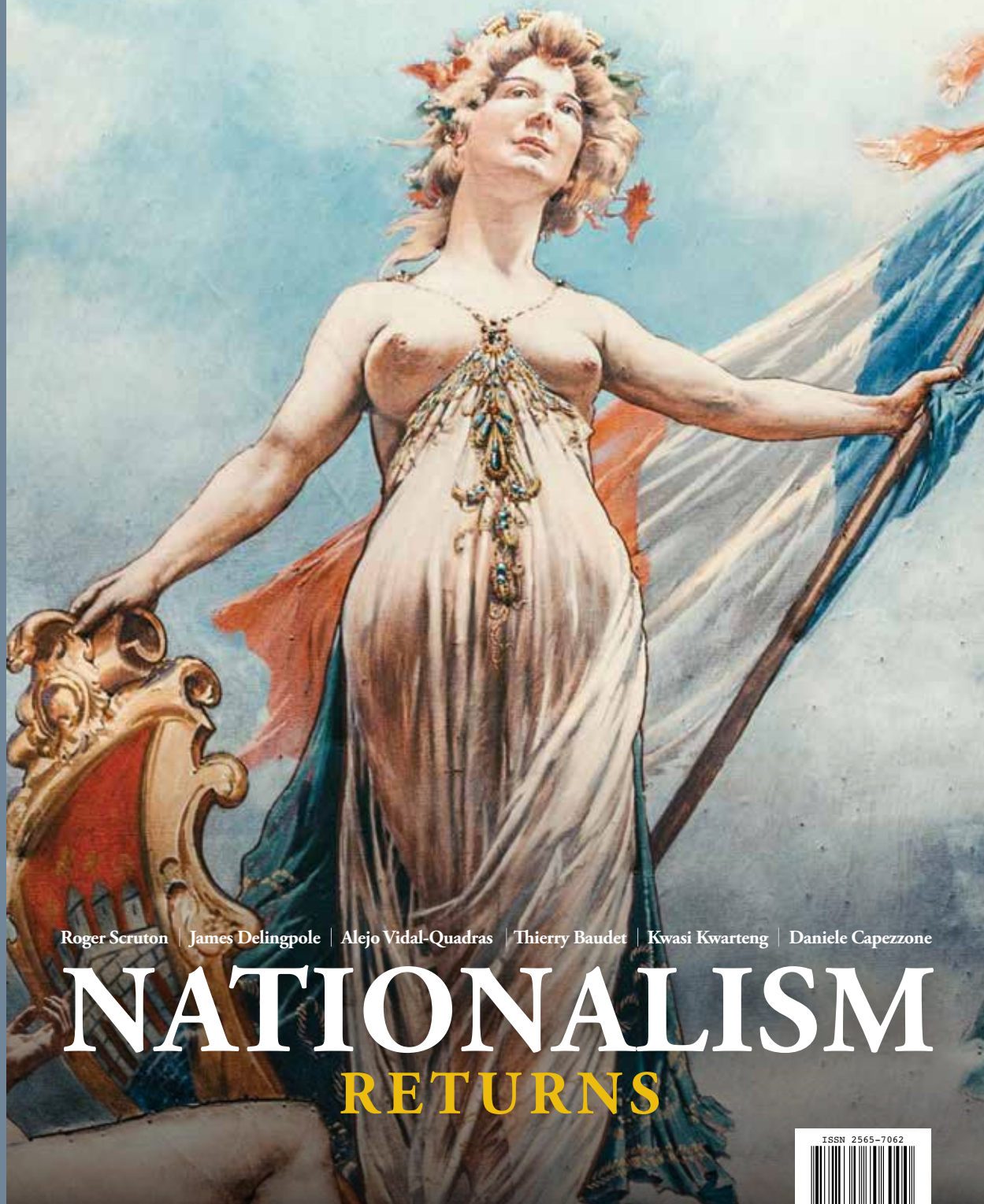


# THE CONSERVATIVE

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL BY THE ALLIANCE OF CONSERVATIVES AND REFORMISTS IN EUROPE



Roger Scruton | James Delingpole | Alejo Vidal-Quadras | Thierry Baudet | Kwasi Kwarteng | Daniele Capezzone

# NATIONALISM RETURNS

ISSN 2565-7062



9 772565 706000 >

# THE CONSERVATIVE

The Conservative is a quarterly Journal in print and online, sponsored by the Alliance of the Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE).

Read The Conservative online at  
**[www.theconservative.online](http://www.theconservative.online)**



**REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:** All content and materials of The Conservative are copyrighted, unless otherwise stated. For permission to republish articles appearing in The Conservative, please contact the Managing Editor at [editor@theconservative.online](mailto:editor@theconservative.online).

**DISCLAIMER:** ACRE is a Belgian ASBL/VZW No: 0820.208.739, recognised and partially funded by the European Parliament. Its views are not reflected by the European Parliament.

The views and opinions expressed in the publication are solely those of individual authors and should not be regarded as reflecting any official opinion or position of the Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe, its leadership, members or staff, or of the European Parliament.

## EDITORIAL BOARD

### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Daniel Hannan MEP

### ADVISORY BOARD

Arthur Brooks

Roger Kimball

Professor Ryszard Legutko MEP

Rich Lowry

Professor Madhav Das Nalapat

Dr Andrew Roberts

Professor Pedro Schwartz

Professor Sir Roger Scruton

### MANAGING EDITOR

Themistoklis Asthenidis

### SUB-EDITOR

Andrew McKie

### ILLUSTRATOR

Michael Daley

### DESIGN

videor.ba

## HOW TO CONTACT US

### ADDRESS:

Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE)

Rue du Trône 4, B-1000

Brussels, Belgium

**TEL:** +32 2 280 60 39

**WEB:** [www.theconservative.online](http://www.theconservative.online)

**EMAIL:** [info@theconservative.online](mailto:info@theconservative.online)

## INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Please address submissions and letters to the editor to:

### ADDRESS:

*Editor-in-Chief, The Conservative*

Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE)

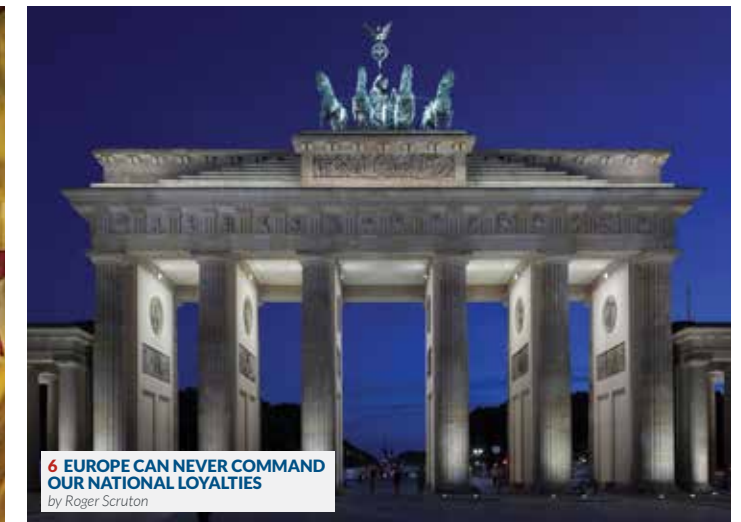
Rue du Trône 4, B-1000

Brussels, Belgium

**EMAIL:** [editor@theconservative.online](mailto:editor@theconservative.online)



**12 CATALAN NATIONALISM, LIKE ALL NATIONALISM, IS ETHICALLY ABHORRENT**  
by Alejo Vidal-Quadras



**6 EUROPE CAN NEVER COMMAND OUR NATIONAL LOYALTIES**  
by Roger Scruton



**23 CONSERVATIVE MUSIC**  
by Jay Nordlinger



**36 BUILDING A COUNTRY CALLED EUROPE**  
by Bill Wirtz

## 5 EDITORIAL: NATIONALISM RETURNS

by Daniel Hannan

## 6 EUROPE CAN NEVER COMMAND OUR NATIONAL LOYALTIES

by Roger Scruton

## 12 CATALAN NATIONALISM, LIKE ALL NATIONALISM, IS ETHICALLY ABHORRENT

by Alejo Vidal-Quadras

## 18 THERE IS NO MORE SECURE VESSEL FOR FREEDOM

by Dominic Green

## 23 COLUMN: CONSERVATIVE MUSIC

by Jay Nordlinger

## 26 A SOVEREIGN STATE CAN BE AN OPEN STATE

by Jeremy Rabkin

## 31 COLUMN: CONSERVATIVE WINE

by Iain Martin

## 36 BUILDING A COUNTRY CALLED EUROPE

by Bill Wirtz

## 40 STATES SHOULD BE SMALLER, MORE DIVERSE AND MORE AUTONOMOUS

by Robert Nef





**74 BREXIT WAS DE GAULLE'S REVENGE**  
by Kwasi Kwarteng



**66 WITHOUT NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY, WE'D BE BACK IN THE MIDDLE AGE**  
by Thierry Baudet

**47 CONSERVATIVE ICONS**  
by Roger Kimball



**82 LET FREE NATIONS COMPETE AGAINST EACH OTHER**  
by Daniele Capezzone

**47 COLUMN: CONSERVATIVE ICONS**  
by Roger Kimball

**58 DEMOCRATIC SELF-GOVERNMENT REQUIRES NATIONALISM**  
by John Fonte

**63 COLUMN: FREE MARKET ADVANCES**  
by Kristian Niemietz

**66 WITHOUT NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY, WE'D BE BACK IN THE MIDDLE AGE**  
by Thierry Baudet

**71 COLUMN: CONSERVATIVE BOOKS**  
by James Delingpole

**74 BREXIT WAS DE GAULLE'S REVENGE**  
by Kwasi Kwarteng

**79 COLUMN: CONSERVATIVE CULTURE**  
by Damian Thompson

**82 LET FREE NATIONS COMPETE AGAINST EACH OTHER**  
by Daniele Capezzone

## EDITORIAL: NATIONALISM RETURNS



**Daniel Hannan MEP**  
is Editor of The Conservative.  
@DanielJHannan

In May 1942, broadcasting by radio from London, Charles de Gaulle appealed to his countrymen to rally to the cause of democracy and national sovereignty – two words which, as he saw it, expressed the same concept. “*La démocratie se confond exactement pour moi avec la souveraineté nationale*,” he said, adding that if democracy meant government of the people and by the people, then sovereignty meant the right of the people to unhindered self-rule.

Those words might sound archaic to modern ears, but they made sense to de Gaulle’s listeners. European radicals had always championed the nation-state as the democratic alternative to the *ancien régime*. In making the argument for government for the people and by the people, they found they had to explain whom they meant by “the people”. The answer, to most of them, was obvious. Democracy would work best within a unit where people felt enough in common one with another to accept government from each other’s hands – in other words, within a nation.

That sense of common identity might rest on many things: language, religion, shared territory, shared history. Being visceral, it was difficult to define. But that didn’t make it any less real. A shared sense of nationhood was what made people pay taxes to support strangers,

obey laws with which they disagreed, accept election results when they lost. Take the *demos* out of democracy and you would be left only with the *kra-tos* – the power of a regime that had to compel by force what it could not ask in the name of patriotism.

A belief in the nation-state is incompatible with support for deeper European integration. The EU has acquired the attributes of statehood – a parliament, a currency, a flag, a president, embassies, a national anthem and so on – without the accompanying sense of shared affinity. Its peoples speak different languages, follow different media, vote for different sets of politicians. Some Euro-zealots (as Bill Wirtz describes in this issue) have tried to create a substitute European nationalism; but most stick to the line that the nation-state is *passé* and that, as Guy Verhofstadt recently put it in London, the future belongs to supra-national empires.

Does it? When the EEC was founded in the 1950s, there were 80 states in the world. Today there are 200. While there still are plenty of secessionist movements at work, there are very few fusionist movements – other than in Brussels, obviously. The trend is toward more, smaller and more accountable states. And, by and large, it is a positive trend. Few countries become poorer, over time, as a result of becoming freer.

In the pages that follow, Roger Scruton and Thierry Baudet make an elegant conservative case for nationhood, and Daniele Capezzone and Jeremy Rabkin make what we might call a more liberal case, stressing, respectively, the importance of competition and the compatibility of the nation-state with an open economic system. Alejo Vidal-Quadras, writing from a unionist Catalan perspective, and Robert Nef, from a Swiss, offer a different take. The one thing all our contributors have in common, I hope, is that their arguments are original and elegant.

This magazine aims to be the best place for intelligent Right-of-Centre opinion of every strand – conservative, libertarian, traditionalist, patriotic, free-market and, yes, nationalist. In this, as in every issue, we aim, as Horace enjoined, to delight as well as to instruct. I hope you enjoy it. 🐕



## EUROPE CAN NEVER COMMAND OUR NATIONAL LOYALTIES

by Roger Scruton

Recent elections in the former Communist countries and in Italy, France and Germany, and the Brexit vote in the United Kingdom, show the extent to which sentiments of national identity are once more prominent in the cultural landscape of Europe. And they are the

more prominent for the attempt by the Eurocrats to forbid them.

I doubt that this situation was foreseen by those who first set the European process in motion. It seemed reasonable, even imperative, in 1950 to bring the nations of Europe together, in a

**People cling to the place, the language, the customs and the religion that have bound them in solidarity with their neighbours, and conferred on them the indispensable sense of “who we are”.**



way that would prevent the wars that had twice almost destroyed the continent.

And because conflicts breed radicalism, the new Europe was conceived as a comprehensive plan – one that would eliminate the sources of European conflict, and place cooperation rather than rivalry at the heart of the continental order. National identities were seen, at the time, as part of the problem, and certainly not the basis for a solution.

The architects of the European plan, who were for the most part Christian Democrats, had little else in common apart from a belief in European civilisation and a distrust of the nation state. The *émigré*, Jean Monnet, was a transnational bureaucrat, inspired by the vision of a united Europe in which war would be a thing of the past. His close collaborator Walter Hallstein was an academic German technocrat, who believed in international jurisdiction as the natural successor to the laws of the nation states. Monnet and Hallstein were joined by Altiero Spinelli, a romantic Communist who advocated a United States of Europe legitimised by a democratically elected European Parliament.



Such people were not isolated enthusiasts, but part of a broad movement among the post-war political class. They chose popular leaders like Konrad Adenauer, Robert Schuman and Alcide De Gasperi as the spokesmen for their ideas, and proposed the European Coal and Steel Community (the Schuman Plan) as their initial goal – believing that the larger project would acquire legitimacy,

if it could first be understood and accepted in this circumscribed form.

At the same time the long-term goal was kept secret, on the justified understanding that, if the people got wind of it, they would make sure it never happened. It is not that the ordinary people of Europe are by nature nationalists, in the manner of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century enthusiasts who first crafted the national idea

as a cultural and political icon. It is simply that they cling to the place, the language, the customs and the religion that have bound them in solidarity with their neighbours, and conferred on them the indispensable sense of “who we are”. The nation, for most Europeans, defines the true “first-person plural”, the “we”, to which they belong.

When the first instruments of European cooperation were being devised, the continent was divided by the Iron Curtain, with half of Germany and all of the Slavonic countries under Soviet occupation and fascist regimes installed in Portugal and Spain. France was in constant turmoil, with a Communist Party commanding the support of more than a third of its electorate; the free remnant of Europe was critically dependent upon the Atlantic alliance, and the marks of occupation and defeat were (except in Great Britain and the Iberian peninsula) everywhere apparent. Only radical measures, it seemed, could restore the continent to political and economic health, and those measures must replace the old antagonisms with a new spirit of friendship.

As a result European integration was conceived in one-dimensional terms, as a process of ever-increasing *unity*, under a centralised structure of command. Each increase in central power was to be matched by a diminution of national power. Every summit, every directive and every click of the ratchet has since carried within itself this specific equation. The political process in Europe has therefore acquired a *direction*. It is not a direction that the people of Europe have chosen, and every time they are given the right to vote on it they reject it, as recently in Britain. The process is moving always towards centralisation, top-down control, dictatorship by unelected bureaucrats and judges, cancellation of laws passed by

**What we are now seeing in Europe is that yesterday's radical visions cannot translate into today's political needs. The imperial project has entered into conflict with the only source of sentiment upon which it could conceivably draw for its legitimacy.**

elected parliaments, constitutional treaties framed without any input whatsoever from the people – in short, the process is moving always towards imperial government. And only one thing stands opposed to this result, and that is the national sentiments of the European people.

For this very reason national sentiments have been demonised. Speak up

for Jeanne d'Arc and *le pays réel*, for the “sceptred isle” and St George, for Lemmenkäinen's gloomy forests and the “true Finns” who roam in them, and you will be called a fascist, a racist, a populist and an extremist. There is a liturgy of denunciation here that is repeated all across Europe by a ruling elite that trembles in the face of ordinary loyalties. But the fact is that national sentiment is, for most ordinary Europeans, the only motive that will justify sacrifice in the public cause.

In so far as people do not vote to line their own pockets, it is because they also vote to protect a shared identity from the predations of those who do not belong to it. That is the real reason why Viktor Orbán did so well in





the recent Hungarian election, why the Law and Justice Party remains so strong in Poland and why Angela Merkel is facing such a radical challenge from the *Alternativ für Deutschland*.

What we are now seeing in Europe is that yesterday's radical visions cannot translate into today's political needs. The imperial project has entered into conflict with the only source of sentiment upon which it could conceivably draw for its legitimacy. The nation states are not equally stable, equally democratic, equally free or equally obedient to the rule of law. But they are all that we have. They alone inspire the loyalty

and obedience of the European people, and without them there is no way that the machinery of the Union can act. By replacing national accountability with distant bureaucracy, that machinery has left people disarmed and bewildered in the face of mass migration, surely *the* great issue for Europe today, and one that the elite is determined to avoid.

The same bewilderment has been stirred by the common currency. The Euro, invented and imposed without any proof that the people of the "Eurozone" had any desire for it, was immediately understood, by the kleptocrats of the Mediterranean, as a

way of enlarging the national debt, and transferring it to the hard-working Germans. And the people of Greece, Spain and Portugal agreed, since nobody alerted them to the cost – the *national* cost – that will be paid, in terms of youth unemployment and the de-capitalisation of society, when the national government has lost control of its currency.

In a crisis people "take stock", which means that they retreat to the primary source of their social identity, and prepare to defend it. They do not do this consciously. But they do it nevertheless, and the futile attempt by the comfortable elites to denounce the "extremism" of the people whose inheritance they have stolen, or the "populism" of those who gain the people's favour, merely exacerbates the reaction. But the situation is not a happy one.

Not only are there nations like the Flemish and the English which have no nation state of their own, the half-century of peace and prosperity has fed upon the European cultural inheritance without renewing it. The constitutional treaties and trans-national courts of the EU have made a point of granting no favours to the Christian faith, and the spirit of multiculturalism has



**The people of Greece, Spain and Portugal agreed, since nobody alerted them to the cost – the national cost – that will be paid, in terms of youth unemployment and the de-capitalisation of society, when the national government has lost control of its currency.**

ensured that national cultures receive no subsidies either from national governments or from the European Union. A "cult of the minority" has been imposed from above. Yet all across Europe "multiculturalism" is being rejected, both by ordinary people and by many of their elected representatives. For, while multiculturalism has done nothing to reconcile immigrant communities to their new surroundings, it has destroyed the frail remnants of national cultures that survived the Second World War.

This is one reason why people who stand up for their national identity can so easily be made to look like "extremists". You don't look like an extremist, if you express your national sentiment in the

idiom of a Péguy, an Orwell, a Lampedusa or a Sibelius. But when you have no national icons besides the flag and the football team you find it difficult to display the most important aspect of national sentiment, which is that it is an invocation of peace, and not a cry of war.

That is why culture matters, and why its loss, in times of crisis, is a loss to the whole community, and not just to the educated minority who are aware of the fact. And it is precisely here, in the realm of culture, that the national idea needs to be defined and acknowledged. For European civilisation depends far more on national solidarity than on any of the transnational institutions that have emerged from the original plan. 🐕



#### Sir Roger Scruton

is a writer and philosopher who has published more than forty books in philosophy, aesthetics and politics. He is widely translated. He is a fellow of the British Academy and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. He teaches in both England and America and is a Senior Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, Washington D.C. He is currently teaching an MA in Philosophy for the University of Buckingham.  
@roger\_scruton





## CATALAN NATIONALISM, LIKE ALL NATIONALISM, IS ETHICALLY ABHORRENT

by Alejo Vidal-Quadras

Nationalism is both a political doctrine and a method to achieve power. As a political doctrine it aims to place ethnic, linguistic or cultural identity at the top of the moral scale, above freedom, equality, solidarity or justice. This characteristic of nationalism makes it ethically aberrant.

As a way to conquer power, it is based on the rational use of the irrational to achieve the uncritical

support of enough people in a particular territory to configure a majority in an election. This aspect, typical of all forms of populism, makes it extremely dangerous because it involves potential recourse to violence. It was not in vain that the French President François Mitterand pronounced in one of his last speeches the famous phrase: “*Le nationalisme, c’est la guerre.*”

**Catalan nationalism is one of separation and not of unification, as were the German, British or Italian nationalisms, which managed to build large-scale nations merging smaller political entities.**

All identity nationalisms are by nature divisive, exclusionary, supremacist and overtly or covertly racist. Catalan nationalism, a political movement that was born in Spain in the last quarter of the 19th Century, has not been and is not an exception.

It has exhibited all these features with more or less virulence over the last century and a half, depending on the time and circumstance.

Catalan nationalism is one of separation and not of unification, as were the German, British or Italian nationalisms, which managed to build large-scale nations merging smaller political entities. Catalan nationalism, on the contrary, is determined to put an end to Spanish national unity by fragmenting a state with five hundred years of

existence.

A feeling very different from ethno-linguistic particularism is patriotism, which is manifested through the love of one’s own country, understood as a space of rights and freedoms, of affection and mutual help among its citizens and of treasuring a cultural heritage with a universal vocation. The conception of national identity as a starting point to open up to the world, or as a

barrier that isolates us in our corner, is the fundamental difference between pathological identity nationalism and healthy civic patriotism.

The separatists obviously need reasons that seem weighty enough to justify their disturbing purposes. In the selection of motives that lend meaning to their destructive project, nationalism is protean and can resort to the most diverse issues. Race, language, religion, geography, history or the distribution of natural or financial resources constitute the base of the arguments that feed the secessionist fire.

The fact that they respond to an objective reality or that they are pure inventions or exaggerations has never been an obstacle

for the nationalist leaders to use them emphatically as an effective instrument to awaken emotions and generate supporters. In this sense, they play with the advantage that their messages are directed directly to the limbic system of the brain, cancelling to a large extent the left side of the neocortex.







Catalan separatists have distorted history by presenting the secular relations between Catalonia and the rest of Spain as a succession of completely imaginary grievances to the Catalan community and fantasising about a sovereign Catalan state that has never existed. In recent times they have added to these chimeras the protest over the unfair distribution, according to their biased calculations, of the fiscal balance between the Autonomous Community of Catalonia and the rest of Spanish regions. Leaving aside the evidence that the

**The nationalists' messages are directed directly to the limbic system of the brain, cancelling to a large extent the left side of the neocortex.**

territories do not pay taxes, but physical persons and the companies do, and even accepting their scheme of fiscal flows, numerous studies of prestigious academic and financial institutions, including the Department of Finance of the Generalitat, have shown that their figures are pure propaganda.

Another important element to highlight in the perverse conceptual construction of Catalan nationalism is its dramatic and constant appeal to democracy and hence its demand for a referendum of self-determination to establish whether or not Catalans wish to remain united to Spain.

“What’s wrong with putting polls and asking people what they want?” is the tricky question they ask to attract international sympathy for their claims. If the United Kingdom has allowed a consultation to the Scots, why

does not the Spanish state authorise a similar plebiscite in Catalonia?

The answer is clear: the process that led to the holding of the referendum in Scotland on September 18 2014 took place with scrupulous respect for the British constitutional order and within the law. According to the Spanish Constitution, a consultation of this nature is unconstitutional. To be brought about – assuming that the Spanish Parliament authorised it – the Fundamental Law of 1978 should be reformed beforehand.

Catalan separatists broke the law by promoting and conducting the referendum of October 1 2017, and their leaders committed, in accordance with the criminal code in force in Spain, criminal offences of considerable seriousness, such as rebellion, sedition, prevarication, disobedience to the courts and embezzlement. The four prominent separatists who are in preventive detention have not been put behind bars by the government, but by a judge applying the law, as befits a democratic *État de Droit*.

From the very beginning of self-government in Catalonia in 1980, the nationalists have not stopped for

a moment in their efforts to separate this Spanish land from its national, historical, economic, cultural and sentimental matrix. Persistently and maliciously, they have used all the institutional, political and financial means with which the Spanish Constitution has entrusted them. They have acted in schools through the systematic indoctrination of children and young people, in the public media, creating a climate of opinion hostile

**The nationalists undertook to develop their policies within the framework of the Constitution and not to question the indivisibility of the Spanish nation.**

to everything Spanish, and encouraged private media to work for their objectives by buying them with subsidies. Throughout the social fabric they have promoted and financed a wide range of private entities in the service of the independence movement.

This constant poisoning of consciousness, and disregard for the law, represents a flagrant betrayal of the great civil pact of the Transition, which allowed, after the death of General Franco,

the peaceful move from an authoritarian regime to a democracy, such as those existing in the free West and, in particular, in the European Union. In essence, the deal consisted of transforming Spain into one of the most politically decentralised states in the world. It structured it into autonomous communities endowed with broad and intense legislative, executive and budgetary powers, with recognition of the co-official nature of the Catalan, Basque and Galician languages in their respective zones of presence and favouring a noticeable visibility in the symbolic domain – flags, hymns, commemorations – of the corresponding identities.

In return, the nationalists undertook to develop their policies within the framework of the Constitution and not to question the indivisibility of the Spanish nation. Well, one party, the state and the Crown, has unreservedly fulfilled this transcendental agreement and the other, the nationalists, has smashed it with absolute impudence and flagrant violation of the given word. In the universal history of infamy, this felony will remain an indelible stain on an unworthy and vile Catalan political class. Add to this the fact that the Catalan





Susana Vera / Reuters

**Spain is a great nation with enormous potential that will undoubtedly survive the treacherous attack of a gang of coup plotters whose mediocre greed has dragged them into failure and ridicule.**

Autonomous Administration has stood out as one of the most corrupt in Spain, and an unfortunate picture of moral degradation and political irresponsibility is perfectly drawn.

The flight of companies, the paralysis of investments, the total absence of

international support, the deep fracture of Catalan society in two halves, the exemplary firmness of the Crown and the overwhelming reaction of the courts have shown the non-viability of the separatist putsch in Catalonia.

We hope that the waters will return to their course and that out of this bitter and miserable experience, the wisdom, the respect to the law and the cohesion among all Spaniards will prevail. Spain is a great nation with enormous potential that will undoubtedly survive the treacherous attack of a gang of coup plotters

whose mediocre greed has dragged them into failure and ridicule. 🐶



**Alejo Vidal-Quadras** is a former Member and Vice-President of the European Parliament from Spain, and a radiation physicist. He was elected on the People's Party ticket and sat with the European People's Party group.



# A FUTURE FOR EUROPE

[acreurope.eu](http://acreurope.eu)





## THERE IS NO MORE SECURE VESSEL FOR FREEDOM

by Dominic Green

Reports of the death of the nation state are greatly exaggerated. Between 1945 and 1980, the number of UN member states tripled from 51 to 154. With the accession of South Sudan in 2011, there are now 193 UN states, plus near-state Observers like the ex-state of the Vatican, the never-state of the International Olympic Committee and the nearly-state of Palestine. Many of the newer states were born by parthenogenesis from older ones. More new states are sure to be created by secession and civil war. A Kurdish state, or even two, might be next.

If quantity means anything, the nation state is doing fine. Its doubters,

though, argue from quality. The European-style nation state has not thrived in the Middle East and Africa. Several factors have caused this, and most of them are obvious. The Europeans drew illogical borders which cut across tribal and religious lines. They left in a hurry, bequeathing an administrative afterthought of puppet kings and weak constitutions.

The inheritors of decolonisation abused their inheritance. Where there was no nation, the state became a weapon in the hands of one tribe or sect. Does this mean the state is an inherently bad idea? Or did these states fail because they were badly designed and poorly run?

**Where there was no nation, the state became a weapon in the hands of one tribe or sect.**

In the latter case, then what we need is more and better states, not fewer. We need states which, instead of aiming for a balance of power or fear between multiple parties – as in Lebanon or Iraq – contain a strong ethnic and religious majority, as in Israel and the Kurdish near-state in Iraq. One group cannot achieve historical self-determination if other, equally numerous parties are also trying to determine themselves in the same geographical space. This, after all, was the conclusion that the Europeans, after much bloodshed, reached in 1648, with the Treaty of Westphalia.

The failings of the West are on our minds at present, and even the prospect of a failing of the West. Is the nation state as we know it as time-bound an artefact as a Renaissance portrait? Globally, the rights-based, rule-of-law liberal state is on the back foot. One reason for this is that the non-liberal nation state is doing so well. While the democratic capitalist states are having a crisis of economy and identity, the authoritarian capitalists who

lead China, Iran, Turkey and the Russian Federation are redefining the nation state for our century. Again, the nation state is doing fine in the early 21st century; the problem, for us at least, is our disapproval of their kind of nation state.

The authoritarian capitalist states, like the democratic capitalist states of the West before them, are thriving because the state has harnessed democracy and capitalism. We, meanwhile, are

nervous about our future because democracy and capitalism, having fallen out of harness in the 1990s, are pulling in opposite directions. Capital looks outwards, and democracy inwards. Capital is global, democracy local. Capital wants to transfer skills and goods to where they are most valuable, and production and taxation to where they are least expensive. Democracy wants communal and economic stability, and it pays



**Is the nation state as we know it as time-bound an artefact as a Renaissance portrait?**



taxes to get them. No wonder the rising powers of Asia have preferred to emphasise capital over democracy. The state is steadier that way, at least for now.

The liberal democratic state is unsteady because its leaders have not held up their end of the bargain. They have imposed high taxation within their borders, but opened their economies to market forces and multinational corporations. While ordinary workers have lost their communal and economic stability, the

state has protected its permanent managerial class of unelected bureaucrats.

At the moment, the liberal state's true partner is not the electorate, but big business and unelected bureaucrats. This is not a sustainable situation in a democracy. The rise

**Founded in the first wave of European decolonisation, Israel, like the near-state of the Iraqi Kurds, proves that democratic nation states can work in the Middle East.**

of populism in Europe and the United States confirms as much. Until our leaders get the message, we will be in for more of the same – more populism, more exploitation of our unsteadiness by the rising powers of Asia, and more premature obituaries for the state.

Then again, if the liberal state is not the End of History, and if we don't want to live under authoritarian capitalism, what are our choices? The historical alternative to the nation state is the empire. Most modern states were born from empires – so many, in

fact, that the age of empires was declared over as nation states multiplied after 1945.

Yet empire has not disappeared. It has changed its name. India, and perhaps the United States of America too, might be empires under the protective coloration of federated nation states. The European Union, should it develop further in its current form, would become one. Turkey, should it digress further from its modern form, would become one, too. And did the 20th-century rulers of Russia and China ever stop thinking imperially?

The authoritarian capitalists offer the traditional exchange of empires: liberty for security. They declare spheres of interest, some of it more historic than actual, and assert the interests of their dispersed ethnic and religious kin. Erdogan's Turkey admitted as much when Davutoglu coined the phrase 'neo-Ottomanism'. Weak nation states encourage this sort of expansionism, with all its unforeseen and dangerous consequences, as in the Crimea and the disintegrating Sykes-Picot states of the Middle East. But strong nation states, as in central and eastern Europe, are a bulwark against those who would redraw the map.

The liberal state remains the best of the worst options for organising democratic life. Our pessimism about the liberal state confuses the institutional decay of 19th-century liberalism and 20th-century social democracy with the demise of the political model that served them. The nation state, when it is responsive to its people's needs and values, helps to create stability.

**Instead of abolishing the nation state, we need to cultivate it, and the identity and values that sustain it. That means correcting the balance of accountability between governments and the governed.**

Consider Israel, 70 years old in May. Founded in the first wave of European decolonisation, Israel, like the near-state of the Iraqi Kurds, proves that democratic nation states can work in the Middle East. Since the 1980s, Israel has prospered by moving from a command economy to the free market. It has turned the improvisations of its defence industry into an economic asset: a law allowing engineers to keep the non-military aspect of

patents devised during military service has produced a tech sector second only to that of the United States. The profits of economic modernisation sustain the legacy that no electorate can live without, the cradle-to-grave welfare system.

Instead of abolishing the nation state, we need to cultivate it, and the identity and values that sustain it. That means correcting the balance of accountability between governments and the governed. Governments must look at more than the balance sheet, and consider the social effects of their policies. They must take border security seriously, and they must consider their virtual borders, to protect citizens against online criminality, and the centralising tendency of the knowledge economy. We should be in a better state than the one we're in now. 🐶



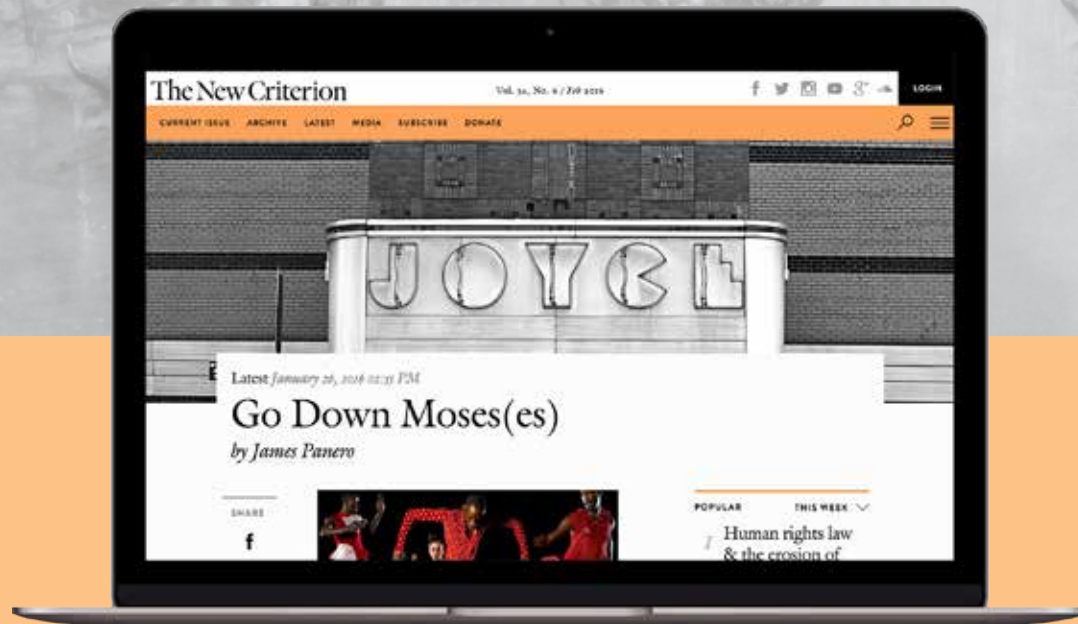
**Dr Dominic Green**  
is a columnist at Spectator USA  
and a frequent contributor to  
The Weekly Standard.





# The New Criterion

Curating the best in  
art and culture in the  
Western world.



Receive weekly recommendations on art and  
culture through a conservative lens with  
The Critic's Notebook email newsletter.

Visit [newcriterion.com/newsletter](http://newcriterion.com/newsletter) to sign-up.

## FINDING THE MUSIC BETWEEN THE NOTES

by Jay Nordlinger



“Years ago, I asked  
Maestro Lorin  
Maazel about the future  
of classical music. The  
first words out of his  
mouth were “Thank  
God for China.”

### Jay Nordlinger

is a senior editor of *National Review* and the music critic of *The New Criterion*. He is the author of *Peace, They Say: A History of the Nobel Peace Prize* (Encounter Books). His latest book is a study of the sons and daughters of dictators: *Children of Monsters* (also Encounter). He lives in New York. @JayNordlinger

Riccardo Muti is one of the senior conductors of the world. For almost 50 years, he has worked at the highest levels: in London, Philadelphia, Milan, Vienna, and elsewhere. Today, he is the music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

On a recent tour with the orchestra, he stopped in New York, for two concerts at Carnegie Hall. I sat down with him to talk about music and about life.

Muti was born in 1941 in Naples (not Florida, although Naples, Florida, happens to be his very next stop). He grew up on the Adriatic coast, in the town of Molfetta. He was one of five brothers, whose father was a doctor. Each boy was expected to take up a profession. For example, “I was supposed to study law,” says Muti.

But his father was also an opera-lover, and an amateur tenor. He required that his boys learn an instrument, because “he believed that music is an important

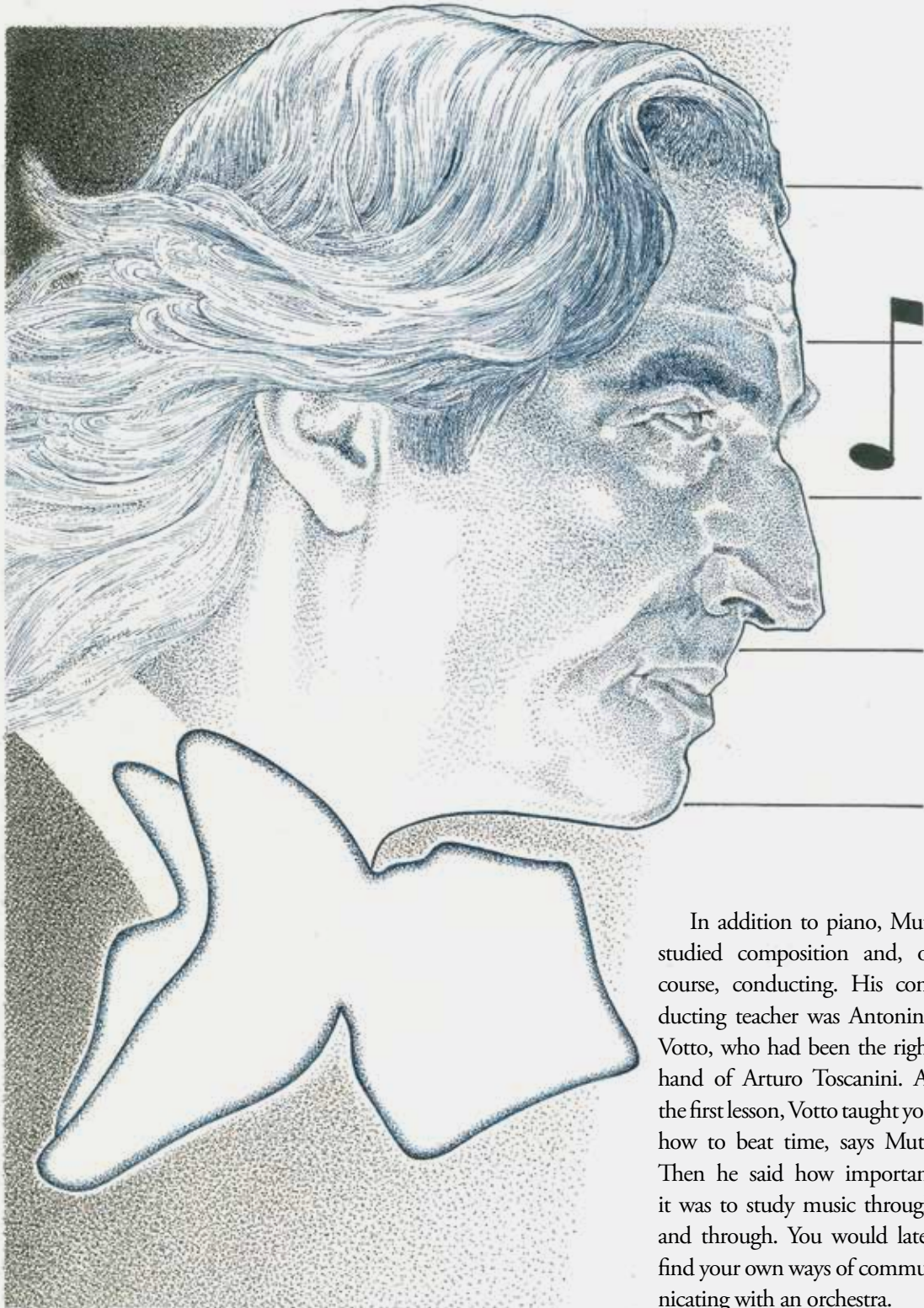
At eight, Riccardo was given a violin. Then he studied the piano, which would be his main instrument. He studied at conservatories in Naples and Milan.

It was Nino Rota who convinced him that he could be a full-time musician. Today, Rota is best known as a film composer – *La Strada*, *The Godfather* – but he was a musician of many parts. “He could play *Wozzeck* from memory,” says Muti, referring to Alban Berg’s modernist opera. But, in his own music, Rota “had the courage to express his own nature”. He “did not try to be a ‘contemporary’ composer”.

element for every person,” as Muti says. “Music helps people to be better. To become deeper in their thoughts. To be more refined inside.”







In addition to piano, Muti studied composition and, of course, conducting. His conducting teacher was Antonino Votto, who had been the right hand of Arturo Toscanini. At the first lesson, Votto taught you how to beat time, says Muti. Then he said how important it was to study music through and through. You would later find your own ways of communicating with an orchestra.

"I was a good pianist," says Muti, "but I was too nervous when I performed, and I did not want to spend my life sitting at a keyboard in front of a wall." He became Maestro Muti.

These days, he says, people become conductors all too easily, without sufficient training or depth. "It's a disaster," he says. "Somebody plays the flute, and the next day he starts to conduct." This problem is especially felt in the opera house, he says.

I ask him about familiar music – ultra-familiar music, such as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, or Tchaikovsky's. Is it still a privilege to conduct these works, after a lifetime on the podium? A great one, answers Muti. "You go more deeply into the score and you love it more. The horizon widens. Every piece, I restudy from the beginning. I start again and again and again, because 'The End' exists only in the movies."

He also acquires new copies of familiar scores, free of his previous markings. The late maestro Otto Klemperer did the same, says Muti. You want a virgin score, to look at music afresh. "Mozart said that music lies between the notes," Muti observes. It is the conductor's job – any musician's job – to find the music between the notes.

One of Muti's non-musical features has been his hair – a great, enviable, much-commented-upon head of hair. Call it "la forza del destino," he says with a chuckle. (*La Forza del Destino*, or "The Force of Destiny," is the title of a Verdi opera.) He does not fuss with his hair, he says. It is cut by a simple barber. And, no matter what people claim, it's natural. It is what it is.

**You go more deeply into the score and you love it more. The horizon widens. Every piece, I restudy from the beginning. I start again and again and again, because 'The End' exists only in the movies.**

In his career, this mane has been both "croce e delizia," says Muti, both cross and delight – a mixed blessing. (That is a line from another Verdi opera, *La Traviata*.)

Years ago, I asked Maestro Lorin Maazel about the future of classical music. The first words out of his mouth were "Thank God for China." Muti sympathises with this sentiment. In East Asia, he says, they believe in Western culture practically more than we do in the West. We must not take for granted what we have, he cautions.

I raise the subject of pop music. "In music with a capital M," he says, "there is no distinction" – no distinction between the classical and the popular. He notes that some pop songs touch the heart and live forever: *Volare*, for example (by Domenico Modugno). And "some symphonies, it is better to burn." Muti admires Céline Dion, the Canadian pop singer. And he quotes the Bible: There is a time for everything, including all sorts of music. Sometimes you need one thing, another time another.

He *always* needs Mozart, he says. "You can conduct him every night." And Beethoven, "*almost* every night." Tchaikovsky, "maybe two times a week – not because he is less important but because you need more time to rest. You don't want to get overexcited."

Riccardo Muti has been at the top of the conducting heap for a long time. "But, in a way, I remain provincial as a person," he says. "After the last note of every concert or opera I conduct, I go back to being the normal person from the south of Italy. Every time, it's a sort of miracle that I am able to conduct an orchestra." 🐕



# A SOVEREIGN STATE CAN BE AN OPEN STATE

by Jeremy Rabkin

President Trump likes to talk about “sovereignty” – he mentioned it 17 times in his address to the UN last autumn. He has denounced “open borders” and called for the construction of a wall on the US border with Mexico. He also questions trade agreements. He

called Nafta, for example, “the worst agreement in history.” In Europe, self-styled “populists” also combine claims for protection of “sovereignty” with attacks on “global trade” or “open borders.”

So it is easy to assume all these claims go together.

**Sovereignty is fundamentally about the right to make your own laws, not a compulsion to make laws about everything.**

In fact, the main thing they have in common is they all provoke and annoy Left-liberal advocates for a

“globalising world”. That might be enough for campaign soundbites. It’s not enough to sustain a serious approach to real policy.

To start with, we should distinguish trade in goods from trade in people. Foreign-made goods will sit on a shelf until resold or used by particular owners. If you admit foreign people, they are part of your society – for better or worse, in one way or another. It’s perfectly rational

to welcome the goods while being cautious about the people. There are lots of historic examples of trading states which took a very cautious approach to immigration, as Switzerland, for example, still does.

The larger point to remember is that sovereignty is fundamentally about the right to make your own laws, not a compulsion to make laws about everything. The term first became a theme

of political writers in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. It was aimed at restricting papal interventions into local political affairs and restricting feudal claims that cut across national borders. “Sovereign” power was identified with *ultimate* control of force, not total control of everything in a territory.

So the French jurist Jean Bodin, the first writer to make a theme of sovereignty (in his *Six Livres de la Republique*, 1576), offered a list of essential sovereign powers, including the collection of taxes, the coining of money, the regulation of weights and measures. He did not bother to include control of imports as an essential sovereign power. He endorsed cross-border trade.

By the mid-18th Century, William Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, noting that all government powers were ultimately governed by laws, taught that “sovereignty and legislature are convertible terms” because “one cannot subsist without the other”. When American colonists denied Parliament’s power to impose taxes on Americans, they proceeded quite rapidly to the conclusion that the colonies were entitled to regard themselves as independent states.





But one of the arguments colonial leaders advanced for independence was that the British government had abused its authority “by cutting off our trade with the rest of the world”. The same Congress that endorsed the Declaration of Independence (where this complaint appears) also proposed a model treaty for trade relations with outside countries, offering to treat imports on the same terms as domestic production if other states would do the same for American exports.

At the time there were no takers for this American offer. Advocates for American tariffs often argued they were necessary to pressure foreign states into reducing their own obstacles to American imports (the Constitution adopted in 1788 forbids the US government to tax exports). Still, when Britain acquired new colonies in Africa and Asia in the 19th Century, it imposed British law but left these



**By the mid-18th Century, William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, noting that all government powers were ultimately governed by laws, taught that “sovereignty and legislature are convertible terms” because “one cannot subsist without the other”.**

places open to the trade of all nations (having learned a lesson from its disastrous experience in trying to restrict the trade of the American colonies).

A sovereign state retains the legal authority, of course, to restrict imports. There are always people who claim that is a good thing to do, because a nation should care more about the livelihood or well-being of its own producers than the foreign producers who compete with them. That might seem an irresistible argument, except that domestic consumers (and domestic producers using foreign materials) also have claims on their government's protection.

You can think national solidarity is important without concluding that citizens should deal only with each other in trade. Few people think that family loyalty requires all siblings and cousins to work on the same farm or work

**If you value national sovereignty, you should be sceptical of systems that relegate more decisions to distant bureaucracies. That's true even if you call yourself a populist. Maybe especially so.**

for the same firm: if they did, they'd likely have much less wealth and more occasion to bicker with each other over how to divide their common profits.

Here's a related challenge for would-be populists to consider. Most governments don't try to control too much of the domestic economy, because it is too hard to anticipate what controls will prove effective over time and which may do more harm than good.

Still, modern states aspire to regulate more than their national parliaments can foresee, so they delegate a lot of authority to specialised bureaucracies. John O'Sullivan, the peripatetic commentator of the Anglosphere, recently offered a “definition” of “populism” as “the democratic response to bureaucratic rules (and rule)”.

That concern should apply with special force to transnational bureaucratic authority, because it is so little accountable to elected

legislatures. But if you are too ambitious for precisely targeted trade controls, you have to rely on bureaucracies to calibrate and recalibrate them. Long before the European Union, the six-nation European Coal and Steel Community of the 1950s already had established a specialised commission to determine proper exceptions, adjustments and revisions to the otherwise agreed rules on free passage of coal, iron-ore and steel among the member states. Only the European trade arrangements have delegated so much authority to specialised bureaucracies to make rules for the members.

Similarly, if your aim is not just to reduce barriers to trade, but to achieve a certain pattern of trade flows, you can't just get member states to agree on trade terms among themselves. You will want to restrict the trade agreements they make with other nations – as the EU now does. Neither Nafta nor other regional agreements impose such restrictions on members. They are not so ambitious. Here, as elsewhere, the EU has taken a power that was previously in the hands of sovereign states and handed it off to specialised bureaucracy.

None of this proves that the most open trade regime will always be the most popular or advantageous. But part of the point of sovereignty is that it gives a nation the chance to change its laws – to adapt. That's the virtue of open economies, too. They give citizens and firms more opportunity to adapt to changing circumstances. If you value national sovereignty, you should be sceptical of systems that relegate more decisions to distant bureaucracies. That's true even if you call yourself a populist. Maybe especially so. 🐕



**Jeremy Rabkin**

is Professor of Law at George Mason University and was, for over two decades, a professor in the Department of Government at Cornell University. Professor Rabkin serves on the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace, the Board of Academic Advisers of the American Enterprise Institute, and the Board of Directors of the Center for Individual Rights.





# Study in English, Live in Prague!

## Philosophy, Politics, Economics (PPE)

**prof. Michael Munger**  
Director, PPE at Duke University,  
Chairman of CEVRO Institute's  
PPE International Academic Board



## International World-Class Master's Program in Prague

- Oxford-style PPE degree in the intersection of political philosophy, political science, and political economy
- A unique understanding of current economic and political processes
- Taught entirely in English by faculty from leading universities in the US and Europe
- Duration: 3 Trimesters

## REMOVAL VIN

by Iain Martin

Moving house is stressful enough, and then comes the moment when the removal team begins packing your wine. Even with the best operation, something can easily go wrong. A prized bottle can slip out of the most experienced hands and fall to the floor. That means it is best not to watch as each one is removed, wrapped and then loaded into a box and shipped away for transportation.

A recent house move in London brought all this home. Mercifully, everything – all my odds and assortments – made it to the new house in one piece, but the nerve-racking experience prompted me to reflect on why we – those of us with the inclination – keep wine at all. What is it that we're looking for? Why not buy stuff as and when and drink it there and then when the occasion demands?

After all, there is no shortage of wine in the shops, and in Britain an extraordinary range of wine from across Europe and the rest of the world is on offer. On the continental mainland, in my



“There are others collecting wine who barely seem to drink or even like it. For them it is a status symbol, a means of showing off, the alcoholic equivalent of sports cars, cigars, and chasing sexual partners.”

### Iain Martin

is a commentator on politics and finance. His latest book *Crash Bang Wallop: the inside story of London's Big Bang* and a financial revolution that changed the world is published by Sceptre. He is based in London.

[@iamartin1](https://twitter.com/iamartin1)

experience, the situation is different. There, local shops and supermarkets outside the main cities offer primarily the fruits of what has been grown in that region. Even

driving ten miles further north in the Rhône can make a major difference. The best place to buy Gigondas – my favourite in the region – is in Gigondas itself. Even in large supermarkets there is understandable regional pride and a determination to support growers long embedded in the local soil.

Britain is different. It is a mongrel nation when it comes to wine, with a long tradition of importing. England has only recently begun to make serious inroads in wine production, and the volumes remain small. Gleefully, British buyers scavenge from around the world – picking meaty Australia one minute, the hot red wines of Sicily the next, and then the cool Sauvignons of New Zealand. My mission continues to convince friends that New Zealand's new generation of up-scale chardonnays from Kumeu River rival, and sometimes outdo, the increasingly over-priced whites from Burgundy.

London wine fans are spoilt for choice. The UK capital city is particularly





**The best place to buy Gigondas – my favourite in the region – is in Gigondas itself.**

well-served with grand and not so grand wine merchants. Nationally, the Wine Society, owned by its members, provides an exemplary service, although too little, say critics, in the way of the eclectic and unusual. The supermarkets drive the bulk of consumption.

Even so, with all that wine on tap with a regular trip to the shops, for some reason this is not enough and almost anyone who can afford to will look for a way to keep and age some wine. Which is how I came to be moving, or having moved for me, some of my favourite bottles awaiting the corkscrew.



There are solutions to the storage and moving dilemma, say super-wealthy friends. Store the bulk of your collection at one of those vast cellaring facilities carved into the side of a hill, or at a warehouse where a team will monitor temperature control. The wine collector can then by email or app summon up supplies at the optimal moment when the wines are drinking perfectly. That way wine will not have to be lugged about by removal men during any house move either.

It seems the problem with storing wine off site is that managing the process

becomes a pain, according to some of those who do it. What should be a pleasure is turned into more of a logistical chore. I know one extremely rich person who found it so unrelaxing and fiddly that he sold his entire collection. He started again, with a much smaller and manageable store of wines at home.

There are others collecting wine who barely seem to drink or even like it. For them it is a status symbol, a means of showing off, the alcoholic equivalent of sports cars, cigars, and chasing sexual partners.

Collecting assumes a large enough wallet and sufficient

wine to require mass storage. Most of us do not have that problem. Enthusiastic amateurs – the category into which I fall – have special bottles and cases put aside in a cupboard. If you do this, make sure it is a cool and dark space and try to avoid using a cupboard under the stairs. Feet thumping on the stairs, time after time, day after day, can create just enough movement to unsettle the wine and spoil its development.

Keeping too much at home brings other problems. A journalist colleague with a first-rank palette told me recently that he has bought so much that he now has

an estimated 2,000 bottles stored in the cellar underneath his house. Supplies are so backed up, and space so tight, that he will have to drink his way through to access the oldest stuff. It will take years. What an ordeal...

What did I find of note in my move among the cases of Gigondas? A stray bottle of Taylor's port 1985, brought by a friend in Edinburgh to a dinner party in the mid-2000s who said at the front door, "keep this, lay it down". Good advice. I can see him saying it now.

Then a random bottle of good quality pink stuff from Provence, forgotten from the 2010 vintage. It will be vile now.

There were some Champagne gems though, including a magnum of Pol Roger 1999 that will be over-the-hill but interesting, and a bottle of Pol Roger Winston Churchill from 1998 that will be perfect. I will open it to mark the publication of Andrew Roberts's single-volume life of Churchill due later this year. Obviously, I will not open it at the book launch party, as one bottle will not go far and could cause a fight. Anyway, Andrew will have sourced Champagne by the caseload for his friends for that party.



## CONSERVATIVE WINE

Collecting wine saves money, it is said, because it can be bought young and drunk when it has matured, risen in price and can hardly be found, although I have never thought the process is much of a bargain.

The fun and pleasure are what are foremost for most us, I suspect. In a small way, *via* sensation and the sparking of memories, good wine kept and opened years later brings the past to life and can make the future look brighter. Call it sentimentality, if you must. I prefer – as I have said in this column before – to think in Tory terms of Edmund Burke and the connection between the generations, with our obligation to the dead, the living and to those unborn or making their way in the world.

One case of claret I had stored at the very back, and lifted especially carefully, was a Margaux from the superb 2009 vintage, a

Marquis de Terme bought to keep and open when my son comes of age in 2022 if, God willing, I am still upright and functioning by then. “The wine will still be far too young!” said a leading wine writer when the subject came up, but then he thinks

the Bordeaux 1945s are still on the young side.

Fretting over the perfect age to drink that Margaux is not the point, though. I bought it, and keep it, in the hope and expectation that we will share every bottle, and laugh, with family and friends. 🐕



**Collecting wine saves money, it is said, because it can be bought young and drunk when it has matured, risen in price and can hardly be found, although I have never thought the process is much of a bargain.**

# IFT

[ifretrade.org](http://ifretrade.org) | [info@ifretrade.org](mailto:info@ifretrade.org) | [@IFTtweets](https://twitter.com/IFTtweets)

IFT Ltd. | 10 Buckingham Street | WC2N 6DF | London | United Kingdom



# BUILDING A COUNTRY CALLED EUROPE

by Bill Wirtz



EPA

Whenever there is a crisis, there are a number of ways to deal with it. It stands to reason, in most situations, that an organisation re-evaluates the way it has been conducting itself, which may or may not have led to the crisis in the first place. Brexit is such an opportunity for the European Union.

The EU is left with a political class which not only didn't believe that an exit from their organisation would ever happen, but which is also incapable of drawing the conclusion that their mantra has been seriously questioned. Even the day after the Brexit vote, the conclusion in Brussels was that this would be the opportunity to continue to drive European integration even further.

However, public debate around Brexit has revealed more than just a blind political class which doesn't admit to a more than decade-long *faux-pas*: it is the portrayal of euroscepticism as a backwards and dangerously nationalistic ideology that is so indicative of the way that the EU wants to go. It has indeed changed course, because one thing is

for certain: political integration as an antidote to war in Europe is a completely hopeless argument.

No EU leader will be able to convince an electorate that leaving the union will lead to a new armed conflict on the continent. David Cameron of all people should know, since he famously made that attempt, by stating that leaving the EU could lead to World War 3. We will all supposedly cower in our bunkers on March 29 2019.

In order to gain popular support for its political endeavours, Brussels has chosen a more ideological way:

creating a European identity. This takes the form of #IamEuropean hashtags on Twitter, or protest chants – the likes of “EU we love you” – along with historical symbolisms such as the French president Emmanuel Macron choosing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for his victory speech at the Louvre last year. But these are just political gadgets in comparison to the

**No EU leader will be able to convince an electorate that leaving the union will lead to a new armed conflict on the continent.**

broad range of EU-funded initiatives for young people. The keyword is Erasmus+.

The Erasmus programme funds more than just studying exchanges. Since it merged with the EU's “Youth in Action” initiative, it also funds student conferences, which, to no surprise, do not embolden young people to be very critical of the EU. The “European Youth Parliament (EYP)”, co-funded through Erasmus+, recruits students as young as 16 for its events, in which they simulate EU debates.

The structure of the debates makes it imperative for the students to find solutions to current problems that need to be solved by the EU. Absence of action is not an option, and in fact, minors are peer-pressured in committee sessions to decide by unanimous consent: “After all, it'd be such a bore if your group were the only one without a final text.”

Another project, “Young European Leadership (YEL)”, (also co-funded with EU taxpayer money), states that it wants to empower young people to be active European citizens, who provide critical input. Critical only to an extent, it seems, as YEL has been awarded the European Charlemagne Youth Prize 2016, as one of the best



Dylan Martinez / Reuters





projects “in the entire European Union to foster European integration”.

These are just two of a long list of examples of EU-funded programmes, in which “empowering European citizens” is code for being nothing but European Union support groups. These young people are flown out to numerous countries and accommodated on EU expenses, taking selfies with Martin Schulz and standing straight to the EU’s anthem. Secondary school and university students are told that they too can have flourishing careers in EU bureaucracies, and return from their trips with a twisted notion of what it means to be European.

**As much as there is a good case against EU nationalism and EU integration, there is an even better case for individualism.**

To an extent, they cannot be blamed. If all you had been told repeatedly is that the EU represents all that is good on this continent, and when it has been implied that its existence is essential to civilised cooperation, then you too would regard its opponents as bigots. If you’re really interested in why prominent eurosceptics face so much abuse online, look no further than EU-funded “education” initiatives.

The future of EU leadership will not be the Jean-Claude Junckers or Michel Barniers, but much more in

the image of former Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt: a man so fanatical that he wants to create a “United States of Europe”. For him and his supporters, the unitary European state can be created once people internalise this “European identity”.

EU-funded projects, and political organisations which fuel the concept of EU nationalism, don’t feel set back by Brexit, but much rather emboldened by the political capital they seek to get out of its repercussions.

What we need are young people who are willing to doubt interventionist governments and who aren’t afraid to ask the fundamental questions about the nature and role of the state. What

we are likely getting, however, is a generation which has been set to support this political project no matter what, either because they reap personal benefits from it, or because they swallow the political ideology of the “European identity”. This has large implications as to how we will debate the European Union in years to come, including many for a United Kingdom outside the EU.

We can combat this tendency with the same tools we use to argue against interventionist nationalists already. It means making a consistent case for free trade and against

protectionist food standards or agricultural subsidies. It means arguing for accountability of the political system, instead of a bureaucracy sheltered thousands of miles away from the citizens it purports to govern.

It means warning of the inherent danger of centralisation by emboldening individuals to bring power back to local communities and regions. As much as there is a good case against EU nationalism and EU integration, there is an even better case for individualism. If this generation of young people is indeed one of idealists, then we need to suggest to

them ideals worth standing for. They are called individualism, limited government, and liberty. 🐕



**Bill Wirtz**

*is a young political commentator from Luxembourg, now living in Brussels. He works with the libertarian student group European Students for Liberty.*



## Free Market Road Show 2018

**The biggest libertarian event in the world**

**Spring 2018**

**[www.freemarket-rs.com](http://www.freemarket-rs.com)**





## STATES SHOULD BE SMALLER, MORE DIVERSE AND MORE AUTONOMOUS

by Robert Nef

The traditional nation-state wanted to safeguard and imperialistically promote the ideas of state, nation, language, economy and culture within one “sensibly” and “naturally” constrained territory. But who is to say what the correct political borders are? This collective error led to the First World War, “the great seminal catastrophe of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the event which lay at the heart of the failure and

decline of this Western civilization”, as the historian and diplomat George F Kennan put it.

It is an event in whose shadows we are still suffering; of course, the Second World War was just a continuation of the First, and the Cold War just a continuation of the Second. The disastrous issue was the vain hope of finding “just” borders. But there are no “just” borders. Borders are just borders!

**Cultivating diversity is one of the great secrets of the Swiss success. European diversity includes the individual responsibility of EU member states for their own budgets, which requires a consistent no-bail-out policy that expects each member to take on responsibility for its own financing and to bear the consequences of national bankruptcy.**





Most nation states are probably too large rather than too small. Their current size came out of an optimal defence technology in case of war. Large states did not rise through markets but through wars. However, this emphasis on size for military purposes becomes a moot point in our nuclear age.

There are political communities which are collecting money for the common good on the basis of self-administered taxes, on the model of club membership fees. Alternatively, whenever possible, they directly charge for use. The goal of all friends of

**Diversity makes us all more robust and less vulnerable. It enables mutual transfer of knowledge: one simply copies the successes and avoids the mistakes.**

liberty is not the removal of borders and the integration in centralising structures, but a political organisation which offers the best possible combination of “voting”, “voting with your feet” (exit) and “loyalty”.

The dictum “no taxation without representation” is well known, but sometimes the equally important

opposite is forgotten: “no representation without taxation”. The “natural” political organisation is a group of people who agree to be taxed by consent. This group may be very small, perhaps even smaller than Switzerland. But small is beautiful, and there is no reason to fight against your neighbours. Provided, of course, that they don’t try to change your (tax) system.

This is, in fact, a form of experimentation. History does not offer us ready-made complete models that we can simply replicate. But it does show us a lot of interesting experiments. I, for example,

never call Switzerland a model. It cannot be copied. But it is an, at least partly, successful experiment.

Cultivating diversity is one of the great secrets of the Swiss success. European diversity includes the individual responsibility of EU member states for their own budgets, which requires a consistent no-bail-out policy that expects each member to take on responsibility for its own financing and to bear the consequences of national bankruptcy. This combination of diversity and autonomy is what Eric Jones called “The European Miracle” – “The fundamental trump card of Europe is its diversity.”

It was not an Austrian economist but an Austrian poet, Franz Grillparzer (1791 – 1872), who had very good reasons in 1859 to be against nationalism. He remarked that “human development leads from Humanity via Nationality to Bestiality”. Unfortunately, we have observed this rapid

progression over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, full of war and the growing welfare state.

All friends of liberty, all classical liberals and libertarians, are called first to seek out the liberal core of the European idea and then to defend it tenaciously against all undesirable developments in the direction of more

central bureaucracy and more personal and regional redistribution.

I am convinced that Europe today needs more than short-term political crisis management. Nor will the flight forwards into a centralised economic, financial and social policy solve the current problems. What is required is a consideration of the conditions and facts that form the secret to the success of our little continent in world history. It is our diversity that enables competition in the broadest sense and mutual learning – that diversity which tenaciously resists the spirit of standardisation and harmonisation.

In the past this internal diversity used to be considered a disadvantage, but in a competitive world of a learning society it is effectively turning into an advantage. At least that is the experience we have had in Switzerland. Diversity makes us all more robust and less vulnerable. It enables mutual transfer of knowledge: one simply copies the successes and avoids the mistakes.



**Most nation states that exist today are the result of very cruel experiments of unification and of discrimination (even extinction) of minorities. They have been steeped in Bismarck’s Blut und Eisen.**



**History does not offer us ready-made complete models that we can simply replicate. But it does show us a lot of interesting experiments.**

Indeed, the smaller the group experimenting, the better, because the risks of a failure are contained within a small area or a small group of people. Diversity over an area is then a natural creator of small groups suitable for experimentation. Historically, the most decisive cultural and political unit is the city (with its suburbs), not the centralised nation state. Political institutions of the future will simply be confederations of cities and local communities. I suggest that an actual path forward is *not* “let us forget about all regional integration and let us go back to the good old nation state!” Switzerland has never been a typical nation state, and this is another of the many secrets of our successes.

Most nation states that exist today are the result of very cruel experiments of unification and of discrimination (even extinction) of minorities. They have been steeped in Bismarck’s *Blut und Eisen*. The pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (535 – 475 BC) may have been right, after all, in claiming that “war is the

father of all things”.

But we should add that the mother of all things is the peaceful exchange and mutual learning and adaptation. So let us all together forget the authoritarian over-regulating father, at least in the political sphere. And let us go back to the tolerant mother who shows us how to exchange in peace and how to be creative.

Today, economies and cultures are essentially and increasingly spanning political or linguistic borders. The EU is not the positive alternative to the collective error of centralised nation states. Instead, the EU is a bureaucratic, corporatist empire, a political cartel in which the economically influential parties keep the smaller or economically weaker parties happy through transfer payments.

In return they demand financial and political tributes, whilst at the same time cutting off competition among systems as much as possible. The more ambiguous and indistinct the foundations are, the better for the self-assigned, self-empowering bureaucrats. Eurocrats in Brussels can live quite well in this state of hazily defined responsibilities, since bureaucrats are masters at muddling through. You can

always present unnecessary restraints as inevitable practical constraints “without alternative”. It is well known that necessity knows no law.

The EU is trying to prolong this collective error on a continental level by muscling in a form of European pseudo-solidarity and nationality. It wants to be something of a mercantilist super-nation. If it lacks loyalty, it wants to buy people off by centrally organised redistribution. But in reality it is perhaps destroying the loyalty more than creating it. Coercion destroys voluntary action and genuine loyalty. Loyalty can be based on free consensus over enlightened self-interest, but never on bureaucratic machinery of redistribution. 🐶



**Robert Nef**

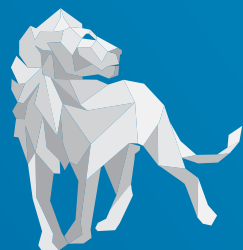
was formerly head and chairman of *Liberales Institut* in Zurich, a classical liberal think tank. He has been Editor-in-chief of the magazine *Reflexion* and of the monthly *Schweizer Monatshefte* and is a Member of *Mont Pèlerin Society* and of *International Society for Individual Liberty*.

# THE CONSERVATIVE

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL IN PRINT AND ONLINE, SPONSORED BY THE ALLIANCE OF THE CONSERVATIVES AND REFORMISTS IN EUROPE (ACRE).







# New Direction



CONSERVATIVE ICONS

## FRIEDRICH HAYEK AND THE FATAL CONCEIT OF SOCIALISM

by Roger Kimball



What's the one thing everyone knows about capitalism? Why, that it started out as a mean, nasty tool of greedy industrialists. "The Industrial Revolution," we all learned, was a terrible Moloch that devoured children, put profits before people, and though it made great fortunes (or, perhaps, partly because it made great fortunes), was a wicked development. The Industrial Revolution, we've all been taught, was the original sin of capitalism, necessary, perhaps (perhaps) to prime the engine of economic progress, but lamentable nevertheless.

Ask anyone: the Industrial Revolution is a stigma that no amount of societal amelioration can remove. The "factory system," an integral part of the Industrial Revolution, was an urban nightmare, a Dickensian melodrama in which rural innocence was mauled and blighted in those horrific, unsanitary "Satanic mills" that William Blake anathematized. Once upon a time, before the advent of the factory system, workers enjoyed:

*a passably comfortable existence, leading a righteous and peaceful life and all piety and probity; and their material condition was far better than that their successors... They did not need to overwork; they did no more than they chose to do. and yet they earned what they needed. They had leisure for healthful work in garden or field, work which, in itself, was recreation for them, and they could take part beside in the recreation and games of their neighbours ... [which] contributed to their physical health and vigour... Their children grew up in fresh country air, and, if they could help their parents at work, it was only occasionally.*

Alas, this Eden, as described by Frederick Engels in a fairytale called *The condition of the working classes in England in 1844*, was destroyed by the advent of the machine. "The proletariat," writes Engels, "was called into existence by the introduction of machinery:"

**“Ask anyone: the Industrial Revolution is a stigma that no amount of societal amelioration can remove.”**

### Roger Kimball

is editor and publisher of The New Criterion and President and Publisher of Encounter Books. He is a frequent contributor to many publications in the US, Europe, and Australia and writes the Roger's Rules column for PJ Media. He is author of several books, including, most recently, *The Fortunes of Permanence: Culture and Anarchy in an Age of Amnesia*.

@rogerkimball



## CONSERVATIVE ICONS

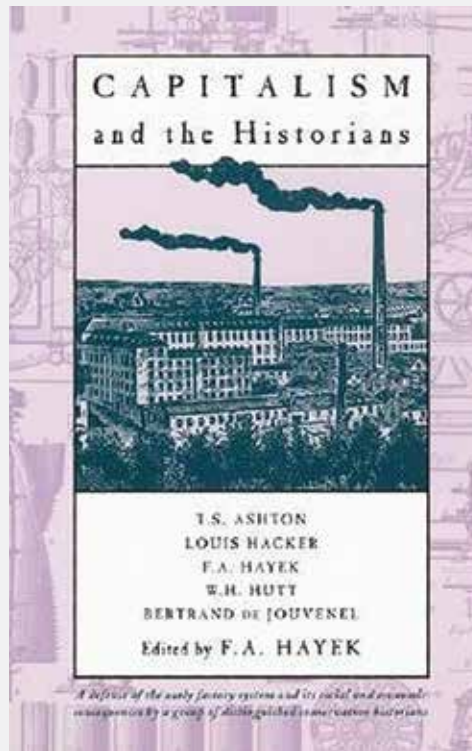
*The consequences of improvement in machinery under our present social conditions are, for the working-man, solely injurious, and often in the highest degree oppressive. Every new advance things with the loss of employment, want and suffering.*

That's the sad story of capitalism we all imbibed with mother's milk, or formula. No less an authority than Bertrand Russell has assured us that "the Industrial Revolution caused unspeakable misery both in England and in America. I do not think any student of economic history can doubt that the average happiness in England and early nineteenth century was lower than it had been hundred years earlier."

As Friedrich Hayek points out in *Capitalism and the Historians*, an extraordinary collection of essays he edited and published in 1954, "The widespread emotional aversion to 'capitalism' is closely connected with this belief that the undeniable growth of wealth which the competitive order had produced was purchased at the price of depressing the

standard of life the weakest elements of society." This picture of economic depredation, notes Hayek, is "one supreme myth which more than any other has served to discredit the economic system [capitalism] to which we owe our present-day civilisation."

When we move from the realm of myth-making to historical truth, however, we see that the Engels-Russell narrative, the narrative upon which we've all been bat-



tened, is a tissue of exaggerations, misrepresentations, and outright lies. A "careful examination of the facts," which is what Hayek and his

colleagues provide in *Capitalism and the Historians* (or, to give it its full title, *Capitalism and the Historians: A Defense of the Early Factory System and its Social and Economic Consequences*), has led to a "thorough refutation of this belief."

Alas, the fact that a poisonous idea has been "thoroughly refuted" does not mean that it has been disarmed. Far from it. Some bad ideas exert a catnip-like fascination on susceptible souls, partly because they speak to that species of naiveté that undergirds all utopian schemes, partly – and more darkly – because it plays into the hands of those who wish to wield power over others.

Consider, for example, the case of Benito Mussolini. In 1929, when he was still riding high as the man who made the trains run on time, Il Duce boasted that: "We were the first to assert that the more complicated the forms assumed by civilisation, the more restricted the freedom of the individual must become."

Of course, Mussolini was wrong about his historical priority, just as he was wrong about most other things. The palm for first promulgating

**The widespread emotional aversion to 'capitalism' is closely connected with this belief that the undeniable growth of wealth which the competitive order had produced was purchased at the price of depressing the standard of life the weakest elements of society.**





## CONSERVATIVE ICONS

that principle in all its modern awfulness must go to Lenin who, back in 1917, boasted that when he finished building his workers' paradise "the whole of society will have become a single office and a single factory with equality of work and equality of pay." What Lenin didn't know about "restricting the freedom of the individual" wasn't worth knowing.

Granted, things didn't work out quite as Lenin hoped – or said that he hoped – since as the Soviet Union lumbered on there was less and less work and mostly worthless pay. ("They pretend to pay us," one wag said, "and we pretend to work.") Really, the only equality Lenin and his heirs achieved was an equality of misery and impoverishment for all but

a shifting fraction of the *nomenklatura*. Trotsky got right to the practical nub of the matter, observing that when the state is the sole employer the old adage "he who does not work does not eat" is replaced by "he who does not obey does not eat."

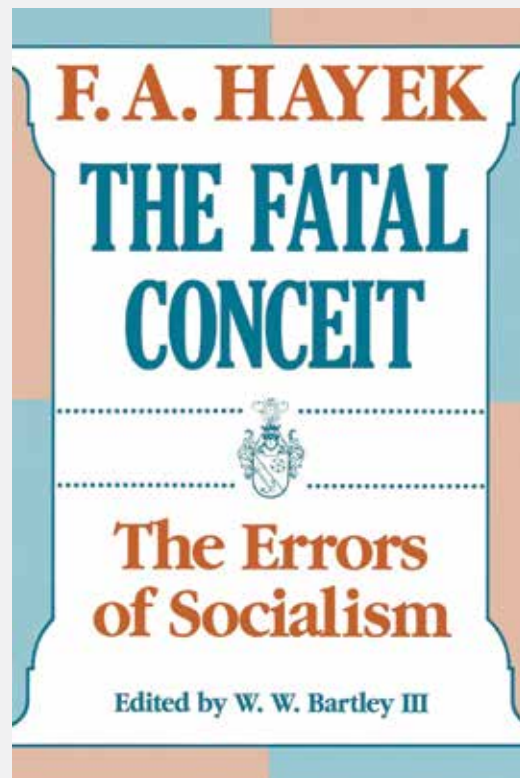
Nevertheless, a long line of Western intellectuals came, saw, and were conquered: how many *bien-pensants* writers, journalists, artists, and commentators swooned, as did Lincoln Steffens: "I have been over into the future," he said of his visit to the Soviet Union in 1921, "and it works." Jeremy Corbyn updated the sentiment when,

you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. But it is remarkable what a large accumulation of egg-shells we have piled up over the last century. (And then there is always Orwell's embarrassing question: "Where's the omelette?")

I forget which sage described hope as the last evil in Pandora's box. Unfair to hope, perhaps, but not inapplicable to that adamant "faith in a better world" that has always been at the heart of the socialist enterprise. Talk about a hardy perennial! The socialist experiment has *never* worked out as advertised. But it continually blooms afresh in the human heart – those portions of it, anyway, colonised by intellectuals, that palpitating tribe which Julien Benda memorably denominated "clercs" (as in "*trahison de*").

But why? What is it about intellectuals that makes them so profligately susceptible to the catnip of socialism?

In his last book, *The Fatal Conceit: The Errors of Socialism* (1988), Hayek drily underscored the oddity:



in 2013, he said that Hugo Chavez "showed us that there is a different and a better way of doing things. It's called socialism, it's called social justice and it's something Venezuela has made a big step towards."

Yes, Jeremy, it has. And how do you like it? Of course,

*The intellectuals' vain search for a truly socialist community, which results in the idealisation of, and then disillusionment with, a seemingly endless string of "utopias" – the Soviet Union, then Cuba, China, Yugoslavia, Vietnam, Tanzania, Nicaragua – should suggest that there might be something about socialism that does not conform to certain facts.*

It should, but it hasn't. And the reason, Hayek suggests, lies in the peculiar rationalism to which a certain species of intellectual is addicted. The "fatal conceit" lay in believing that, by exercising reason, mankind could recast society in a way that was at once equitable and prosperous, orderly and conducive to political liberty.

I say "mankind," but of course the fatal conceit is

always pursued by a tiny elite who believe that the imposition of their reason can effect the desired revolution in society. The rest of us "deplorables" are the raw material for the exercise of their fantasy.

Hayek traced this ambition back through Rousseau to Descartes. If man is born free but is everywhere in chains, Rousseau argued, then why does he not simply cast off his fetters, beginning with the inconvenient baggage of traditional social restraint? Whether Descartes deserves this paternity suit is perhaps disputable. But I see what Hayek means. It was a small step from Descartes's dream of making man the "master and possessor of nature" (as he said at the end of the *Discourse on Method*) through

**Of course, Mussolini was wrong about his historical priority, just as he was wrong about most other things.**

science and technology, to making him the master and possessor of man's *second* nature, society.

How much that was recalcitrant about human experience and the world had suddenly to be rendered negotiable even to embark upon that path! All that was summed up in words like "manners," "morals," "custom," "tradition," "taboo," and "sacred" is suddenly up for grabs. But it was part of the intoxicating nature of the fatal conceit – for those, again, who were susceptible to its charms – that no barrier seemed strong enough to withstand the blandishments





## CONSERVATIVE ICONS

of mankind's ingenious tinkering. "Everything solid," as Marx famously said, "melts into air."

John Maynard Keynes – himself a conspicuous victim of the fatal conceit – summed up its psychological metabolism in his description of Bertrand Russell and his Bloomsbury friends: "Bertie in particular sustained simultaneously a pair of opinions ludicrously incompatible. He held that in fact human affairs were carried on after a most irrational fashion, but that the remedy was quite simple and easy, since all we had to do was to carry them on rationally."

What prodigies of existential legerdemain lay compacted in that phrase "all we had to do." F. Scott Fitzgerald once said that the test of "a first-rate intelligence" was "the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time" and still be able to function. In fact, that ability is as common as dirt. Look around.

Friedrich Hayek (he dropped the aristocratic "von" to which he was born) was a supreme anatomist of

this species of intellectual or intellectualist folly. Born to a prosperous family in Vienna in 1899, Hayek had already made a modest name for himself as an economist when he departed for England and the London School of Economics in 1931. Over the next decade, he published

The story of this short but extraordinary book – which is less a treatise in economics than an existential *cri de Coeur* – is well known. Three publishers turned it down in the United States – one reader declared it "unfit for publication by a reputable house" – before the University of Chicago, not without misgivings, took it on. One of Chicago's readers, while recommending publication, cautioned that the book was unlikely to "have a very wide market in this country" or "change the position of many readers."

In the event, Chicago could hardly keep up with demand. Within months, some 50,000 copies were in print. Then *Reader's Digest* published a condensed version, which brought the book to some 600,000 additional readers. A few years later, a *Look* picture-book version – the "graphic novel" of the day – further extended its reach.

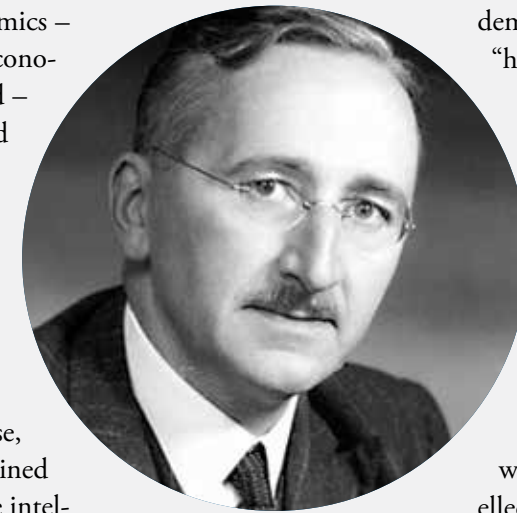
*The Road to Serfdom* transformed Hayek from a retiring academic into an

international celebrity. By the time he died, six weeks shy of his 93rd birthday, in 1992, Hayek had become a darling of the academic establishment. He'd been a professor at the London School of Economics, the University of Chicago, and the University of Freiburg, and was the recipient of numerous honorary degrees. In 1974, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics – the first free-market economist to be so honoured – and his theories helped lay the intellectual groundwork for the economic revitalisations that Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan undertook in the 1980s.

In a deeper sense, however, Hayek remained a maverick, outside the intellectual or at least the academic mainstream. The message of *The Road to Serfdom* shows why. The book had two purposes. On the one hand, it was a paean to individual liberty. On the other, it was an impassioned attack on central economic planning and the diminution of individual liberty such planning requires.

It might seem odd, in the wake of the Reagan and Thatcher revolutions, to

describe an attack on central planning or a defense of individual liberty as "maverick." But in fact, although Hayek's theories won some major skirmishes "on the ground," in the world of elite intellectual opinion his views are as contentious now as they were in the 1940s. Even today, there is widespread resistance to Hayek's guiding insight



that socialism is a nursery for the growth of totalitarian policies.

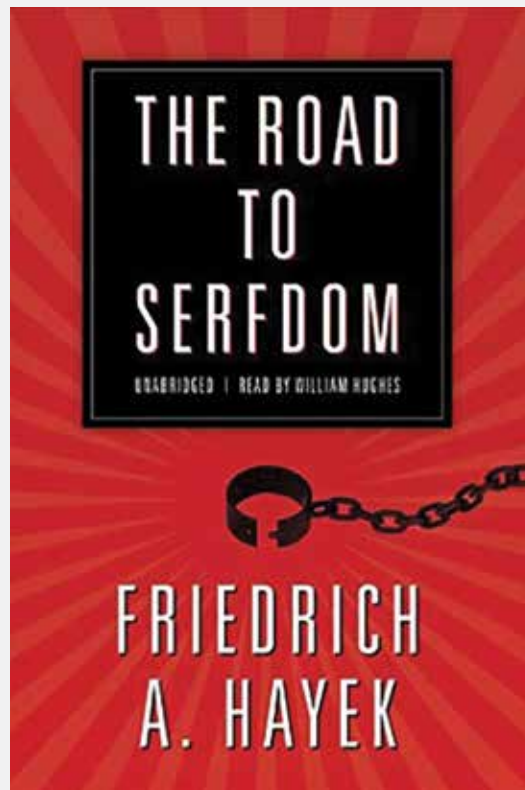
With the example of Nazi Germany before him, Hayek saw how naturally national socialism, leaching more and more initiative away from the individual in order to invest it in the state, shaded into totalitarianism. A major theme of the book is that the rise of fascism was not a reaction *against* the socialist

trends of the 1920s, as is often contended, but on the contrary was a natural outcome of those trends.

What began as a conviction that, if planning were to be "efficient," it must be "taken out of politics" and placed in the hands of experts, ended with the failure of politics and the embrace of tyranny. "Hitler did not have to destroy democracy," Hayek noted; "he merely took advantage of the decay of democracy and at the critical moment obtained the support of many to whom, though they detested Hitler, he yet seemed the only man strong enough to get things done."

Britain, Hayek warned, had already travelled far down the road of socialist abdication. "The unforeseen but inevitable consequences of socialist planning," he wrote, "create a state of affairs in which... totalitarian forces will get the upper hand." Hayek quotes numerous influential commentators who cheerfully advocate not only wholesale economic planning but the outright rejection of freedom.

Today, some of us warn about the growth and



half a dozen technical books in economics (sample title: *Monetary Theory and the Trade Cycle*). Life changed in 1944 when *The Road to Serfdom* – published first in England, then a few months later in the United States – catapulted him to fame.



## CONSERVATIVE ICONS

insidiousness of “the administrative state” or “the deep state” — that permanent bureaucracy of busybodies who are not elected but nevertheless wield enormous power over every aspect of our lives. The growth of that unaccountable apparatus of control has deep roots. In 1932, for example, the influential political theorist Harold Laski argued that “defeat at the polls” must not be allowed to derail the glorious progress of socialism. Voting is all well and good — so long as people vote for the right (ie, the Left) things. In 1942, the historian E. H. Carr blithely argued that: “The result which we desire can be won only by a deliberate reorganisation of European life such as Hitler has undertaken.”

The two great presiding influences on *The Road to Serfdom* were Alexis de Tocqueville and Adam Smith. From Tocqueville, Hayek took both his title and his sensitivity to what Tocqueville, in a famous section of *Democracy in America*, called “democratic despotism.” Hayek, like Tocqueville, saw that in modern bureaucratic societies threats to liberty often come disguised as humanitarian benefits.

If old-fashioned despotism tyrannises, democratic despotism infantilises. Echoing and extending Tocqueville, Hayek argued that one of the most important effects of extensive government control was psychological, “an alteration of the character of the people.” We are the creatures as well as the creators of the institutions we inhabit. “The important point,” he concluded, “is that the political ideals of a people and its attitude toward authority are as much the effect as the

**At the end of the day, Hayek’s inestimable value is to have dramatised the subtle and seductive insidiousness of the socialist enterprise.**

cause of the political institutions under which it lives.”

A major part of *The Road to Serfdom* is negative or critical. Its task is to expose, describe, and analyse the socialist threat to freedom. But there is also a positive side to Hayek’s argument. The road away from serfdom was to be found by embracing what Hayek called “the extended order of cooperation”; aka capitalism. (Although Hayek uses the term “capitalism,” I prefer the term “free market,” which is innocent of Marxist overtones.)

In *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith noted the paradox, or seeming paradox, of the free market: that the more individuals were left free to follow their own ends, the more their activities were “led by an invisible hand to promote” ends that aided the common good. In other words, private pursuits advance public goods: that is the beneficent alchemy of the free market, of capitalism. Hayek’s fundamental insight, enlarging Smith’s thought, is that the spontaneous order created and maintained by competitive market forces leads to greater prosperity than a planned economy.

The sentimentalist cannot wrap his mind, or his heart, around that datum. He cannot understand why we shouldn’t favour “cooperation” (a pleasing-sounding arrangement) over “competition” (much harsher), since in any competition there are losers, which is bad, and winners, which may be even worse.

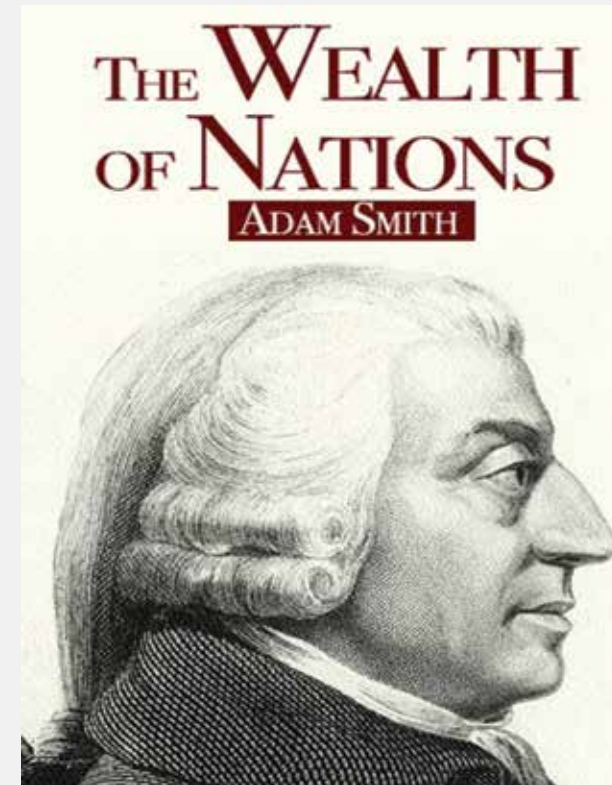
It is at this juncture that advocates of a planned economy introduce the word “fairness” into the discussion: wouldn’t it be fairer if we took money from person “A,” who has a stack, and gave it to person “B,” whose stack is smaller? (“That is,” as W. S.

Gilbert put it in *The Mikado*, “assuming I am ‘B’.”)

Socialism is a version of sentimentality. The socialist, the sentimentalist, cannot understand why, if people have been able to “generate some system of rules coordinating their efforts,” they cannot also consciously “design an even better and more gratifying system.” Central to Hayek’s teaching is the unyielding fact that human ingenuity is limited, that the elasticity of freedom requires the agency of forces beyond our supervision, that, finally, the ambitions of socialism are an expression of rationalistic hubris. As David Hume, another of Hayek’s intellectual heroes, put it, “a rule, which, in speculation, may seem the most advantageous to society, may yet be found, in practice, totally pernicious and destructive.”

A spontaneous order generated by market forces may be as beneficial to humanity as you like; it may have greatly

**The more individuals were left free to follow their own ends, the more their activities were “led by an invisible hand to promote” ends that aided the common good.**



extended life and produced wealth so staggering that, only a few generations ago, it was unimaginable. Still, it is not perfect. The poor are still with us. Not every social problem has been solved. In the end, though, the really galling thing about the spontaneous order that free markets produce is not its imperfection but its spontaneity:

the fact that it is a creation not our own. It transcends the conscious direction of human will and is therefore an affront to human pride.

The urgency with which Hayek condemns socialism is a function of the importance of the stakes involved. As he puts it in *The Fatal Conceit*, the “dispute between the market order and socialism is no less than a matter of survival” because “to follow socialist morality would destroy much of present humankind and impoverish much of the rest.” We get a foretaste of what Hayek means whenever the

forces of socialism triumph. There follows, as the night the day, an increase in poverty and a diminution of individual freedom.

The curious thing is that this fact has had so little effect on the attitudes of intellectuals. No merely empirical development, it seems — let it be repeated innumerable





**A rule, which, in speculation, may seem the most advantageous to society, may yet be found, in practice, totally pernicious and destructive.**


times – can spoil the pleasures of socialist sentimentality. This unworldliness is tied to another common trait of intellectuals: their contempt for money and the world of commerce. The socialist intellectual eschews the “profit motive” and recommends increased government

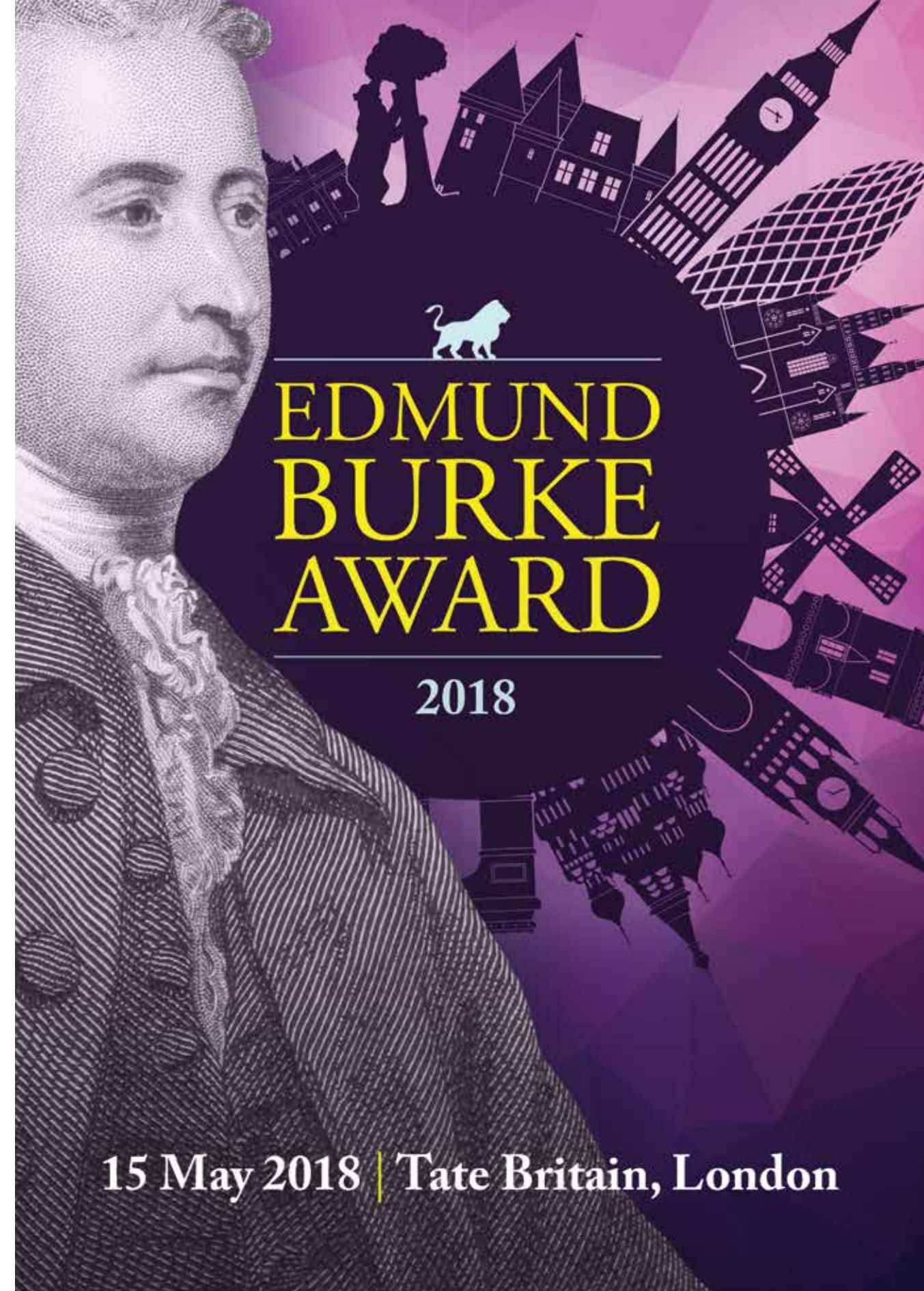
control of the economy. He feels, Hayek notes, that “to employ a hundred people is... exploitation but to command the same number [is] honourable.”

It is not surprising that Hayek is often described as “conservative.” In fact, though, he was right to object that his position is better described as “liberal,” understanding that term not in its contemporary deformation (ie, Leftist, statist) but in the 19th-century English sense in which Burke, for

example, was a liberal. There is an important sense in which genuine liberals are (in Russell Kirk’s phrase) conservative precisely because they are liberals: they understand that the best chance for preserving freedom is through preserving the institutions and traditional practices that have, so to speak, housed freedom.

Although cautious when it came to political innovation, Hayek thought traditional Tory conservatism too wedded to the *status quo*. “The decisive objection” to conservatism, Hayek wrote in “Why I Am Not a Conservative,” a postscript to *The Constitution of Liberty*, is that it is by nature reactive and hence unable to offer alternatives to the “progressive” programme. It can retard our progress down the socialist path; it cannot, Hayek thought, forge a different path.

At the end of the day, Hayek’s inestimable value is to have dramatised the subtle and seductive insidiousness of the socialist enterprise. “It is seldom that liberty of any kind is lost all at once”: that sentence from Hume stands as an epigraph to *The Road to Serfdom*. It is as pertinent today as when Hayek set it down in 1944. 







## DEMOCRATIC SELF-GOVERNMENT REQUIRES NATIONALISM

by John Fonte

The two most important words in politics are: who decides? Today throughout the West the central issue is whether government is based on the consent of the governed or whether previously democratic peoples will be ruled against their consent by supranational institutions and global forces beyond their control.

The Brexit referendum was a defining moment in early 21<sup>st</sup> century global politics. Through Brexit, the British people re-affirmed

the greatest political right of all, the right of a free people to rule themselves. Western conservatives should not hesitate to celebrate the reassertion of democratic self-government – that is, democratic sovereignty – in the United Kingdom.

Today, the democratic nation-state is the primary institution that ensures the existence of a just political system in which the rulers are responsible to, and chosen by, the ruled. As Michael Gove put it succinctly

**Without patriotism no consensual regime will survive.**

during the Brexit debate: “the laws we must obey... should be decided by the people we choose and who we can throw out.” Instead, European Union membership means that British laws “are decided by politicians from other nations who we never elected and can’t throw out”.

Supporters of the supranational authority of the European Union argue the system remains consensual because



power has been delegated by democratic nation-state officials to the EU’s supranational institutions. Significantly, however, both the Enlightenment philosopher John Locke and the American statesman Alexander Hamilton specifically repudiated this type of delegation of authority that transfers sovereignty or self-government from one political entity to different political entity. Locke writes in his famous *Second Treatise* that if

the “legislative” (parliament) delivers “the people into the subjection of a foreign power” it “change[s] the legislative.” Locke states that the concept of a “free and independent society, to be governed by its own laws: this is lost, whenever they are given up into the power of another”.

Echoing Locke, Alexander Hamilton declared that sovereign legislative decision-making cannot be delegated away under the American Constitution. Hamilton wrote that:

“a delegated authority cannot alter the constituting act... An agent cannot model his own commission. A treaty, for example, cannot transfer the legislative power to the executive.”

If the democratic nation-state is the primary institution of a free society, its sovereignty and liberty cannot be taken for granted but is sustained only by the patriotism of its citizens. As political thinkers from Plato and Aristotle to Montesquieu, Madison, Burke, and Tocqueville have reminded us, without patriotism no consensual regime will survive.

Conservative voters and conservative politicians are naturally drawn to patriotism, to national traditions, national identity, and the patrimony of one’s own nation. But what should be the conservative approach to nationalism? Let us examine the different types of nationalism.

There is aggressive nationalism, often exhibited by authoritarian states, that is belligerent towards foreigners and in some cases seeks military conquests. But we already have more precise words to deal with this negative behaviour: *jingoism* for the glorification of war and military conquest, and *chauvinism* for contempt for other nations. Thus the use of the term “nationalist” is gratuitous in cases where jingoist or chauvinist are more accurate.

On the other hand, self-governing free societies cannot exist without patriotism, which is synonymous with democratic nationalism. There can be no democracy without the nation-state and no nation (and no conservative politics, for that matter) will survive without nationalist sentiments. As the *National Review* editor, Rich Lowry, put it: “Nationalist sentiments are natural and can’t be beaten out of





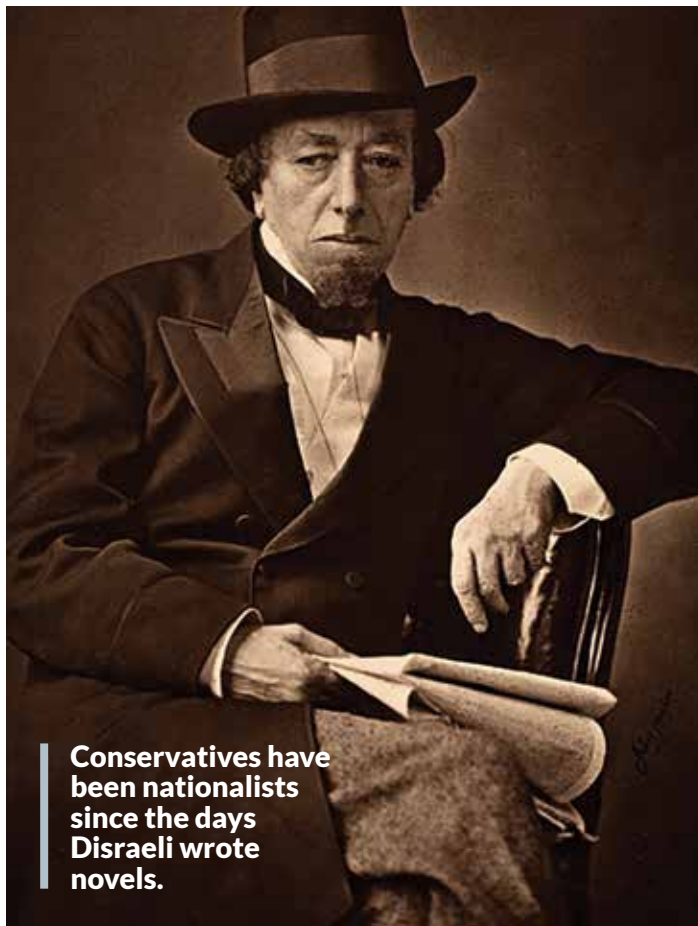
After World War II the conservative renaissance in the West under Reagan, Thatcher, de Gaulle, and Begin was imbued with the spirit of democratic nationalism, in opposition to a social democratic-style Western Left that was becoming increasingly transnationalist. As democratic nationalists (and conservatives) both de Gaulle and Thatcher (despite their economic and foreign policy differences) favoured a Europe of sovereign nation-states rather than the

supranational entity that the EU has become.

During the 1980s in the United States two leading thinkers of neo-conservatism, Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoretz, unhesitatingly described President Reagan as a nationalist. Podhoretz defined patriotism as a “love of” one’s country and nationalism as “pride in” one’s country, and noted that Reagan promoted both. But whatever the different definitions, the connection between conservatives and patriotism and nationalism

people if you try. It would be a strange... conservatism that lacked any foundation in them.” Lowry and his colleague Ramesh Ponnuru called on fellow conservatives to embrace an “enlightened nationalism.”

The Israeli politician Natan Sharansky argued that “nationalism has been a powerful weapon in defending the free world against aggression”. During the Second World War, democratic nationalism, as articulated by Churchill, Roosevelt, and de Gaulle was a main inspiration for resistance to the Nazi German empire (which in Hitler’s view was more Aryan racist and imperialist than a regime primarily focused on German nationalism and German national interest).



**Conservatives have been nationalists since the days Disraeli wrote novels.**

is fundamental and cannot be denied. As the Israeli philosopher, Yoram Hazony, observed: “Conservatives have been nationalists since the days Disraeli wrote novels.”

There are some who argue that conservatives should adopt a “patriotism good, nationalism bad” stance. But this manner of thinking makes too many concessions to anti-national identity forces and, thus, often leads to a watered-down form of “patriotism” that is hesitant vigorously to defend one’s culture, heritage, history, and national traditions, without

which a free democratic society will not survive.

Conservatives, whether Anglosphere free marketeers, Gaullist continentalists, or some fusionist combination, such as Likud in Israel or the centre-Right coalition in Denmark, should stand firm. We should proudly say: yes, we are for patriotism, democratic nationalism, and the sovereign right of a free people to rule themselves. And this includes the right of societal reproduction – that is, the right of a free people to perpetuate their own cultures, institutions, and ways of life through an immigration

and assimilation policy that is based on the principle of government by the consent of the governed. 🐶



**John Fonte**

*is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute. He is the author of Sovereignty or Submission, winner of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) book award for 2012.*





Values4Europe

**Your opinion matters!**

[www.values4europe.com](http://www.values4europe.com)

Share and discuss your values and ideas about Europe!

**Join the debate!**



BREXITINFLATIONDEFLATION  
TRUMPCHINASAUDIEUROZONE  
CLINTONPUTINFACEBOOKIMF  
FAKEUNMACRONMERKELWEF  
REACTIONTAXPAYCERNGOOGLE  
INNOVATIONEXPROPRIATIONKIM  
KOREACOMPETITIONIDEASNUKE  
NEWSDATABARNIERWEINSTEIN  
KREMLINJAREDIVANKASYRIA  
CATALANBORISBLOCKCHAIN

MAKE SENSE

READ [WWW.REACTION.LIFE](http://WWW.REACTION.LIFE)

Pro-market, irreverent, independent analysis daily from leading writers.

## THE OPPORTUNITY OF AN OFF-THE-SHELF TRADE DEAL

by Kristian Niemietz

Australia's Foreign Affairs Minister, Julie Bishop, has recently expressed her government's support for the possibility of the UK joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a nascent free trade area of eleven countries. This looks like an excellent opportunity for post-Brexit Britain.

TPP is an interesting case. Traditionally, most Free Trade Areas (FTAs) have comprised countries that were similar in terms of income levels and/or geographically close together. TPP is almost the complete opposite: a motley crew of old industrialised countries (Australia, New Zealand, Japan), countries whose economies



“TPP is an interesting case. Traditionally, most Free Trade Areas (FTAs) have comprised countries that were similar in terms of income levels and/or geographically close together.”

took off during the first wave of globalisation (Chile, Malaysia), and new kids on the block (Vietnam), scattered across the globe. Several other countries, among them South Korea and Taiwan, have also expressed an interest in joining.

Joining an existing FTA – an off-the-shelf solution – is much easier than setting new ones, so hopefully, the UK will pursue that approach much more widely after Brexit. Efta and Nafta would be obvious candidates.

Joining TPP would, of course, not obviate a sensible agreement with the EU. TPP is not a very comprehensive FTA, and far-flung markets cannot replace markets close to home. But it certainly drives home the point that leaving the EU, and more specifically, the Customs Union, opens new trade opportunities for Britain.

Meanwhile, Argentina's government is making some progress in rolling back the hyper-interventionist policies of the Kircher era. About time.

### Dr Kristian Niemietz

is head of Health and Welfare at the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), London. He studied Economics at the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin and the Universidad de Salamanca, and Political Economy at King's College London, where he also taught Economics.  
[@K\\_Niemietz](https://twitter.com/K_Niemietz)





## FREE MARKET ADVANCES

Argentina has long served as a cautionary tale. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the country was richer than most of Europe, and certainly well ahead of Spain and Italy, where most Argentines' families were originally from. But from the 1930s onwards, a policy trend towards nationalisations, protectionism and clientelism fundamentally changed the character of the Argentine economy. It led to a long period of relative decline. By 1990, Spain had become twice as rich and Italy nearly three times as rich as Argentina. While the 1990s and early 2000s were a period of liberalisation, Kirchnerism represented a return to the worst habits.

President Mauricio Macri's government has abolished foreign exchange controls and export restrictions for agricultural products. Costly and distortionary subsidies for utilities are being phased out. A number of discretionary import restrictions have been scrapped. The market for air travel, currently dominated by the state-owned Aerolineas Argentinas, is being opened up to competitors.

All very promising so far. But these were the low-hanging fruits. And while Macri's drive to eliminate distortions is laudable, he is clearly not a free-marketeer: he seems to see entrepreneurship is something which governments must actively promote, rather

than something that just naturally flourishes if government gets out of the way.

Staying in that region: according to Bloomberg Markets, there is a possibility that Chile's incoming government might split up Codelco, the country's state-owned copper mining corporation, and privatise one part of it. This would not just be an economically sensible move, given that Codelco is heavily indebted, and reliant on government subsidies. It would also have some symbolic importance.

It is commonly assumed that from the mid-1970s to the end of Pinochet's dictatorship, the "Chicago Boys" – American-educated, free-market economists – were given a free reign over

the country's economic policies. This is not quite true. The military junta respected the Chicago Boys' expertise, but they never really trusted their free-market policies, which they often blocked or delayed. The large wave of industry privatisations, for example, only started in 1985, and even then, the generals insisted on exemptions. The most prominent one was Codelco.

Codelco had been created by Pinochet's government, as a merger of various existing state-owned mining companies, and companies that had been recently nationalised by the socialist president Salvador Allende. It has been untouchable ever since, protected by an odd coalition of socialists

on the Left, and economic nationalists on the Right. So in a sense, the company, in its present form, embodies the worst of all worlds. That alone would make a partial privatisation worthwhile.

When Saudi Arabia is in the news, it is usually not good news. The Kingdom is mainly mentioned in connection with human rights abuses, archaic laws, and support for extremist groups. The last few months were a bit of an exception. The most high-profile story was that the driving ban for women has finally been scrapped.

What has been less well documented is that this seems to be part of an emerging broader

liberalisation trend, which also entails greater freedom in the economic sphere. Cinemas, for example, had been banned for nearly four decades. That ban has now been lifted – although the state still controls which movies people are allowed to see – and earlier this year, the first ones have been opened.

This has probably more to do with economics than with a desire for modernisation as such. A lot of entertainment is banned in Saudi Arabia, but the smaller neighbour countries are, relatively speaking, more liberal (it would be hard not to be). So a lot of Saudi citizens simply travel there when they want to have some fun, which means that those neighbouring countries also get to collect the associated revenue.

Now that the long period of exceptionally high oil prices has come to an end, Saudi Arabia needs to develop other sectors that can pick up some of the slack. Apparently, it is starting to dawn on the royal family that banning a lot of economic activity is not the best way to do that. 🐶



Argentina has long served as a cautionary tale. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the country was richer than most of Europe, and certainly well ahead of Spain and Italy, where most Argentines' families were originally from.





## WITHOUT NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY, WE'D BE BACK IN THE MIDDLE AGE

by Thierry Baudet

A series of bloody conflicts swept through Western Europe between 1500 and 1650. England was plagued by various civil wars, which led to the tyrannical rule of Oliver Cromwell; France suffered thousands of massacres, the exodus of

persecuted Protestants, and a regicide in 1610; the Netherlands became embroiled in the Eighty Years' War with Spain, while conflicts in Germany culminated in the Thirty Years' War, during which it is estimated that a third of its population died.

**The continued bloodshed was the result of the overlapping, conflicting jurisdictions which had been a characteristic feature of the Middle Ages, and which had become untenable in the modern world.**

The continued bloodshed was the result of the overlapping, conflicting jurisdictions which had been a characteristic feature of the Middle Ages, and which had become untenable in the modern world. Kings and noblemen lived in a state of continual competition over claims to decision-making powers.

Ecclesiastical and worldly rulers constantly disputed who was to have the final say.

Significant numbers of devout Catholics questioned the authority of secular rulers. Independent cities, emancipated provinces and fiefdoms had also begun to compete with one another. Noblemen were not subject to the same

**There is more at stake than the divide between those who love their home, their nation, their history, their community – and those who feel uncomfortable about these particularities and instinctively work towards their destruction.**

rules as students, farmers or guild members. The political structure was overlapping, and many-layered. No single institution had the last word.

From Jean Bodin in France to Johannes Althusius in Germany, from Hugo de Groot in the Netherlands to Thomas Hobbes in England, thinkers in every European country came to the conclusion that the only way to put a stop to endless war was to establish centralised, territorial jurisdiction. This marked the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern world.

One organisation was ultimately to be invested with the authority to maintain order in a clearly defined area. The population would be asked to pledge obedience to that power. Religious, regional or class ties were to become subordinate to the loyalty all of us had to have towards the state.

This is how peace was finally restored in Europe





The imperial power that once ruled all of Europe has returned in the form of the imperial decrees issued by Brussels.

over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries. The continent flourished and the Enlightenment and democratic revolutions ensued. Wars became more rational and more limited in scope – with the exception of the wars that grew out of renewed ambitions to establish imperial rule on the continent once more, as happened under Napoleon, Wilhelm II, Mussolini and Hitler.

After the Second World War, national sovereignty was reinstated after the disastrous consequences of ambitious plans to unite Europe had, once again, become clear. Strangely enough, however, the idea that the sovereign state was no longer tenable co-existed with this realisation. An attitude that can only be described as *oikophobia* became a catalyst for the insidious dismantling of the state.

Its agents were supranational institutions such as the European Union, the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, the World Trade Organisation and the International Court of Justice, as well as the systematic dilution of homogeneous populations by means of waves of mass immigration, open borders and multiculturalism. An international “style” of shapeless,

modernistic buildings and abstract, meaningless “art” continues to destroy people’s sense of belonging, while the continent’s many old cities have lost their beauty and their ability to offer a sense of home.

My view is that all policy that is the result of the *oikophobia* of our elites, constitutes, ultimately, a kind of return to the Middle Ages. New overlapping jurisdictions are being created and cultivated. A new class-based society has come into being. A quasi-hereditary aristocracy has returned in the form of the cosmopolitan

elites, the “highly-educated” (as they call themselves), who intermarry and operate on an international scale, and who exclude the new serfs – the “deplorables” and the migrant workers – by means of subtle style conventions and hollow pleas for “tolerance”. The imperial power that once ruled all of Europe has returned in the form of the imperial decrees issued by Brussels. Papal authority has returned *via* the “universal” Human Rights Court and the “universal” Criminal Court. Universal – the literal translation of “Catholic”.

My criticism of these developments extends beyond questions of taste. There is more at stake than the divide between those who love their home, their nation, their history, their community – and those who feel uncomfortable about these particularities and instinctively work towards their destruction. For the medieval order of overlapping jurisdictions and conflicting loyalties – the homeless order we are now returning to – cannot be reconciled with the democratic rule of law.

Democracy requires a sovereign parliament that decides

## The EUROPEAN CONSERVATIVE



Arsuaga. Bartulica. Baudet. Bolkestein. Brague. Burke. Buttiglione. Dalrymple. De Mattei. Del Noce. Delsol. Espada. Fleming. Harris. Huizinga. Kinneging. Klink. Kuby. Kuehnelt-Leddihn. Kugler. Legutko. Ljungberg. Manent. Minogue. Nef. Nolte. O’Sullivan. Sacks. Sanandaji. Sarrazin. Schindler. Schwarz. Scruton. Thatcher. Tyrmand. Voegelin. Waldstein.



These are just some of the names you’ll encounter when you read *The European Conservative*, the oldest English-language, pan-European conservative magazine. *The European Conservative* publishes articles, editorials, essays, and reviews representing the many varieties of ‘respectable conservatism’ across Europe — from anti-statists and free market enthusiasts to traditionalists and constitutional monarchists. We welcome unsolicited manuscripts.

Back issues are available in PDF format at:

[www.europeanconservative.com](http://www.europeanconservative.com)

For information about the magazine or to support our efforts as a volunteer or donor, please contact:

[editor@europeanconservative.com](mailto:editor@europeanconservative.com)





**Spiritually uprooted and politically dispossessed: that is our future unless we stop the assault on the nation state.**

on war and peace, expenditure and immigration. The great capitals of our European countries have lost virtually all of their decision-making powers in those crucial policy areas. Meanwhile, it is impossible for the European Parliament to be democratic, because there is no European *demos*.

As a result, majority decisions are not experienced as taken in the name of “us” – and are not considered legitimate. There is no European “we”, and no European public debate. No one feels connected to the weighted vote of the Polish, the Bulgarians, the Estonians, the Germans, the French, the Spaniards, etc.

Nor can the rule of law exist at a post-national or European level. The absence of a shared, national identity inescapably leads to endless confusion about how the law should be interpreted. And about which morals apply, and which cultures should take the lead. In addition, for their decisions to be conceived as authoritative, judges have to draw on a shared idea of legitimacy – and for them to be able to do so, they would have to be considered to be part of the same “community”.

Who will accept their decisions if that is not the case? That shared legitimacy is lacking on the continental scale. That is why the European Court of Human Rights unleashes such a storm of criticism when it ignores national preferences. It is also why we see an increasing call

for *sharia* law courts with their own Islamic judges in the suburbs of major cities.

We have reached a decisive moment in our history. Are we going to continue along this path to a new Middle Ages? The social unrest in the southern euro countries and the tension between the cosmopolitan elites and ordinary people are set to increase. As the new class-based society takes shape, democratic rule of law will come to an end. As a result of modernism in the arts, people will continue to feel more and more uprooted as they lose their sense of connection with their surroundings. Spiritually uprooted and politically dispossessed: that is our future unless we stop the assault on the nation state. 🐕



**Thierry Baudet**

is a Dutch politician, jurist, columnist and historian who founded and leads the political party Forum for Democracy. He was elected as Member of the House of Representatives in the 2017 General Elections.

## SWORD OF HONOUR TRILOGY

- Evelyn Waugh

by James Delingpole

*In each issue, James Delingpole reviews a book which may not be recent in its publication, but which conservatives should read.*

The Second World War was the making of Evelyn Waugh, though he didn't appreciate this at the time. Almost too old to fight – he was 36 when the war broke out – Waugh drifted in and out of various glamorous-sounding units (the Royal Marines, the commandos, the Royal Horse Guards) but never saw any serious action. His snobbery and cantankerousness made him a poor officer. Lord Lovat once said that he had chucked Waugh out of the commandos to save his life: as soon as Waugh led his men into battle, Lovat feared, they would seize the opportunity to shoot him.

From this disappointing material, however, Waugh crafted his masterpiece, the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. It was originally published, over a period of 13 years (1951 to 1964), in three separate volumes, so as to make him more money. Reviews were mixed: people preferred *Brideshead Revisited*.



“When I first read it in my early 20s, I was disappointed that there was so little combat in it. Now that I'm older, I realise that this is part of its strength: it's not really about war at all, but about something much bigger – about life itself and our quest for meaning in a world which makes so little sense.”

**James Delingpole**

is a conservative columnist and novelist who has written for publications including the Daily Mail, Daily Express, The Times, The Daily Telegraph, and The Spectator. He is also the executive editor of Breitbart London. His latest book is *Watermelons*.  
[@jamesdelingpole](https://twitter.com/jamesdelingpole)

But it's *Sword of Honour* – rambling, unwieldy, frustrating though it is – which does most to stake his claim as the 20th century's greatest novelist.

It follows the attempted military exploits of the semi-autographical Guy Crouchback – middle aged, and Catholic, as the author was; richer and posher, as Waugh would like to have been. He sets out, full of high ideals, hoping to prove himself in battle like his knightly ancestors. But ahead lies only disillusion, with brief bouts of futile peril in Senegal, Crete and Yugoslavia, punctuating long periods of aching self-doubt, drudgery and boredom.

As heroes go, Crouchback is almost a cipher: sexless, phlegmatic, uncharismatic.

But his essential dullness serves to ground in reality a series of events and characters so bizarre, colourful and *outré* they might have escaped from Waugh's early satirical novels.



There's Trimmer – aka McTavish – the handsome, proletarian hairdresser recast, purely for propaganda purposes, as a war hero after a confected raid on enemy territory whose only casualty is a dog; Crouchback's brother officer Apthorpe, the ridiculous old Africa hand whose most treasured possession is the portable toilet he calls his "thunder box"; Brigadier Ritchie-Hook, the insanely brave, savagely blood-thirsty First World War veteran who returns from a lunatic beach raid on West Africa cradling a black man's severed head; Guy's ex – the appallingly fickle and flighty Virginia Troy – based, as all Waugh's ghastliest females were, on his own first wife "She Evelyn" Gardner.

But because this is the work of a mature, bruised, increasingly religious novelist with an eye on posterity, not a flippant, brittle, bright young thing on a mission to shock, all this preposterousness serves a deeper moral purpose. It's there to tell you that war – at least in Waugh's view – is the bleakest of black

comedies in which no good deed goes unpunished but where shits, incompetents, cowards, and even traitors too often prosper.

For its initial readership this would have been a brashly insensitive viewpoint. Even today, it comes across as quite outrageously cynical, bitter and perverse as a judgment on Britain's fin-



**Even if it isn't the 20th century's greatest novel, it almost certainly qualifies as its greatest conservative novel.**

est hour. But while we may shudder at Waugh's callousness – this, remember, is the father who refused to visit his

own son as he lay in hospital in Cyprus shot almost to death in a machine gun accident – we may also find it hard not to admire his cool, observational detachment. If, as Graham Greene suggested, great writers need a "splinter of ice" in their hearts then Waugh had a whole iceberg's worth.

We still haven't quite established, though, what makes the book so good.

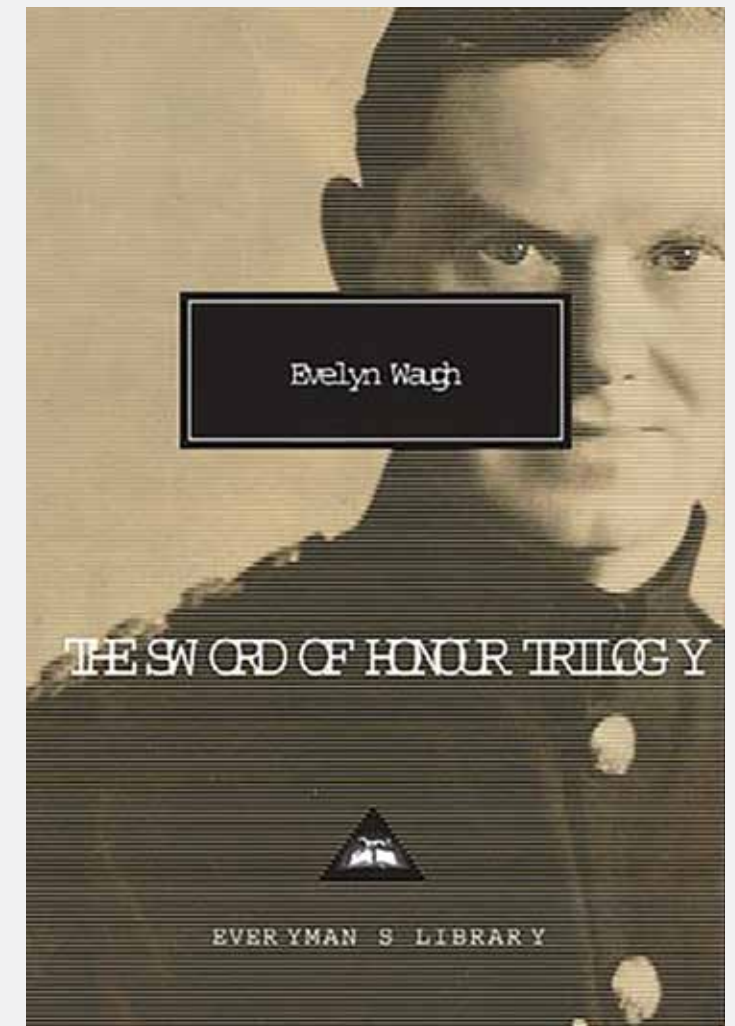
In part, it's the sublime technique. Elegant, economical, never a word out of place, ever adept with the *mot juste*, Waugh's prose style is simply matchless. (As too is his dialogue, so authentic, honed, perfectly formed that he almost never needs to add adverbs to explain how it is spoken – or even needs to tell us who is speaking).

In part, it's his sheer range: from broad comedy to sudden pathos; farce to tragedy; domesticity to Stuka attacks; fashionable London restaurants to dreary south coast training camps; laird's dining halls to bombed-out Cretan villages; hallucinogenic

**There's also something quintessentially conservative in its pervasive religious theme, where personal acts of good behaviour are seen as the best route to redemption.**

sea voyages to grand Catholic funerals; literary pseuds, society hostesses, decent but stupid officers (poor "Fido" Hound), African witch-doctor abortionists, Jewish refugees... All human life is here, all drawn with an engagement and fluency and breadth of sympathy quite remarkable from such a crashing snob.

And even if it isn't the 20th century's greatest novel, it almost certainly qualifies as its greatest *conservative* novel. Besides the obvious reasons – the reverence for tradition and the suspicion of the novel – there's Waugh's relentless, unfashionable, clear-eyed contempt for the way his hero's compatriots and allies keep deluding themselves as to the evils of Communism. The book's title refers in part to a ceremonial sword forged by the British in honour of Stalin's glorious victory at Stalingrad and exhibited at Westminster Abbey. Crouchback pointedly refuses to join the queues to see it, recognising that Stalin and Hitler are as bad as each other.



There's also something quintessentially conservative in its pervasive religious theme, where personal acts of good behaviour are seen as the best route to redemption. We are told by the book's moral touchstone – Guy's devout and kindly father – that "*sub specie aeternitatis*" "quantitative judgments do not apply". He means that it's the *quality* of your deeds, however small, that counts in the eyes of God.

When I first read it in my early 20s, I was disappointed that there was so little combat in it. Now that I'm older, I realise that this is part of its strength: it's not really about war at all, but about something much bigger – about life itself and our quest for meaning in a world which makes so little sense. I cannot recommend reading – or re-reading – it highly enough. 🐕



# BREXIT WAS DE GAULLE'S REVENGE

by Kwasi Kwarteng

The nation state is back, and borders are now very much part of the political debate. In America, Donald Trump's most famous policy was undoubtedly the building of a wall on the southern border with Mexico. In Europe, Angela Merkel's poor performance in the German general election was partly explained by her perceived eagerness to throw open Germany's borders to a

million migrants from Syria. The AfD (Alternative for Deutschland), an anti-immigration party, achieved a remarkable result in the election. They now have 94 out of 598 seats in the Bundestag, and are Germany's third largest party.

Across the Western world, borders are back in fashion. Nothing demonstrates statehood better than a strong border. Even children

**Across the Western world, borders are back in fashion. Nothing demonstrates statehood better than a strong border. Even children understand what lines on a map signify.**

understand what lines on a map signify. This solid grasp of national boundaries lies at the heart of the EU's dilemma. Everybody knows that, for the godfathers of the



Kevin Lamarque / Reuters

EU, Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman, full European integration was the ideal. This, let's make no bones about it, was a United States of Europe. That was the plan.

The single currency itself was a precursor to a super-state. As Jacques Rueff, the French politician and monetary expert, asserted as early as 1950: "Europe will make itself by money, or not at all".

Britain's decision not to join the euro project was a necessary precondition for Brexit. Europhiles as candid as Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Commission, and Martin Schulz, the leader of Germany's Social Democrats, have never hidden their desire to create a single state of Europe based on a single currency. In his State of the Union speech in the European Parliament last September, Mr Juncker confirmed that "the euro is destined to be the currency of the entire Union", while at his party's conference in Berlin in December 2017 Schulz

**Europhiles as candid as Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Commission, and Martin Schulz, the leader of Germany's Social Democrats, have never hidden their desire to create a single state of Europe based on a single currency.**



called on EU states to commit to a "United States of Europe" by 2025.

Today, the talk is of a single army for the EU. Tomorrow, the idea of a President for the whole European Union, with his or her directly elected mandate, will no doubt be proposed again. It was always thought that Tony Blair's ultimate

ambitions lay in this direction. He reportedly craved the post of first President of Europe.

But history has a funny way of biting people on the backside. Just at the moment when Europe seemed to be heading towards greater integration, the financial crisis struck. The Greek sovereign debt crisis severely damaged the reputation of the single currency, because everyone knew that Greece's inclusion in the project was the result of political horse-trading, and made no economic sense.

The British people always rejected the single currency. Even Blair in his pomp shied away from a referendum to join it. This stubborn reluctance to join the euro project marked Britain out, while all the major economies of Europe – Germany, France, Spain, Italy – surrendered their national currencies and adopted the single currency with hardly a murmur of protest.

The British reluctance to join the euro was arguably a forewarning of Brexit. It indicated that Britain had a different set of national



priorities than those countries which had jettisoned their national currencies with such abandon.

Whatever the cause, it is widely acknowledged that the Britons have a slightly different sense of what it is to be a nation. The Germans have been known to call the British “Inselaffen” – island apes – a label which, if widely known in Britain, is likely to be worn as a badge of pride, just as the British Expeditionary Forces at the beginning of the First World War called themselves the Old Contemptibles, after Kaiser Wilhelm dismissed Sir John French’s “contemptible little army”.

The history of the British state, coupled with that of the British Empire and the Commonwealth, has not only given Britain a different type of national identity. It also established trading lines across the world which radically differed from those on the Continent. Nobody understood this better than the great French statesman, Charles de Gaulle.

In 1963, de Gaulle vetoed Britain’s membership of the fledgling EEC, saying: “England in effect is insular, she is maritime, she is linked through her exchanges, her markets, her supply lines to the most diverse and often the most distant countries...



She has in all her doings very marked and very original habits and traditions. In short, the nature, the structure, the very situation that are England’s differ profoundly from those of the continentals.”

General de Gaulle saw in 1963 more clearly than many people today. The idea that Britain had to stay in the EU because our trade was dependent on Europe was, of course, a circular argument.

After 50 years in the EU, it was no surprise that a lot of British trade was centered in the EU. That, after all, was the point. There is no doubt that after Brexit, trade will be slightly different. It is highly likely to revert to the pattern described by General de Gaulle in 1963.

Brexit could be termed de Gaulle’s revenge. A prescient statesman, steeped in history and literature, the General

understood Britain’s historic character. In contrast, domestic politicians like Edward Heath and other champions of the European cause in Britain itself had no real grasp or feel for British history. They were bureaucratic managers and technocrats, who perhaps feared democracy.

As we embark on Brexit, and survey the political scene across the world, we can be sure that the concept of the

nation state is a living idea which will not die soon. Many ardent EU enthusiasts simply cannot understand that, for millions of British people, national sovereignty is a real and dynamic concept. The nation state has traditionally been defined as a political entity which is independent, and has the ability to set its own laws and define its political institutions. Brexit, in all its

complexity and suddenness, was a striking manifestation of a national spirit. 🐶



**Kwasi Kwarteng**  
is the Conservative MP for Spelthorne.





24 May 2018 | Solvay Library, Brussels  
acreurope.eu/event/blue\_green\_summit\_2018

## THE SNOBBERY OF IDENTITY POLITICS WILL KILL GOOD MUSIC

by Damian Thompson

The Centre for New Music at Sheffield and Sheffield University runs a competition for young composers that offers them the chance to have their music workshopped and recorded by the Ligeti Quartet.

That's a potentially interesting project, even if the heart sinks at the prospect of yet more "workshops". I'm never sure what that word means, especially when turned into a verb. Presumably the Ligeti workshops are quite different from those run by the dim



**“The difference between good and bad art is a matter of opinion. When those opinions coalesce, we can say that a critical consensus has emerged, though we're free to ignore it.”**

**Damian Thompson**

is an Associate Editor at The Spectator and Editorial director at the Catholic Herald.  
@holysmoke



functionaries of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales at their festivals of hand-wringing. Let's just agree that it's a piece

of multi-purpose Lefty jargon that describes countless exercises in "virtue-signaling" (which I suppose is multi-purpose Right-wing jargon, but at least easier to understand).

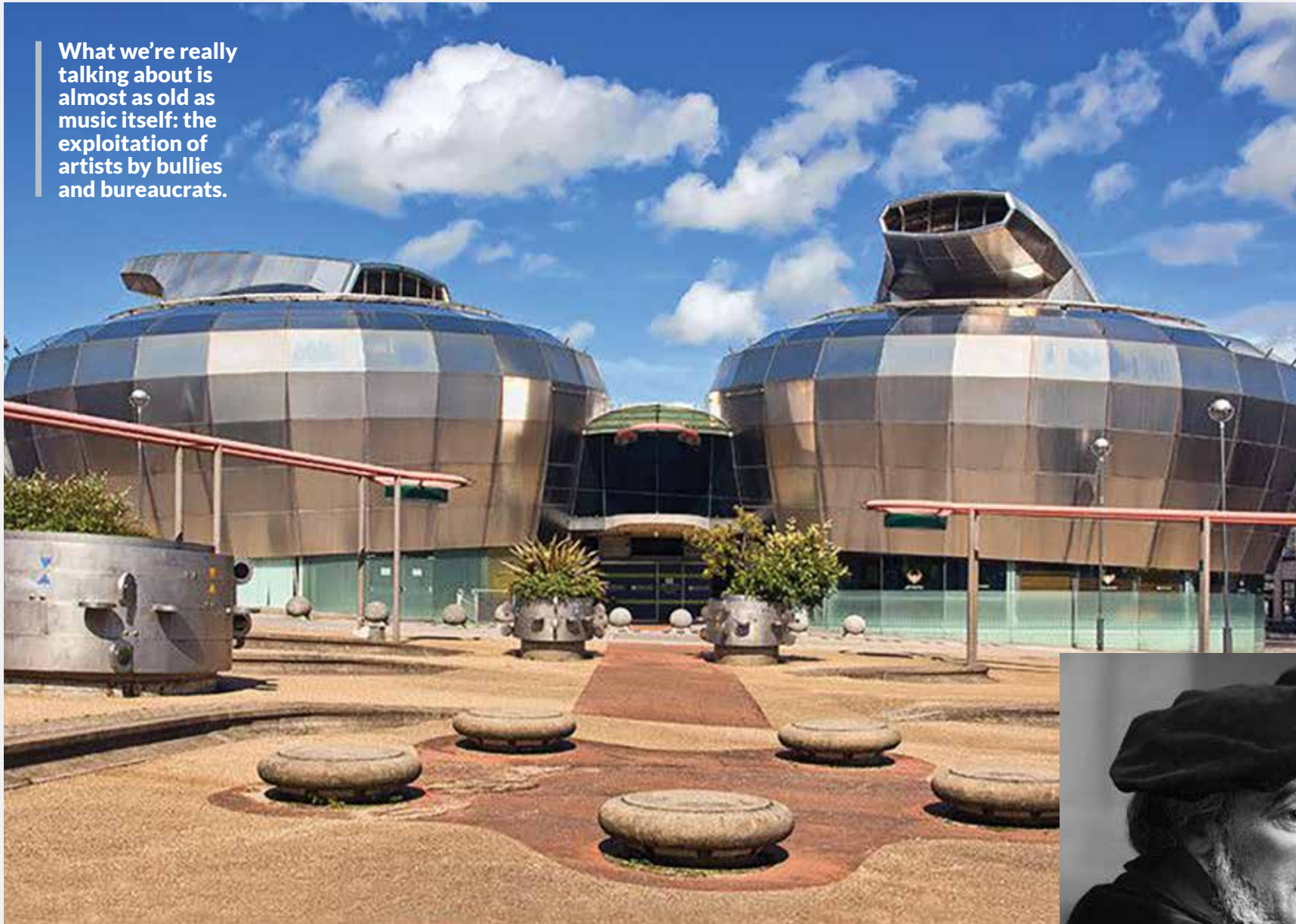
Anyway, that's not the real problem with the Sheffield competition. Philip Sharp, who writes a "classical liberal" blog about music and culture, has noticed this paragraph in the competition's rules:

"A 'two ticks' policy will be in place for female composers, composers who identify as BME, transgender or non-binary, or having a disability, to automatically go through to the second stage of the selection process."

This is a preposterous policy for so many reasons that it's hard to know from which angle to criticise it. Also, such criticism is probably a waste of effort, since the people who devise these idiot rules are impervious to criticism.



What we're really talking about is almost as old as music itself: the exploitation of artists by bullies and bureaucrats.



aristocratic patrons of the past. The history of, say, 18th-century music is one of missed opportunities: composers later judged to be greatly talented (or even geniuses) pushed aside by mediocre court favourites benefiting from their

employers' own two-ticks policies based on family allegiance or whatever.

The Sheffield criteria are of course risible: they guarantee that a piano quintet written by a bloke who dresses in a cocktail frock will reach the second round irrespective of its merits.

This could only happen in the 21st century (though it's just possible, I suppose, that Wagner's patron King Ludwig of Bavaria shared his taste for wearing women's silk underwear). But what we're really talking about is almost as old as music itself: the exploitation of artists by bullies and bureaucrats. 🐺

**The history of, say, 18th-century music is one of missed opportunities: composers later judged to be greatly talented (or even geniuses) pushed aside by mediocre court favourites benefiting from their employers' own two-ticks policies based on family allegiance or whatever.**

But let me make one fundamental point. The difference between good and bad art is a matter of opinion. When those opinions coalesce, we can say that a critical consensus has emerged, though we're free to ignore it.

The Sheffield two-ticks policy suppresses opinions. In an attempt to remove obstacles to artistic flourishing, it restricts freedom of judgment – in a competition, of all things. And pointlessly so, since we can be pretty certain that the

Sheffield judges are not inclined to discriminate against minority candidates.

The irony is that this narrowing of choice is no more likely to produce a critical consensus about good and bad music than the restriction of choice imposed by







## LET FREE NATIONS COMPETE AGAINST EACH OTHER

by Daniele Capezzone

The *Brahmins*, the hieratic caste of the mainstream media, the *ayatollahs* of European centralisation, the so-called “experts” (the same people who failed to understand Brexit, Trump, the

elections in Germany/France/Italy, and nevertheless are still lecturing us, in their usual patronising tone), have been offering for years their solemn pronouncement, as a modern version of the Delphic Oracle:

**We cannot deny that nation-states have often given rise to, inspired and harboured statist, protectionist, interventionist, and centralising economic policies.**



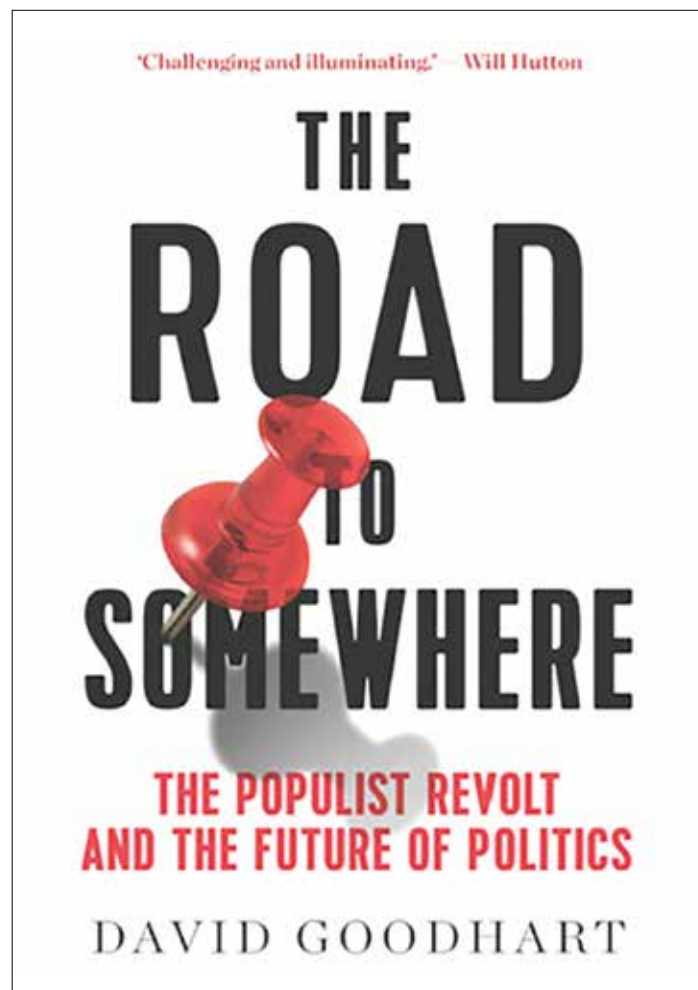
the nation-state has died, it is an obsolete notion. End of the matter.

As regularly happens, they turned out to be wrong. The nation-state is still alive, and someone may raise the suspicion that it's they who are obsolete, if (still talking as they are) not yet dead.

In their oracular statements, they have been making at least four logical mistakes. First: in an environment of popular resentment, in an atmosphere of rage towards politicians and traditional institutions, many electors are inclined to trust only the levels of government on which they can directly exercise their control.

Second: most of the existing supranational and transnational institutions (from the EU to the United Nations) are in the middle of an existential crisis, dominated by non-elected

**Most of the existing supranational and transnational institutions are in the middle of an existential crisis, dominated by non-elected bureaucracies and untransparent procedures, which are not likely to attract popular trust and support.**



bureaucracies and untransparent procedures, which are not likely to attract popular trust and support.

Third: in the Western electorate, as David Goodhart has explained, we are witnessing a comeback (even a revenge, perhaps) of the *Somewheres* and a retreat of the *Anywheres*. If you are tied to a territory, to some traditions, you are less likely to accept the idea

that fundamental decisions might be made far in time and in space from you, and far from your concrete chance to ask politicians to account for that.

Fourth: you may like it or not, but when so many people perceive mass immigration as a threat, as a process which is increasingly getting out of control, the notion of national borders gains once again a strong meaning.

In the presence of such conditions, why on earth should nation-states have disappeared?

Anyway, as classical liberals and free-marketeers, we know very well how nuanced and complex things are (and will be). On the one hand, we may enjoy the show

of this humiliation of the *Brahmins*: we had warned them that every attempt to wipe out the dimension of nationhood was a cultural and political mistake. Moreover, we are well aware that the precious gifts – which we inherited – of political liberty and electoral

**Mrs Thatcher's prescient Bruges speech remains a cornerstone and an inspiration, 30 years later. The best option for the future is a willing cooperation between sovereign states.**





**Nation states can prove – once again – to be the least dangerous, the least intrusive among the existing institutional schemes.**

democracies have been produced just by modern nation-states. Mankind (or peoplekind, as Mr Trudeau recently tried to rename all of us) has not produced anything better, so far.

But, on the other hand, we know that there is another side to the story. We cannot deny that nation-states have often given rise to, inspired and harboured statist, protectionist, interventionist, and centralising economic policies. Many people (on the Left and also, unfortunately, on the Right of the political spectrum) believe in a more assertive economic role of the state. To them, the nation-state is the perfect tool to impose high taxes, high public spending, a positive prejudice towards public initiatives and nationalisation, and a negative bias against private business.

So, to settle the conundrum, we must embrace a political risk, and make the most of our awareness of the contradictions we must face.

As an embankment against the waves, we should

choose the very same notion of competition which we praise in the free-market, and bring it into the institutional arena. The key concept is: let's make free nations compete among themselves (inside and outside the existing international institutions) so that lower taxes and lower-regulation systems can act as a model for the others. The time has come to encourage (for example, inside the EU) not a *centralising federalism*, with Brussels imposing autopilot on 27 countries, a monstrous strait-jacket of uniformity from Portugal to Scandinavia, but a sort of *competitive federalism*, to see which model performs better from a legal, fiscal and regulatory point of view.

In that, Mrs Thatcher's prescient Bruges speech remains a cornerstone and an inspiration, 30 years later. The best option for the future is a willing cooperation between sovereign states. From this perspective, instead of wasting time on the abstract details of the EU's institutional architecture, we could finally focus our efforts on the political will to carry through effective reforms in every nation.

All over the world, fiscal competition has finally

started: now, it's up to every state to be part of this global contest to grab resources, high-skilled talent, investment and opportunities. It would be mad, on the contrary, to choose a forced homogenisation, paving the way for Brussels to level up taxes and regulation.

In this perspective, nation states can prove – once again – to be the least dangerous, the least intrusive among the existing institutional schemes. As players of a new global competition, they can help us get over two historic "divorces": the divorce between nationalism and classical liberalism, and the divorce between nationalism and individualism. 🐶



**Daniele Capezzone**

is an ACRE board member, director of New Direction Italia and has been twice elected as an Italian MP. With the Italian journalist Federico Punzi he has written Brexit: The Challenge (2017).

@Capezzone



New  
Direction

# THE CONVENTION

LIBERAL FESTIVAL



1-2 June 2018 | MADRID

www.newdirection.online





# BAKU SUMMIT

2018

8-9 June 2018 | Baku, Azerbaijan

[acreurope.eu/event/baku\\_summit\\_2018](http://acreurope.eu/event/baku_summit_2018)