdom of His law for the state" - which means concretely that property is connected with "patronage, police and jurisdiction", i.e. with lordship. In the language of the conservatives, however, this lordship is called "duty," which the owner, as God's governor, fulfills with strict and just love toward those who depend on him for their rightly understood good; the requirement that the owner be a "patron" of the state, is a "duty" of the state.

The involvement of the nobility in the dark business of the money economy had to have disastrous ethical and material consequences for them; Mueller therefore described the "great alternative" for agriculture as follows: "either feudalism or debt. It does not escape dependence; only the choice remains between that of the feudal lord and that of the creditor. Either a personal obligation of exchange, as the Christian laws have taught us, or a Roman obligatio, i.e. slavery." At the same time, August von Rehberg: "The dissolution of immovable property, which goes hand in hand with the decomposition of corporations, thus ends with the abolition of intellectual and civil liberty - and this abolition is approved of by the liberal bourgeoisie, of all people, which loudly rejects the interference of the state in the economy, but justifies it without further ado when it aims at the destruction of immobile property in favor of mobile property." In the conservative understanding, property is essentially a service or fief of the *societas civilis*, i.e. all property is "state property" not in the sense of socialization, but that all owners orient themselves around a duty to the body politic, where there can be no separation between public and private interests, or between ethics and reason of state. True wealth, for Bonald, consists in "force morale" as condensed in "moeurs et lois." Alban de Villeneuve-Bargemont, a legitimist and "Christian political economist," went as far as to anticipate surplus value theory, and developed an overproduction theory of economic crises.

In view of its fundamental importance for the development of industry and the formation of the new society in general, the (continued) division of labor is a very frequent target of conservative polemics; and since it could not be rejected on the basis of technical criteria, the critics put forward general anthropological and ethical arguments. Moser, for example, said that anyone who possessed specialized abilities to a high degree did not have a completely healthy soul; a number of natural abilities were lost in him. Rehberg also expressed similar thoughts at an early stage, which became conservative stereotypes only a few decades later. He found that through the "too far carried out" division of labor, people "lose even more in the

inner formation of their noblest part than they gain in skill for other purposes. He who develops a single ability at the expense of all his other natural abilities is no good outside his own narrow circle, he no longer sees the conditions of life and thus becomes detached from his fellow men; thus the division of labor paves the way for despotism, to which isolated individuals are most easily subjected."

Hermann Wagener's conservative *Staatslexikon* said of the division of labor that it "impairs any valuable development of human powers and abilities, so that the quality of the manufactured products is also affected." Wagener was one of the key conservatives who promoted the idea of a social monarchy, with the king as "the patron of the weak, the king of beggars, and the father of the mass of the people." This was an attempt to both stave off the dissolution of conservatism, and attack the liberal enemy head on through an alliance between absolutism and the newly enfranchised working masses, the old ideal of the popular autocracy smashing the boyars (in this case, capitalists and managers). The venture would not succeed.

Karl von Canitz und Dallwitz (1843) reproached representative government and its mere property qualifications for suffrage, seeing taxable income on its own as not being a true indication of one's station, but highly dependent on mobile assets. These representatives then go on to lord over all social classes in the state, as though they speak for the whole nation, with their taxing power falling disproportionately on the poor. He contrasts this to the patrimonial model of social relations, where "the royal house possesses a mass of estates with the same right on which any possession in the country rests; where the king, by inheriting the crown, also becomes fideicommissary of the crown and household goods by the same right, where he makes very generous contributions to state expenditures from this income, which is not dependent on any grant, then it would be nonsense to say: the king lives from the taxes of his subjects and the poor have to pay the expenses of his court." The king lives off his own, the "nation" lives parasitically off others. This ties in to another defense of conservative property relations: that wealth allows one to be a generous and charitable steward by exercising the virtue of *liberalitas*, in contrast to the speculative orientation of the capitalist, and the despotism of the communist.

Therefore, as many other authors have pointed out before (notably Mannheim and Kuehnelt-Leddihn), anti-capitalism had conservative credentials before this was reformulated by socialists and communists to serve entirely different ends. Both conservatism and socialism wanted to overcome the division between state and society, between private and public. The former did so by deflating the state entirely, by its commitment to estate, order and rank, and by strong emphasis on intermediary powers. The latter did so by egalitarian despotism over all

and in the name of the have-nots. I.e. the difference between "society is the state is divine law" and "the state constitutes/subsumes society."

Conservative preoccupations with the philosophy of history, moral anthropology, and cultural criticism in the form of their polemic against political economy, in many ways paved the foundation for sociology. Robert Nisbet commented on this decades ago. Mystagogue's essay on Louis de Bonald covers this as well.

IV. The dissolution of conservatism.

For Kondylis (and in my estimation as well), conservatism as a historical phenomenon had run its course by the 1870s. Besides describing how conservatism lost its presence as a distinct tendency, he identifies some scattered legacies associated with it within the ideas of corporatism, in cultural criticism, and the theory of dictatorship.

In France, the dissolution starts rapidly proceeding already after the July Revolution in 1830, and Kondylis writes, "symptomatic of the decline of French conservatism, however, is neither this fragmentation per se, which 1830 was accompanied by sometimes bitter struggles for direction, nor the momentary socio-political weakness of legitimism after the painful blow of the July Revolution, but rather the disengagement from the classical world of ideas of the *societas civilis* that became visible in this situation and at this time." Legitimists such as Antoine Eugène Genoud began committing themselves to universal suffrage, pursuing a "popular legitimist" strategy against the Orleanist oligarchy. The monarchy was increasingly reimagined on a communitarian and social character. As documented by Bernard Rulof and others, legitimists even pursued electoral alliances with republicans. Royalists like M. de Locmaria go as far as to say that nobility is "a burden, if not a brake," hence "the Legitimists form a political party which recruits in all ranks, and whose hierarchy is exclusively based on talent and honor." Thus, Locmaria goes on, "royalty is not a pagoda: it is an interest; it is only worth what it saves and the good it does." Because of the inability of classical conservatism to provide the guiding star of conservative action after the nobility had ceased to be the bearer of coherent conservative politics, the conservatism of those who did not want to follow the path proposed by Locmaria became increasingly loose and sentimental in thought, living either on memories or on a partly ritualized and partly hysterical cult of the person of the legitimate successor. Although French conservatism can live on under the umbrella of old liberalism and at the cost of its specific features, it has no precisely localizable socially influential supporter and no coherent ideology of its own; the loosely connected basic motifs mentioned above (family, faith, patriotism, localism, etc.) therefore center around the person of the respective

pretender to the throne. The strong monarch is also at the center of the conservative constitutional designs that attracted more general interest at the beginning of the 1870s, when a somewhat real chance to restore the monarchy presented itself for the last time. The strong position of the monarch was accompanied by a weakening of the state (decentralization, reduction of state expenditures, etc.), while the social question was to be solved in a corporative and paternalistic way. After this restoration of the Comte de Chambord failed, legitimism stagnated into a romantic or personal cause.

In England, the question of the Corn Laws led to a practical tripartite division of the Tory party (Peelite-liberal, protectionist, Tory radical), not because of a real resurgence of orthodox conservatism, but rather because tangible interests were at stake; the opposition between protectionism and free trade did not necessarily coincide with that between old and new conservative tendencies, although it was entangled with them, but its primary importance indicated the extent to which conservative politics had become the politics of interests, that is, the practical acceptance of the rules of the new society. Under the pressure of this reality, even Disraeli, as a young conservative leader, had to forget or suppress the dreams of Young England and show some flexibility toward the middle classes. If in 1868 the Conservative Party drew its parliamentary power mainly from the rural constituencies, which were under the traditional influence of local aristocratic dignitaries, by 1885 half of its deputies came from the cities, where their election was governed by a more or less tight party organization. Several years after the Second Reform Bill, Disraeli at least felt able to appeal to all owners and not merely to the landed interest on behalf of the Conservatives, while at the same time seeking to win over labor not by anti-capitalist platitudes but rather by nationalist slogans. The prevalence of the general national interest in conservative phraseology and propaganda was symptomatic of the final affirmation of the liberal-parliamentary rules of the game on the part of the conservatives, who henceforth needed voters from all classes, and, moreover, it even constituted an unintentional contribution to the formation of mass democratic conditions.

In Germany, especially those conservatives who followed Bismarck unconditionally lacked a unified, specifically conservative sociopolitical line; they generally advocated a strong state, historical continuity, and the protection of agrarian interests, but the ideological background became increasingly vague and the relationship of sociopolitical demands to it correspondingly loosened. This was in fact not only a "very moderate" but also a very "thoughtless and opportunistic conservatism." But even the conservatives of the *Kreuzzeitung* party, who were more independent of Bismarck, were essentially shaped by the change of the spirit of the times to so-called realpolitik. They retained only memories of the old

conservatives, with most of whom they had hardly come into personal contact, and they also belonged to a different, more modern type of people. Their way of doing politics was concentrated in parliament, the press, and mass agitation, and resembled more the professional politics of liberalism and social democracy than the staunch political habitus of the older generation of landowners, who represented the conservative cause through their own social presence and activity in the place of their personal influence. Legitimism was practically dead, while at the same time the affiliation with agrarian interest representation was growing stronger; not much remained of the old worldly aureole except a pronounced interest in church and school issues.

Organicist naturalism passes into a Darwinian one, and thus organicism as a theory of unbroken and unconstrained growth is displaced by a structurally opposed theory of relentless struggle for existence, which was completely foreign to classical conservatism in this form. The corporate principle, as represented by the radical agrarians, also loses much of its old estate-based character, which was based on the interconnection of the political and the economic within the *societas civilis*, and is conceived rather from the professional point of view, that is, according to the liberal-economistic criteria of capitalist society. And finally, the fundamental monarchism of the agrarians is badly in harmony not only with their de facto adaptation to the rules of constitutionalism, but also with their distrust of the "liberalism" of the court and the government. This mistrust was already an eloquent indication that this state was no longer the state of the conservatives.

This, together with the view, shared by friend and foe, that the ideal of the legitimate Christian state was incompatible with the satisfaction of Prussian ambition in the German sphere, and that therefore loyalty to the former must forever prevent the latter, gradually led to the inner alienation of some of the most energetic conservatives from classical conservatism. The extent of this alienation became clear when the gross violation of the dynastic principle of legitimacy by Bismarck's annexation policy did not cause a revolt of the entire conservative camp against his prodigal son, but on the contrary caused the isolation of the old conservatives around Gerlach. This, of course, had to do with the disarming paradox that the author of this violation was not a revolutionary, but a sprout of the counter-revolution. But this paradox would have been impossible and unthinkable if classical conservatism had not led to a dead end in foreign and national policy. Thus, the anti-liberal forces had to realize the liberal national dreams in their own way in order to forestall liberalism and retain power in the state. This had to cause confusion about the definition of "liberal," "conservative," "progress," and "reaction." Many conservatives found a psychologically relieving way out by

simply suppressing the question of principle and becoming followers of Bismarck, fascinated by the practical success and the prospects for the future that were opening up for Germany.

However, the main impetus is the rising threat of the red menace. Where liberals and labor had been roughly united in an opposition against Church, Court and the Manor up to about 1848, and both favorable to forms of Chartism, radicalism and expansion of democratic rights, the radicalization of the workers' movements into the abolition of all property and not just non-freehold property, under the aegis of Marxist and social democratic parties, led to a common fusion of all proprietors irrespective of class behind the common platform of king, fatherland and empire. Lord Salisbury recognized this very explicitly. But this was an unequal fusion, since the the idea of progress in the sense of the

development of technology, the increase of production and rationalization, and economic attitudes were now assimilated into "conservative" thought.

The dissolution of classical conservatism does not mean the dissolution of the right wing, of course. Conservatism is of the right, but the right includes more than conservatism. The major shifts in the *fin de siecle* right wing involve an abandonment of any residual Christianity, a pronounced literary and artistic pathos, a general aestheticization of politics, a more positivistic and functionalistic conception of social order where nobility and class is replaced by the *elite*, the corporate state looked at mostly instrumentally as a professional-economic mode of organization to solve practical problems of production and distribution, and so on.

Kondylis analyzes the Victorian romanticism of Carlyle and Ruskin, the integral nationalism of Charles Maurras, and the conservative revolution in Germany as instructive examples. We should add that what is distinctive about Maurras is how he integrates his literary sensibilities -- the supposed conflict between Latin classicism and German romanticism -- into an overarching political framework where France is the bearer of such a "classical" national soul, with Louis XIV and Auguste Comte equally included into it. Democracy and its egalitarianism is rejected because it is contrasted to *organization*, which requires hierarchy and differentiation, i.e. this claim is put forth not to defend an integral union of ethics and politics in a divinely ordained body politic, but purely out of structural-logical necessity that there have to be laws and rules of some kind. Maurras, as a self-described "monarchical positivist," arrives at the monarchical principle from an empirical basis, as this is the form of government under which France had reached its historical greatness. In turn, the "Anti-France," consisting of Protestants, Jews and *metiques* (foreigners) is the essentially fixed enemy of the French national soul, insofar as Protestantism is perceived to be a romantic-subjectivist religion

compared to the structure, formality and juridical rationality of the Catholic Church. Precisely as these post-conservative right-wing movements were ever more shaped by intellectuals and artists, they could acquire widely varying and idiosyncratic ideological content. In any case, for Maurras, monarchy followed from the nation, and not vice versa. As a provincial himself, hailing from the Provençal, he was committed to federalization and decentralization, but his advocacy of corporatism and association never could explain how class conflict would practicably be tamed, seeing as he had an overriding faith in "les nations avant les classes; les nations avant les affaires," i.e. the national interest being intrinsically unifying.

Kondylis therefore sums up Maurras' uneven synthesis of nationalism and royalism: "Maurras does not want to infuse his nationalism with democratic, plebeian or plebiscitary elements, and this puts him in a quandary all over again. He wants to make nationalism the strongest force of social integration, but at the same time he deprives it of the very thing that could have made it such a force. Maurras could not see from his presuppositions that in the age of total mobilization living nationalism had become an egalitarian-revolutionary force and that, since it had become so, a half-hearted use of it could no longer achieve the highest socio-political effects."

Where the theory of dictatorship is concerned, in contrast to the conservatism of the 19th century, the right of the 20th century must hold on to the separation of state and society, because the danger of the development of private property and economic liberalism is connected with a reopening of this separation. Either the separation of state and society disappears as a result of the imposition of a collectivist or totalitarian regime, in which state and society obey equally the dictates of the ruling party, or it becomes blurred within a parliamentary democracy, in which the state becomes the enforcer of the wishes of certain social groups, and in fact - which is the main concern of the right - the bearer of left-wing social policy. The separation of state and society, as envisaged by the right, must therefore be accompanied by a strengthening of the state, which would enable it, in possession of the political monopoly and with unquestioned authority, to resist any pressure from social forces, both collectivist and mass-democracies. The extreme strengthening of the political authority of the state ends with the establishment of a dictatorship, that is, with the abolition of parliamentarism and political liberalism.

Corporatism is probably one of the most enduring legacies, especially as it resurfaced in a myriad of forms throughout the 20th century -- Catholic personalist, authoritarian, fascist, pluralist, social-democratic, etc. However, no one could solve the fundamental dilemma of corporatism in modern society -- that being what level of autonomy or competence should

these corporations be granted, the fact that as top-down constructions they could be neutered at any time, but most importantly: due to modern states pursuing complex long-run macroeconomic policies, the influence of these corporations often devolve into simply another disintegrative interest group, where the demands of corporations end up exacerbating the same "egoistic competitive individualism" they were meant to contain through intransigent pursuit of narrow interests that serve only to reassert class conflict. Thus, the state which acts as the referee in the conventional tripartite corporatist schema will invariably find at some point that it is easier to directly regulate economic functions by usual executive and ministerial channels, instead of having to go through the intermediation of corporate bodies which can drive a wrench into overarching state/national policy. Corporatism is not necessarily any more of a panacea for social harmony than parliamentarism with its own representative pretensions claims to be. The Winter of Discontent in Britain from 1978 to 1979 is a paradigmatic example.

V. Does conservatism still matter?

Though conservatism may be dead, the social vision that it aimed to defend, and the intellectual project embarked on in this defense, remain relevant. That is to say, modern right-wing ideologies often aim precisely to create a synthetic reintegration of the *societas civilis*, and in any case they share all the same problems in the wake of its dissolution.

The distinction between state/society and private/public continues to be a vital element of modern discourse, despite having been long obsoleted by the advent of mass democracy. The recurring disputes over tech censorship are what come to mind immediately, and even here people in the know never really outgrow the dichotomy, instead insisting on the private "usurping" the public, some indeterminate private-public fusion, or the private becoming *de facto* public through fulfilling some condition, etc. It gets worse when people act smug about classifying some institution into one or the other label, as though some profound socially relevant avenue for practical action is opened by so doing. It is unlikely we will dispense with this dichotomy soon, seeing as how we are still in a transition period where the mass-democratic social structure hasn't fully "caught up" to displacing obsolete bourgeois-liberal ideological discourses, though by now I think we are almost there. Ironically, one of conservatism's greatest legacies may be the fact that people still talk about "liberalism" as though it is phenomenon that still carries some substantial social content, rather than being the arbitrarily definable term for whatever aspect of modernity one wants to single out that it truly is. "Liberalism" as referring to indifferentism and atheism made it into the Catholic magisterium in the second half of the 19th century, which has in some sense immortalized it

as a premier shorthand for "what is wrong with the world." It is also instructive to observe that the most vociferous enemies of "neoliberalism" are left-wing academics, and that is precisely because they see in it a remnant of non-democratic 19th-century doctrinaire liberalism, a "reactionary" vestige that is also connected to postwar Christian democracy and its social market economy. It is certain that we will not hear the end of "liberalism" any time soon. Far too many people have made careers out of it being their identity, whether as its guardians or as its "traditionalist" assailants. Nonetheless, it is fading away in the face of the anti-white ideologies that are explicitly post-liberal and post-Enlightenment in their value commitments. The transition from formal equality to material equality, the social atomization of the welfare state and its hedonic stimulation of the underclass, from *Rechtsstaat* to *Sozialstaat*, the slogans 'solidarity', 'community development' and 'empowerment' dissolving the already atomized state-citizen dichotomy into a much more ominous racial struggle for consumption goods and state sinecures, itself only the corollary of a cultural revolution (or war of extermination) against all of European heritage, including and especially the vestiges of "liberalism" and due process of law -- if people still blame this on John Locke, then they are beyond saving.

Aestheticism is the dominant mode of thought in right-wing circles, often to the point of detachment from what is on the ground. Thus, it is not uncommon for people to declare their heritage as too far gone and not worth saving. Instead, they will say that they are for "truth," "beauty," and "the good," wherever this may be. Of course, as any good Aristotelian knows: *non est natura sine persona*. Universals do not exist without being instantiated into particulars, hence this self-satisfied proclamation of loving virtue above all is really an excuse for rootlessness and derelict of one's duty to the *patria*, with love of the *patria* being something that the *societas civilis* valued very highly indeed. "Licitum est vi vim repellere; Igitur, rex, pugna pro patria," urged Geoffroy of Paris to Philip V of France.

Donoso Cortes' musings on dictatorship are as relevant as ever, them being cited notably by Bronze Age Pervert. It is interesting to observe a widespread tendency on the dissident right over the past several years where a consensus interpretation of ancient (Roman) history has developed entirely on the basis of present-day polemical concerns. Thus, it is now commonly agreed that Cicero was a degenerative cuckservative propping up a corrupt oligarchy, that Caesar was a based populist, that the Catiline conspiracy was a psyop just like January 6, and even that Caligula's wicked reputation is a defamation by oligarchs like Philo and Seneca. People like Charles Haywood and many others are writing programmes and manifestos for the coming Caesar to use. This valorization of dictatorship and caudilloism, however, comes into

conflict with the right-wing denunciation of social atomization. For the Caesaristic project of smashing all of civil society will likely not lead to any resurgence of the Elks lodge, precisely since the dictatorship will always be on watch for any civic association as potentially being a vector for the leftist enemy, foreign and domestic. It will be granted that the Caesar can do a lot of good w.r.t. immigration and reversing immoral court decisions and legislation, but it is still likely he would prefer that people keep "bowling alone." The possibility is also generally not as commented on that the coming Caesar need not be a right-wing figure, but a mere stabilizing figure, or at worst a left-wing radical. In any case, these idle discussions do not have much value, except that they are sociologically interesting about right-wing attitudes.

The philosophy of history is in utter disarray, to say the least. Economic determinism, esoteric occultism and New Age heterodoxy, cyclical and perennial theories are all advanced at various times by various parties. Funnily enough, a lot of these "perennial" interpretations that are raised to signal against "linear-progressive" views end up restating the same positions as left-wing academic historians. For instance, one could make the claim that the English Civil War was the essential "form" of the "democratic revolution," and that all subsequent revolutionary maladies in the Occident are simply recurring instantiations of this same "form," and its content -- liberalism. This ends up affirming the same views as 19th-century Whig historians like Macaulay, Freeman and Hallam (who were primordialists and believed in an Anglo-Saxon "germ" of primitive liberty), and 20th century Marxist historians like Christopher Hill, only with the value judgments inverted. This predestination of counterfactuals puts the human will in bondage as to its role in history. It looks only at the "whatness" of things and erases the "thisness" of things, since it is only the differentia of what thing to this thing, from genus to species, that the historical content of an ideological polemic leaves its mark on human affairs. It is this category error that leads to people finding "proto-leftist" elements and anticipations all throughout history without the least bit of rhyme or reason to form a coherent narrative that doesn't require ridiculous time lags with unbroken lines of descent.

The principle of *jus dicere non dare* and the certitude of divine law is continuously strived for and emulated by many synthetic alternatives that aim to demonstrate some kind of objective law of nature by which a right-wing project can be justified, and by which the enemy can be definitively identified as trespassing the law of nature. Today, this almost always takes the form of evolutionary biology, behavioral genetics, and related fields. These have a more pragmatic use in combating regime-sanctioned ideologies that engage in biological denialism, but they're also integrated into ideas about the "God of nature," personifications of natural selection, or personifications of cooperative game theory. Men cannot believe in the Bible

anymore, but they do find the strength to believe in genome-wide association studies. Nonetheless, these approaches suffer from the fact that there is no "chain of being" which can hierarchically rank the constantly shifting selection pressures, ecological changes, changes in allele frequency, etc. that in turn modify the "essence" of the objects of selection. Fixity and regularity are not part of the struggle for existence, and there is only so much in the way of moral facts that one can glean from natural history.

Conservatism is gone, but the problems it raised are not. There is still much use in going back to the root.

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