

Carlsbad 1819

Like another Chouannerie

Scientifically historicizing progress

January 6, 2018 by Nulle Terre Sans Seigneur

A 2006 essay (<https://engageonline.wordpress.com/2015/11/04/how-neoconservatives-shift-from-left-to-right-inspired-anti-semitic-conspiracy-thinking-ralph-seliger-engage-journal-issue-1-january-2006/>) by Ralph Seliger, himself a left-liberal Zionist, remains one of the best article overviews of the oft-cited relationship between neoconservatism and Trotskyism. Its stated purpose is to debunk the “Jewishness” of the neoconservatives, but the author’s retelling of events that he was sometimes a first-hand witness to speak for themselves.

Unlike virtually everyone else, I don’t regard neoconservatism by itself as ever having been a significant phenomenon. It’s nothing more than the Jewish wing of Wilsonianism, and the perspectives of neoconservatism and mainline gentile liberal internationalism do not differ significantly from each other, except that some of the first-generation neocons did partially criticize various Great Society programs — like Nathan Glazer did. Even without the neocons, it is unlikely to me that the US and Israel’s cozy relationship (beginning with LBJ, thus predating AIPAC influence) would have differed. Before PNAC, there was the UDA (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_for_Democratic_Action). The Old Right had already dissolved by that point, and in fact I’d say that realistically it was the final defeat of the Taft Republicans by Eisenhower during the debates on the Bricker Amendment (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bricker_Amendment#Eisenhower_aided_by_Democrats) that was far more traumatic to American conservatism than in whatever influence the social democratic ideas of the Partisan Review and neoconservatism may have had.

Either way, discussions of neoconservatism frequently return to the name of Max Shachtman, a Trotskyist revisionist who would formulate the theories of “bureaucratic collectivism” and the so-called “Third Camp” approach to foreign policy of “neither East nor West.” Bureaucratic collectivism as a theory of the Soviet economy posits the bureaucratic expropriation of the surplus product in society as constituting a distinct mode of production separate from both capitalism and socialism. Many Trots didn’t like this theory since, besides introducing a new system with ill-defined “laws of motion,” it had a rather pessimistic overtone in that a bureaucratic collectivist society did not have a straightforward way of resuming into a proletarian dictatorship, unlike the competing theory of “state capitalism” which did introduce such a backdoor — more on this in a bit.

As the standard “neocons are degenerated Trotskyites” account goes, the Third Camp position morphed from “neither East nor West” to “I support the East though I’m leaning, leaning to the West.” This transformation would reach its apex after Nixon’s election, when the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coalition_for_a_Democratic_Majority) was formed, with its bombastic manifesto published in 1972 entitled “Come Home, Democrats (http://neoconservatism.vaisse.net/doku.php?id=come_home_democrats_1972),” calling for a return to the “great tradition” of “Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Adlai Stevenson, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Hubert H. Humphrey.” Commitments to equal opportunity (but not yet affirmative action), income redistribution and democratic interventionism are clearly outlined. Podhoretz, Bell and Lipset are among the sponsors, as are many others.

Henry “Scoop” Jackson was the de facto figurehead of the CDM, and indeed it was organized in support of his nomination as Democratic candidate for president. Scoop Jackson combined the politics of the New Deal coalition, civil rights and environmentalism with consistent hawkishness and military Keynesianism. Wolfowitz and Perle served as his aides. The failure of the Scoop Jackson campaigns and the integration of certain neocons into the foreign policy think tank Committee on the Present Danger (which, contrary to expectations, appears to have been financed on a relatively grassroots level (http://neoconservatism.vaisse.net/doku.php?id=budget_and_sources_of_funding_of_the_cpd_1976-1992)), led to an exodus to Reagan and the GOP more broadly. Some, like Joshua Muravchik, remained registered Democrats regardless.

Pursuing the Shachtman line, I stumbled upon one of his early critics, the prominent Trotskyist Tony Cliff, and his 1948 essay *The theory of bureaucratic collectivism: A critique* (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/cliff/works/1948/xx/burcoll.htm>).

I found it to be a highly entertaining illustration of the pretensions of “scientific socialism” and how it so desperately tries to sneak in the most utopian of optimism while pretending to have the upper hand in rigorous analysis.

Cliff says the USSR is “state capitalist” and not “bureaucratic collectivist.”

It is so because, first of all, “bureaucratic collectivism” is incoherent:

Actually, if the Bureaucratic Collectivist economy is geared to the “needs of the bureaucracy” – is not subordinated to capital accumulation – there is no reason why the rate of exploitation should not decrease in time, and as the productive forces in the modern world are dynamic – this will lead, willy-nilly, to the “withering away of exploitation”.

Furthermore, that:

Once the Stalinist bureaucracy created a massive working class and massive concentrated capital, the objective prerequisites for the overthrow of the bureaucracy had been laid.

This is so, because Cliff deems capital accumulation and its “anarchic competition” to be inherently exploitative in a way that economic systems revolving around the creation of use values for a ruling class simply aren’t. Slaves and serfs have physiological limitations that capital doesn’t. “With the dynamism of highly developed productive forces,” he writes, “an economy based on gratifying the needs of the rulers can be arbitrarily described as leading to the millennium or to 1984.” Anything is possible.

This comes awfully close to being a proslavery argument worthy of a Southern Fire-Eater. But Cliff has a very weaselly method for slipping out of this reactionary consequence.

It is historically retrogressive!

Marx maintained that the historical tendency towards the degradation of the proletariat, its increased oppression by capital, is fundamental to capitalism, whereas the substitution of the proletariat by a new, or rather, ancient, class of slaves is quite contrary to the general tendency of history. As we have said, only a lack of means of production and an abundance of labour power can explain the widespread use of prison labour in Stalin's Russia.

Slavery, to Cliff, is inherently *periodized*. It exists in the past. It is something that is *done*. Completed. Anything that resembles a new slave society therefore must in fact be a mirage springing from underdevelopment of "productive forces." Otherwise we would have a contradiction of the "general tendency of history," which says slavery cannot possibly be a driving economic class structure in THE CURRENT YEAR.

Scientific socialism.

And here is the case for "state capitalism" over "bureaucratic collectivism":

For a Marxist who thinks Russia is state capitalist, the historical mission of the bourgeoisie is the socialisation of labour and the concentration of the means of production. On a world scale this task had already been fulfilled. In Russia the revolution removed the impediments to the development of the productive forces, put an end to the remnants of feudalism, built up a monopoly of foreign trade which defends the development of the productive forces of the country from the devastating pressure of world capitalism, and also gave a tremendous lever to the development of the productive forces in the form of state ownership of the means of production. Under such conditions, all the impediments to the historical mission of capitalism – the socialisation of labour and the concentration of the means of production which are necessary prerequisites for the establishment of socialism, and which the bourgeoisie was not able to fulfil – are abolished.

Russia *must* be capitalist, else there couldn't be any socialism emerging from the embryo of "social, collective, large-scale production, and associated with it, the working class," as he calls it earlier. There *has* to be socialism eventually because otherwise, well, it would be terrible if there wasn't. Therefore, Russia is state capitalist.

Bruno Rizzi, an Italian shoemaker who wrote the revisionist Marxist tract *The bureaucratization of the world* in 1939 and was something of a predecessor to James Burnham (as well as being referenced by Cliff in this pamphlet) taunted this attitude like so: "Once the existence of a new class in the USSR is admitted a yawning chasm opens up before the Marxist mentality, but this chasm will not go away by closing one's eyes. The cup of bitterness must be drunk to the dregs, only then will it be possible to take up the wire again and follow it to safety."

"History does not insist that a new ruling class should coincide with a former exploited class," Rizzi says.

So it doesn't.

And speaking of the “historically retrogressive” consequences of slavery, let’s hear something on wage labor (<https://archive.org/stream/poleconomyslave00ruffrich#page/6/mode/2up>) from a proslavery case by firebrand Edmund Ruffin (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Ruffin):

For, when laborers can no longer subsist on their wages, the deficiency must in some way be supplied by the property owners. In lawless or badly governed countries, beggary and theft may be the irregular means of drawing that support from property which was denied in wages. In better regulated communities, the supply is furnished by the “poor law,” or a compulsory provision for the laboring poor who cannot subsist on their wages, as well as for the infirm poor, incapable of labor . . . The pauper, whether laborer or otherwise, receiving support from the parish, is neither more nor less than a slave to the administrators of the law and dispensers of the public charity. The pauper ceases to be a free agent in any respect.

This raises the question of just how different the social provisioning from “social, collective, large-scale production, and associated with it, the working class” would be from a poor law committee. Given that by Cliff’s statement any society not subordinated to capital accumulation but using modern large-scale production should see decreasing rates of exploitation, so could a neo-patrimonial economy. After all, the “socialisation of labour and the concentration of the means of production” which are deemed to be the prerequisites of socialism are already basically complete... but we have not transcended the poor law committee? Then again, these are only *prerequisites*, of course. There’s still something missing. There always is. If only Bukharin was in charge.

This entry was posted in [Political economy](#), [Political philosophy](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

25 thoughts on “Scientifically historicizing progress”

1. Pingback: [Scientifically historicizing progress | Reaction Times](#)

2. [Imperial Energy](#) says:

[January 7, 2018 at 5:15 am](#)

“Unlike virtually everyone else, I don’t regard neoconservatism by itself as ever having been a significant phenomenon. It’s nothing more than the Jewish wing of Wilsonianism, and the perspectives of neoconservatism and mainline gentile liberal internationalism do not differ significantly from each other, except that some of the first-generation neocons did partially criticize various Great Society programs — like Nathan Glazer did.”

Yes. This seems right. Max Boot, for instance, calls himself a “hard Wilsonian” or something.

Two books that are useful are the Neocon Reader edited by Irwin Stelzer and the Essential Neoconservative edited by Mark Gerson.

To paraphrase Irving Kristol, two cheers for capitalism and one cheer for the welfare state, though with some reform. Commitment to democracy and freedom, and robust support for the military and military intervention.

Peter Hitchens said something about his brother once that “other people do not realize how revolutionary America is; America is the leading revolutionary force in the world.” C Hitchens never gave up being a Trot.

Christopher Coker said that one time this high ranking U.S General said at a lunch something like “we bring them democracy, but then they elect these Awful people.” Then, a British military historian replied “well general, you can have democracy, with elections and ballot boxes, but to create liberalism is something else entirely.” The general turned to his aid and said “I hope you are writing this stuff down.”

Does a Transatlantic Strategy Exist? with Professor Christopher Coker



(23:30 for the accurate and full quote.)

The assumption that democracy will, as Coker said, “pacify them” runs against a lot of “Western philosophy from Thucydides to Machiavelli, that illiberal democracy is aggressive, imperialist and bad for the neighbors.”

Perhaps, giving “them” democracy is only the first stage, however. The second stage – the second war) – is what gives them liberalism (one-two punch).

OT

You pointed out that Moldbug’s (Boldmug? Oldbug? Boldbug?) epistemology denied “higher truths” or something like that and that you think politics and metaphysics is important or necessary. You know a lot about history and argue for a return to very old ways. However, one question is whether or not those old ways can be maintained on grounds other than theistic? If not, is theism itself a viable metaphysical view anymore? One project for you would be to take aim at modern philosophical naturalism and the possibility of a reactionary politics based on such naturalism (a mix of Aristotle-Hobbes-Hume and Darwin and then whole gang of 20th century Sociobiologists and neuroscientists and what have you.)

Reply.

- Michael Rothblatt says:

January 7, 2018 at 9:03 pm

>America is the leading revolutionary force in the world.

Indeed.

>One project for you would be to take aim at modern philosophical naturalism and the possibility of a reactionary politics based on such naturalism.

Objectivism was an attempt to graft virtue ethics atop a framework of militant atheism, but it is rather... lacking to say the least. I don't think you can really build a system of meaning without metaphysics. Nietzsche and Stirner grokked things much better than Ayn Rand.

Reply.

3. Michael Rothblatt says:

January 7, 2018 at 8:55 pm

>But Cliff has a very weasely method for slipping out of this reactionary consequence.

Mhmm, Marx pulled a fast one over everyone. He tricked people into believing that Traditionalism was an ultimate Progressive ideology.

>The pauper ceases to be a free agent in any respect.

The greatest sin of 19th-century liberals (apart from confiscation of property from the church and the nobility, and instituting of draft) is emancipation of serfs. All the "horror stories" of Industrial Revolution stem from this. No longer having their fertility controlled by lords, the lower classes married earlier and bred more (also making many other ill-advised life choices in the process). Europe didn't have institutions and support structures necessary for a proper functioning of free society (such as, for example, kin in Imperial China). Of course, originally, unions (yeah, unions at first supported laissez-faire — remember Carlyle bitching about it, worrying that in democracy people are going to vote for laissez-faire because it gets them more stuff; shows what he knows — people who want laissez-faire are people who want to make stuff, pig people, the people who want to consume stuff, want freebies) and friendly societies were intended fulfill that purpose, but Conquest's Second Law kicked in, and they were fairly quickly appropriated by the commies.

>Given that by Cliff's statement any society not subordinated to capital accumulation but using modern large-scale production should see decreasing rates of exploitation, so could a neo-patrimonial economy.

What would one call our current economy? People still call it capitalism, but it's even further away from laissez-faire than olden mercantilism was (for example, ye olde mercantilists never succeeded in having their way with money and instituting fiat), and it's subordinated to capital consumption instead of capital accumulation.

Reply.

o Imperial Energy says:

January 9, 2018 at 8:35 pm

Every time we communicate you always have excellent recommend material to read. That book looks appetizing. BTW, that PDF of the Fate of Empires was startling and also chilling. One thought we had was how RF's Patron Theory of Politics might explain the different ages. For instance, the different ages seem to be premised on different castes. Patron Theory would lead on to expect that change lies in centralizing power selecting different castes in order to offset the

power of the castes in the previous or current age. So, merchants (new rich) are selected to offset the power of the military castes and to finance new wars. Then, the lawyers or bureaucrats are selected to offset the power of the merchants. Then, one expands the pool (or franchise) of “Essentials” by promoting equality or diversifying the pool of human resources.

“Objectivism was an attempt to graft virtue ethics atop a framework of militant atheism, but it is rather... lacking to say the least. I don’t think you can really build a system of meaning without metaphysics. Nietzsche and Stirner grokked things much better than Ayn Rand.”

Never read Rand.

Things like HBD, evolution, “Game” make more sense in a naturalistic framework, for instance. Then, again, as the classic Victorian hymn All Things Bright and Beautiful had it, an ordered society based on caste is probably easier for everyone to except if it is God ordained.

Reply

o Michael Rothblatt says:

January 10, 2018 at 11:02 am

>One thought we had was how RF’s Patron Theory of Politics might explain the different ages.

I don’t think it’s about structural problems (structural insecurities at best, play the role of being unable to prevent it). Rather it appears to be the thing about the human condition. People want money. More that money people want status. And unscrupulous people will resort to anything to get those. Usually corruption in some way, shape, or form. Once corruption accumulates enough so that honest work and virtue don’t get you anywhere, you have negative selection society, and the age of decadence is at its high tide.

>Never read Rand.

Don’t. Mencken makes for a far better read.

>ordered society based on caste is probably easier for everyone to accept if it is God ordained

Any society is easier for everyone to accept if it is God ordained. I think, contrary to what many reactionaries believe, that old societies were relatively more stable because of the strength of religious conviction, rather than them being stable because they were based on status (and besides, like many of the romantic myths, the myth of peaceful and loving pre-industrial social relations is a complete hokum). Strangely enough, Mises was one of rare people who was able to see that, and where he was critical of Christianity, he was strongly praiseful of the Medieval Church (which is kinda strange, ‘cause it’s usually the other way around). He saw that resentment arises out of twin devils people being unable to accept their place in the world and being unwilling to accept responsibility. Now you may say that status helps it somewhat, because the peasant knows that he will never become the noble, but that is not the case, or else things like Cockaigne and the Drummer of Niklashausen would not have existed. Him who is a peasant should never wish for to be anything but a peasant. And (to transfer the picture to the Modern era) while garbageman may not command the same respect in society as a doctor might, command respect nonetheless he should. He too has his place, no less (and perhaps even more) necessary than these more respected people. But this contentment with one’s lot in life requires immense religiosity. It requires no less than that one defeat the capital vices. But to do that, you need to have a reason, a motivation. And after all,

you need the concepts, you need to consider vices to be vices in the first place. If I was asked to recommend just one book, it would be “Envy” by Helmut Schoeck. You’ll find out that religion is necessary exactly for the reasons that Marxists denounced it.

Reply.

- Imperial Energy says:
January 10, 2018 at 3:12 pm
Great comment.

We suspect that structure plays a larger role here. For instance, why did Byzantium last as long as it did? According to Luttwak, it lasted for hundreds of years – well beyond the time frame that Glubb gives.

Our first thought was that Byzantium had an emperor, a caste system and stable and effective political-military-economic system and strategy.

Reply.

- Michael Rothblatt says:
January 10, 2018 at 4:18 pm
>For instance, why did Byzantium last as long as it did?

It had a Mandate of Heaven (unofficial and demotic though it was), so it had periodic resets. If you look at dynasties (either “Byzantine” or Chinese) themselves instead of looking at the state, you get the same Glubb picture. Individual dynasties rarely last for more than two centuries, and frequently a lot less.

Reply.

- Imperial Energy says:
January 10, 2018 at 9:56 pm
The players change, but the game remains the same (until it doesn’t).

Reply.

- fjwawak says:
January 13, 2018 at 3:01 pm
Perhaps we should abandon using the word capitalism because it makes us see economics as something separated from politics, private from public (I think bonald once wrote that we must abolish private property in order to defeat socialism). The great sin of laissez-fairists was they separated the economic from the political, the authority over property from the authority over people. In a way they were property absolutists and commies logically wanted to overthrow this new version of absolutism.

Perhaps that’s one of the reasons why neoreactionaries as former libertarians tend to absolutism. Unlike the libertarians/anarchocapitalists they realized politics can’t be abolished. Hoppe might be somewhere between, still dreaming about purely contractual society but I haven’t read his newer works.

Reply.

- Imperial Energy says:
January 13, 2018 at 3:05 pm

In China, the government has a “primary property right” over all land – the people “rent” for the government. This is also the case in neocameralism.

Yes, you are exactly right about the public/private distinction. Our new post covers this:

<https://imperialenergyblog.wordpress.com/2018/01/13/the-steel-cameralist-manifesto-part-7-the-three-cameralist-systems-and-the-art-and-science-of-statecraft/>

Reply.

- o Michael Rothblatt says:

January 14, 2018 at 3:20 pm

>The great sin of laissez-fairists was they separated the economic from the political, the authority over property from the authority over people.

The sin of laissez-fairists is the assumption that property is going to defend itself, which of course, it won't. Either you will defend it yourself with the force of arms (like medieval lords did), or you will subject yourself to someone who will do it for you (in exchange for rent and allegiance).

Reply.

- o fjwawak says:

January 15, 2018 at 9:12 pm

Which is part of their abolition of politics. Or to put it another way: let us be but enforce our contracts, the law etc. The same error of liberalism all the way down to the present day.

Reply.

- o Michael Rothblatt says:

January 16, 2018 at 10:12 am

>The same error of liberalism all the way down to the present day.

Far too many reactionaries appear to believe that unless subjects are treated as mindless drones and valued less than dirt, it's liberalism. Consider the “constitution” of the Carolingian Empire:

“And he [the emperor] ordained that every man in his whole kingdom — ecclesiastic or layman, each according to his vow and calling — who had previously promised fealty to him as king should now make this promise to him as emperor; and that those who had hitherto not made this promise should all, down to those under 12 years of age, do likewise. And he ordained that it should be publicly told to all — so that each one should understand it — what important things and how many things are comprehended in that oath: not alone, as many have hitherto believed, fidelity to the emperor as regards his life, or the not introducing an enemy into his kingdom for a hostile purpose, or the not consenting to the infidelity of another, or the not keeping silent about it. But all should know that the oath comprises in itself the following meaning: [list]”

No fiction of “social contract” that you've never signed there (through which liberals empowered the state with unlimited power, thus making von Lancizolle's characterization of them as “false liberals” very true). You are expected to be loyal

not by automatism but because you've promised to do so, and you know exactly what it entails (as opposed to today, where vast plenitude of the laws makes everyone a latent criminal). So, it's not really different from Hoppean proprietor setting up rules for his covencom. The problem is, of course, that in Hoppe's system the proprietor relies on outside actors for defense. Why is that a problem? Well, because he's probably going to lose his sovereignty to the aforementioned outside actors (which is what system was specifically designed to avoid).

Reply.

- fjwawak says:

January 17, 2018 at 10:57 pm

Don't get me wrong. I don't deny there is a contractual element to medieval governments. I am just pointing out that the error behind classical liberalism, libertarianism and modern liberalism is the same. They employ government to enforce freedom and end up with unlimited state power.

The problem with Hoppe's system is who is going to enforce the contract between "subject" and "ruler"? Such enforcement presupposes already established authority. So it's not a pure contract. Likewise marriage is a not a purely contractual.

So Hoppe can be read as supporter of monarchy and describing something that resembles the medieval order but then he goes on saying that under purely contractual system there would be even more freedom and this is where he (and others) goes off the rails to the anarchy nonsense.

Reply.

- Michael Rothblatt says:

January 19, 2018 at 1:59 pm

>I am just pointing out that the error behind classical liberalism, libertarianism and modern liberalism is the same. They employ government to enforce freedom and end up with unlimited state power.

Well, I wouldn't say it's the same. Moldbug wrote about it. Back when classical liberal arguments were useful to the Left, they were employed. But as soon as the Left got in power and classical liberalism proved an obstacle, the Left didn't mind using traditionalist arguments, social concerns, etc. to expand its power. In the last few decades of 19th century classical liberals realized with horror that you can't limit the state, that incoming new slavery was to be worse than the old, that it was better to be a serf, than a draftee... As for libertarians, they wouldn't want unlimited "state" power, but the problem is that they couldn't care less about what "private" actors are doing, and about injustices perpetrated by "private" actors (a somewhat arbitrary distinction based on libertarian first principles).

>Such enforcement presupposes already established authority.

But the same problem was even **more** present in continental feudalism. It had no hierarchies and **no** sovereignty. A king of one "country" could at the same time be a vassal to a lesser ranked noble from another "country." That

is why all oaths were appeals to God. This lead to “private wars” and all the other problems one might expect from such a state of “anarchy.” The only way to not have such problems, is of course, to assert sovereignty and hierarchy, IOW [absolute] state, which alone holds monopoly to violence.

>Likewise marriage is a not a purely contractual.

Marriage is not at all contractual. Marriage is sacramental.

>describing something that resembles the medieval order but then he goes on saying that under purely contractual system there would be even more freedom and this is where he (and others) goes off the rails to the anarchy nonsense

How so? Hoppean communes aren’t liberal (and besides, include physical removal of dissidents, and enslavement of outlaws). Hoppe stated this in an interview:

“I don’t think that we, in the Western world, can go back to clans and tribes. The modern, democratic state has destroyed clans and tribes and their hierarchical structures, because they stood in the way of the state’s drive toward absolute power. With clans and tribes gone, we must try it with the model of a private law-society that I have described. But wherever traditional, hierarchical clan and tribe structures still exist, they should be supported; and attempts to “modernize” “archaic” justice systems along Western lines should be viewed with utmost suspicion.”

In fact, since total amount of land in the world is so very finite, given the law of the vital few, and the fact that libertarians are property absolutists, under ancapistan one would probably end up with the most unrestrained and unlimited absolutism imaginable, since libertarians don’t really believe in freedom — they believe in property, and furthermore they believe that if you acquired that property in a way consistent with libertarian first principles it’s all fine and dandy *whatever* you do with it (hence all the funny anti-ancap memes with recreational McNukes). But perhaps you are referring to voluntarism stuff, which if you really think about doesn’t make sense from the standpoint of libertarian first principles. If there is an inherent self-ownership from the moment of conception, and if parents have no positive obligations towards children (natural obligations stemming from the natural law), then each man is a debt slave to his parents for having raised him. And indeed, “stateless” societies that libertarians point out to (such as medieval Ireland, and Iceland) were clan-based societies. Of course, the problem with libertarians is, apart from property absolutism, also the fact that libertarians refuse to acknowledge the reality of the situation “on the ground.”

Moldbug’s first post is basically a demolition of libertarianism from that standpoint. His program of formalism was in essence: here are some people, they have asserted power over us, so instead of wailing about it, let us all recognize it and hope to give them no reason to rule us badly and every reason to rule us well.

Reply.

- o fjwawak says:

January 21, 2018 at 11:15 pm

As was pointed out earlier your comments are very informative. Moreover, I don't think we really disagree.

A few remarks. The link that connects classical liberalism with current brand of liberalism is the question of rights and liberty of man. As liberalism is incoherent it can be shaped to whatever one wants it to be. Thus the current form of liberalism is almost opposite to the classical form but it is still based on the same principles. Zippy writes extensively about it and I find his understanding accurate.

Libertarians may not like the state but it seems to be implied in their principles.

The feudalism was what it was though I think "no hierarchies" and "no sovereignty" is too strong. Look at the history of early Czech state for example. But my point was there hardly can be a proper contract when there is no authority who could register and enforce the contract when necessary. IOW you can't hire and pay your king i.e. be in charge of him and expect him to be in charge of you at the same time. This is what ancapists propose when they talk about private defense agencies, private judges etc. It is a desperate attempt to avoid authority.

Ad Hoppe. As I said earlier, I do not follow his work for several years so I might be wrong. Besides, I disputed only this and not some other, possibly reasonable things he said. And I remember him saying in one interview that contract is the key difference between historical and modern forms of government, including monarchy, and free society he proposes. That is what I was referring to.

Libertarians do believe in freedom. In this case freedom from the interference of state (or some lord or what have you). Absolute property rights are the means to achieve this end (in their eyes). Of course, you're right, freedom is not consistent with property. Whenever we speak about (property) rights we speak about rights enforcement and "coercion" of other people to respect these rights. So they end up with one form of state or another whether they like it or not.

Reply.

- o Michael Rothblatt says:

January 22, 2018 at 8:40 am

>The feudalism was what it was though I think "no hierarchies" and "no sovereignty" is too strong.

What is meant by no sovereignty is a given example of one being a vassal to someone in another country. What is meant by no hierarchy is simply this. If there is a vassal of one lord, who is in turn vassal of

the second lord, vassalage isn't recursive — vassal of the first lord is not a vassal to the second in spite of the fact that the first is a vassal to the second.

4. Imperial Energy says:

January 10, 2018 at 8:45 am

One more point, which is, perhaps, about our host's point.

The problem or the question of ownership and control.

Nigel earlier said that liberalism was slavery without slaveholders (or something like that) and in this post we see that creating a professional bureaucracy of "managers" does not wish away the same problems that Communism was supposed to take care of.

In short, with managerialism we have a permanent exploiting class.

Going back to Moldbug, there is two ways of reading neocameralism. The first is a personalist reading and the second is an impersonalist reading.

The personalist reading sees government as a "family business", though the worst excesses of this type of government are kept at bay with the adoption of a formalist legal system (legal formalism) and the use of corporate structures, including shares owning. Nevertheless, ownership and control are very clear and the incentives to provide good governance are also very clear and easily understandable: family business.

The impersonalist reading is that the shares are distributed widely and no one or no one group has a lion's share. The shareholders own the Sovorg which owns the country.

In light of managerialism, this impersonalist system might be self-contradictory with Moldbug's focus on ownership and control.

Reactionary Future, writing about the Corporate Contradictions of Neoliberalism has this to say:

"The results of this absurdity are noted by Ciepley in the collapse of the American corporation from being a capitalist entity in the sense of accumulating capital and investing in expansion and development of new products, to one which doesn't. Corporate boards were encouraged to become shareholders to align the principal-agent problem based on the error- astonishing error- of shareholders being the owner of the company's property. The pay of CEOs then went from being wages and no shares in 1984, to being 66% share options in 2001. The results are simply astounding. In 1950 60% of Corporation profits in the US were retained for expansion and R&D. In 2003 this was just 3% (in China it is apparently 50%.) The Liberals in effect created a nominalist dream world in which the corporation was just metaphysics to the concrete liberal individual who had to be tied into the role of being subject to consequences by being made a shareholder; an absurdity. Liberal capitalism is a contradiction in terms, the essence of liberalism is anarcho anti-civilisationalism. The idea of society as a network of contractual individuals is literally opposed to the legal construct of the corporation which gains its legal personhood from the sovereign."

See also:

<https://americanaffairsjournal.org/2017/05/corporate-contradictions-neoliberalism/>

Hoppe also seems to support the concept of “family business”.

How could such a thing work with America?

One possibility is to use a “barbell” structure. At the top, you have an “impersonalist” system, but at the state, city, town and county level you have a “private”, personalist, “family business” system.

Reply.

- Michael Rothblatt says:

January 10, 2018 at 8:53 pm

>Reactionary Future, writing about the Corporate Contradictions of Neoliberalism has this to say

He thinks economics and biology are “muh libruh conspiracies” and hangs out with anarcho-communists. I don’t think he’s quite the best reading on those topics. I do think corporations should be banned, given their high time preference and low community investment.

>Hoppe also seems to support the concept of “family business”.

Yes, Hoppe appears to be in fact advocating for the some sort of aristocracy, and not for Friedmanite “market anarchy.”

>At the top, you have an “impersonalist” system

Why not have a personalist system at the top? Why do you think scheming behind the closed curtain is better than Mandate of Heaven system for changing “CEOs”? Mandate of Heaven ensures that you have enough both popular and elite support so as to have a prospect of peace after the overthrow, which is one of necessary preconditions for just rebellion.

Reply.

- Imperial Energy says:

January 10, 2018 at 10:00 pm

It has more chance of selling.

The “impersonalism” could be offset by having an aristocracy with substantial shares though. However, the children would need to be inducted into the tradition of duty.

Reply.

- Michael Rothblatt says:

January 13, 2018 at 1:02 pm

>It has more chance of selling.

Remember that *first citizen* thing? You can have monarchy while still pretending to have a republic, a democracy even. Present-day Iran is not that bad of an example. And it’s doing fine given everything.

Reply.

- Imperial Energy says:

January 13, 2018 at 2:20 pm

Yes, indeed. The design of Iran is quite interesting. The structure is what a reactionary England could have been like with the function and nature of the Supreme Leader being that of the Monarch. We wrote up an alternate history of “Albion” with this in

mind by cut from our manifesto. Though we are looking to publish it as a separate piece (the STEEL Queen of Albion).

Reply.

5. Imperial Energy says:

January 13, 2018 at 2:16 pm

Some more thoughts taken from elsewhere that this post and this blog, along with much else has prompted:

What about the blacks?

To speak with an analogy, the Right and the Left are like two parents getting a divorce and the little child Black is what they will fight over.

Left will use Black against Right

It used to be that Right had a very close relationship with Black, but then Left used the power of the government – social workers armed with guns – who took Black away from Right.

Right has had to pay child support ever since.

However, if Right were to become “father” to Black again, then Left (the crazy mother) has no power. To switch things around, Nigel (1819) is arguing for the re-introduction of slavery (or so it seems). After reading Moldbug and Carlyle we started to re-think slavery and Southern Slavery again.

Our thoughts at the moment, which ran completely contrary to our “received opinion” is that while the origins of slavery were “wrong” – the “capturing” – and the conditions were also often “wrong”, the basic relationship and much of the standard pattern was unobjectionable

We are also starting to come round to the view that the North was wrong, or at least deeply foolish and irresponsible (much like in 1917 and 2003).

Radish said that slavery is a combination of adoption + full lifetime employment.

In other words, the Right – the Reactionary Right – must become Paternalist once more and not just in a general and abstract way and not just over other whites but over all other people, should that be the case.

Tough challenge to win the support of Black for they vote in 90% category for Dems.

Which is unbelievable when you think about it. Look at Detroit, look at Chicago. Then, consider what seems to be the new game: using Mexicans to clean out and displace the Blacks.

So, there is the possibility of “buying” out the Blacks.

They need new “patrons” and we need proxies or at least to weaken the Left by taking away their proxies.

However, for the Right – the Reactionary Right (which must become the Right) this requires a complete philosophical and emotional shift in thought and feeling. It means becoming paternal, patriarchal and aristocratic.

By comparison, a good deal of the Right is quite libertarian and “Protestant” (every man is responsible for himself and has to work hard for himself).

However, history has shown that there is a wide class of people (of all races) who are not capable of being responsible. Nigel's point is that either they will be taken care of by the state (slaves without slaveholders) or they can be taken care of by people.

The other person and work who changed our mind was Charles Francis Adams Jr:

http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9996?msg=welcome_stranger

This is a huge Red Pill.

The irony and hypocrisy of the elites today is that they live quite "conservative" lives, as Charles Murray points out. However, they also make use of servants, staffers, aids and assistants. Now, it seems clear that Whites, of all the races, are the most altruistic. The thing to think about then is not to suppress or oppose that (in every case) but to re-direct it to Reactionary ends.

Essentially, it is to re-direct it back to the old theory and practice of "White man's burden". Authority, hierarchy and personalist paternalism.

The danger with the more extreme versions of White Nationalism and Libertarianism is that it pushes people away. The only thing that is offered is legal proceduralism under a free market system (at best!). The essay that Mark Christensen recently wrote (<http://northern-dawn.ca/2018/01/02/book-review-the-other-north-america/>) showed that some Southerners argued that their system was superior because it was based on human feeling and sustained relationships and not the "capitalist logic" of the North which viewed, if anything, humans as nothing more than "factory equipment"

Reply.

6. Pingback: [Despotism ain't a bad place to be | Carlsbad 1819](#)

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