

interpretation

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Short Notices

WILL MORRISEY

Studies of the American Constitution

How Democratic is the Constitution? Edited by Robert A. Goldwin and William A. Schambra. (Washington and London: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1980. 150 pp.: cloth \$12.25, paper \$5.25.)

How Capitalistic is the Constitution? Edited by Robert A. Goldwin and William A. Schambra. (Washington and London: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1982. 172 pp.: cloth \$14.25, paper \$6.25.)

Classifying our constitution as democratic provokes as much debate among scholars and polemicists today as it did among polemicists and ordinary citizens at the time of its ratification. Classifying it as capitalistic provokes little debate. Accordingly, Goldwin and Schambra's first volume debates primarily the nature of our constitution and secondarily the virtues and defects of democracy, whereas their second volume debates primarily the virtues and defects of capitalism and secondarily the nature of our constitution. Each volume contains seven essays. As Professor Bernard Lewis has noted, anthologists usually "violate the humane Pentateuchal ban on yoking animals of unequal strength." But although a philosopher may call scholars oxen, many of us are well instructed by contrasts wrought by editorial inhumanity.

Historian Gordon S. Wood and political scientists Ann Stuart Diamond and Michael Parenti introduce the arguments for our constitution's aristocracy, democracy, and oligarchy, in that order. Wood begins badly, writing that "there was and is no 'real' Constitution against which we can measure the conflicting statements of the Federalists and Antifederalists"; a constitution exists only in the minds of its beholders. Wood nonetheless assumes that the contents of those minds can be discerned, thus conveniently rejecting solipsism in historiography even as he asserts it in textual interpretation.

Wood presents a thoughtful account of the founders' attempt to give the regime both popular support and aristocratic rule. He suggests that the founders used rhetoric equating democracy with republicanism. He claims, over-piously, that they did not do this in such a calculating way "as here implied": "Ideas and words are not manipulated or transformed that crudely." Why "crudely"? The founders' statesmanship was evidently no less subtle than it needed to be. Indeed, Wood ends by criticizing the founders for being too thorough, for "further[ing] the American disavowal of any sort of aristocratic conception of politics and encourag[ing] the American belief that the ills of democracy can be

cured by more democracy.” He suggests no alternative rhetoric—admittedly a historian’s prerogative.

Diamond remarks that land is aristocracy’s basis, whereas the constitution encourages commerce. She also denies that our regime is a mixed one; there were no fixed classes to mix, as rich and poor alike tended toward the middle. She does not mention that Aristotle, foremost of mixed-regime men, would have statesmen encourage a large middle class, although not of course by ‘modern’ means.

Diamond aims her best observation not at Wood’s aristocratic interpretation but at the oligarchic interpretation of Charles Beard and his epigoni. The latter characteristically damn the body of the document and worship its appendage, the Bill of Rights. Diamond asserts that “the primary protection for liberty, in all its aspects, lies in [economic activity ‘generated by self-interest’] and in the constitutional institutions themselves, not in the first ten amendments. ” She argues less convincingly when she claims that democracy elevates men of “natural merit” to high office, and then observes that such philosophers as Hobbes, Locke, and Smith believed “natural merit” a dubious notion in any case. This merely shows that one does not necessarily exhaust the founders’ practical wisdom by reference to Hobbes, Locke, and Smith.

Parenti attacks the constitution from the ‘left,’ calling it “a legitimating cloak and workable system for the propertied interests at the expense of the ordinary populace.” One is tempted to say that never have so many ordinary people profited so much at their own expense, but Parenti’s essay does serve as a useful qualification of any too-noble sketch of the founders. Tendentiousness mars his arguments (“the property interests of the slave owners were looked after,” he sneers in passing) but, taken as one voice among seven, he adds a note that would otherwise be missed.

In the volume’s central essay, Walter Berns refuses to accept the terms of the debate. “The Antifederalists were no more simple majoritarian democrats than the Federalists were aristocrats in any traditional sense. ” Modern republicans base their regimes on the liberty justified by natural rights and by which liberty those rights are defended. This liberty is saved from what one might call mere idealism by its basis in that very material activity, commerce. Berns’s formulation is problematic because the rights described by modern philosophers partake of philosophic materialism. Can the founders be said to have had theoretical wisdom?

Wilson Carey McWilliams concerns himself with a related problem of modern political philosophy. Although Berns contends that our regime has become more democratic, McWilliams argues that there is less citizen participation today than hitherto. He does not substantiate this claim, using it instead to arrive at the more fundamental point that individualism, particularly self-preservation, cannot comport with genuine political life and that the American regime therefore in-

dures its citizens and undermines itself. He does not say how the small, democratic, communal polities he favors could survive.

The volume's final two essays speak of what we are, not what we might be. Joseph M. Bessette replies to Wood and Parenti by writing that the founders made a "deliberative democracy" that reconciles moderation and majority rule.

If the citizens possessed the same knowledge and experience as their representatives and if they devoted the same amount of time reasoning about the relevant information and arguments presented in the legislative body, would they reach fundamentally similar conclusions on public policy issues as their representatives? If the answer is yes, then we must conclude that the result is basically democratic.

Obviously true as far as it goes, this assessment fails to reflect the need for the capacity to make good use of knowledge, experience, and leisure. The statesmanship of both Jefferson's natural aristoi and Hamilton's man of ambition fades from view.

Statesmanship concerns Alfred F. Young, who presents an informative historical account of how the Federalists "made democratic concessions to achieve conservative ends," and how some potential antifederalists came to agree that democracy needed restraint. Of the latter faction, Jefferson in particular came to like the constitution—"testimony to the powerful pull of the democratic features of the document." One might add that Jefferson's conduct as president also testified to the scope the document affords statesmanlike action.

How Democratic Is the Constitution? will introduce new students to the principal issues of the founding and stimulate further reflection by older students. It teaches above all that a comprehensive account of our constitution would take more than one essay or an anthology of essays. Perhaps the only attempt to carefully describe the constitution using Aristotle's regime taxonomy can be found in *A Discourse on Statesmanship* by Paul Eidelberg. Partisans of the aristocratic, democratic, and oligarchic interpretations will have to surpass Eidelberg before they can claim to have said the best, if not the last, words in the debate.

How Capitalistic Is the Constitution? begins with an able presentation of the *Federalist's* arguments on the political benefits of commerce. Marc F. Plattner describes the practical and theoretical bases for this view, reminding us that even Jefferson regarded economic redistribution as antisocial, a violation of the right to freely exercise one's own industry and retain its fruits—"the first principle of association." Plattner observes that those who "seek to impose on the large republic an economic egalitarianism more appropriate to the small republic" indulge in "a utopian combination of contradictory elements."

Edward S. Greenberg uses the occasion to argue for a neo-Marxist view of "the capitalist state." He minimizes the importance of the constitution, believing it primarily a reflection of "the prevailing class relations." Perhaps the most revealing aspect of the essay comes near its end, when he writes that "We have no

way of predicting whether [*laissez-faire* capitalism or corporate capitalism] is capable of successfully taming the emergent crises of the system.” Marx’s proud belief that he had developed the first scientific socialism has evidently lost its plausibility even to his admirers.

Forrest McDonald argues that the constitutional guarantee of property rights made capitalism possible but not inevitable. Merely owning property is not enough; a capitalist also uses his property “for the purpose of creating more property.” He shows that few Americans, and few of the founders, were capitalists. Even American merchants distrusted the “depersonalized, collateral-based credit that is essential to large-scale capitalist enterprise.” Not class relations but statesmanship brought capitalism to America. McDonald credits Hamilton with shrewdly—indeed, surreptitiously—putting the contract clause into the constitution, with developing the practice of using public debt as the basis of “an institutionalized system of monetized private credit” and, of course, with the establishment of a national bank. “Although most Americans probably would have chosen otherwise, Congress chose the Hamiltonian way.”

Walter Dean Burnham is the volume’s sole ‘liberal.’ He claims that we now have a “zero-sum society” in which the economic growth described by Locke and Smith has, for the most part, ended. He advocates more government control over society in order to distribute what we still produce more equally. He regrets the “feudal,” decentralized institutions of the founders. Nonetheless, “it seems a bit too late in the day for a simple-minded faith in the state as a savior.” “I have no magic formula. ”

Neither is magic possessed by Bernard H. Siegan, a ‘conservative’ law professor, or Robert Lekachman, a socialist/democratic economist. Siegan deplores special-interest legislation; whether or not its sponsors’ intentions are egalitarian, the legislation itself almost always gives inequalities the sanction and rigidity of law. The temporary inequalities of commercial flux are more tolerable than the long-lasting inequities of legal inertia. Lekachman, in the volume’s most elegantly-turned and superficial essay, complains that the Supreme Court has failed to make “welfare” payments a “constitutionally protected right” and dreams of help, if not salvation, from “our own François Mitterand,” who has yet to brighten our national horizon. He does manage some telling criticisms of the ‘small-is-beautiful’ left, but gives no sign of knowing Plattner’s argument on the problems of pursuing small-republican economic ends in a large republic.

The editors reserve the most original essay for last. Stephen Miller shows how the founders’ political economy differed from the *laissez-faire* capitalism of the late nineteenth century. Economic libertarianism offers no place for the statesmanship that transcends commerce. He also argues, perhaps inconsistently, that capitalism has comported with authoritarian and even totalitarian rule. He rejects economic egalitarianism as well. Its partisans do “not realize that it is precisely because most Americans do not think the present distribution of wealth makes any moral sense that they are inclined to accept it”; their economic inferiority

reflects no moral judgment on them, feeds no resentment. Having found space for 'conservatives,' socialists, and a 'liberal,' the editors give the last word to a moderate. They risk being thought inhumane to ideologues.

These volumes constitute the first in a series. "A Decade of Study of the Constitution," a program sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute, will feature the publication of more scholarly work as our constitution's bicentennial nears. These volumes have already improved our perennial debates, which may soon intensify for more than ceremonial reasons.

Churchill's Statesmanship

Statesmanship: Essays in Honor of Sir Winston S. Churchill. Edited by Harry V. Jaffa. (Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic Press, 1981. 279 pp.: cloth, \$22.95.)

Winston Churchill's World View: Statesmanship and Power. By Kenneth W. Thompson. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983. 364 pp.: cloth, \$25.00.)

The oldest and best written constitution, the American constitution, will continue to receive careful study as long as regimes of liberty survive. It is a commonplace to say that American institutions work so well that they nearly obviate the need for statesmen. Studying American institutions seems a more serious task than studying American politicians.

It is also a commonplace to admit that even the United States needs statesmanship on occasion. Englishmen, favored with one of the oldest and best unwritten constitutions, found a statesman in their midst near the beginning of this century. It took them nearly four decades to decide what to do with him, and even then they had second thoughts. Americans might do no better, given the chance. Perhaps we need to study statesmanship with as much care as we study institutions. Harry V. Jaffa and Kenneth W. Thompson evidently think so.

Jaffa begins his volume with an essay titled "On the Necessity of a Scholarship of the Politics of Freedom." The "politics of freedom" may not seem to relate directly to the practice of statecraft; it sounds as if it concerns the activities of ordinary citizens or ordinary politicians. It does, but as Jaffa also shows, it is by studying the practice of statecraft by great politicians, statesmen, that we most directly confront the issue of freedom. The statesman, empowered to take extraordinary action, shows us to what extent a human being can act freely in politics. "As a writer no less than as a maker of history, Churchill understood, as few who have either written or made history have done, the difference between wisdom *in* and wisdom *after* the event." We can see this difference only if we "make clear what is known, and what could be known, by those called upon to act." A wise action may or may not end well; "there is a genuine indeterminacy in the na-

ture of things”—an indeterminacy caused above all by the partial freedom of human beings. Jaffa contrasts this traditional understanding of human nature with modern determinism, “the ground of despotism” whereon scientists inexplicably exempt themselves from the mechanistic universe they posit.

After an essay on Churchill’s character by official biographer Martin Gilbert, Jaffa returns to examine Churchill’s own response to the question of freedom. That response emanated from Churchill’s ethical convictions, his character, not from his considerable intellect.

A world made by tides and tendencies, and not by wisdom and virtue, is a world he repudiates. He does not really say that it does not exist; on the contrary, he finds that this is the kind of world which, in ever increasing measure, we find ourselves inhabiting. But he does not accept it; he will not accept it.

Thus Jaffa’s Churchill “asserts . . . categorically the absolute disjunction of modern scientific progress and intrinsic human well-being.” “To end human errors and human evil, by employing collective foreknowledge implies, not perfecting the human condition but ending it, by returning it to the primeval condition that preceded Creation.” This explains the abysmal failure of Marxism, the attempt to combine science and politics to remake human nature. It also explains the failure of the gentler methods of the commercial republics, whose ‘behavioral scientists’ undermine the virtues needed to maintain commerce and republicanism by denying the doctrine of human freedom. Both Marxists and behaviorists would have us attain desired ends as it were automatically. But “virtue would not be virtue if its ends were always gained.”

Marlo Lewis, Jr. writes “On War and Legitimacy in Shakespeare’s *Henry V*.” Jaffa is right to include it, as Churchill’s public life encompassed the two great wars of this century and several smaller ones. Moreover, Churchill attempted to refound the British regime in opposition to certain manifestations of modern ideology, particularly the modern tyrannies. Lewis observes that “Shakespeare sheds light on the delicate matters of legitimacy and the founding of regimes.” To state the crux of those matters indelicately, the means of attaining the power needed to found a regime are not usually the means of obtaining legitimacy. At the same time, legitimacy, “the right to be obeyed” is itself “a source of power” and, conversely, power often inclines the unspirited and powerless toward believing the possessor of power legitimate.

Religious as well as political implications abound here, and Lewis discusses them with admirable shrewdness. Even as political men often seize power but want legitimacy, churchmen stand for legitimacy but want the power to defend their property. In *Henry V*, a king and a churchman attempt to solve these complementary problems by prosecuting and sanctioning an unjust foreign war, the better to unify England’s new regime and to assure the place of the church within it. Lewis notes that “every generation is new” and a “profound sense of civic ob-

ligation disappears unless the kind of experience which originally produced it is recreated.” Thus one might note the profound usefulness to the British regime of Churchill’s warlike actions, although it would be wrong to call his wars unjust.

“Founders can and must make and remake political institutions because human things have no divine support.” Lewis’s rather Machiavellian Shakespeare finds Biblical teachings useful but ultimately dangerous. “England’s conquest and annexation of France proved disastrous to her real interests”—a disaster caused by the tendency of the Christian doctrine of providence “to divorce foreign policy from any conception of the public good which can be ascertained through the give and take of political debate.” Nonetheless, Lewis wittily concludes, “If the absence of providence makes continual refounding necessary, the belief in providence makes it possible.”

The closest Churchill came to advocating unjust wars—in the opinion, at least, of many of our contemporaries—was during his long and vigorous defense of the British Empire. Kirk Emmert shows how this defense contributed to the statesman’s perennial task of refounding. Although “torn between his commitment to virtue and his commitment to liberty and to the democratic regime of liberty”—that is, between commitments to the classic and the modern—Churchill “finally preferred aristocratic virtue to democratic freedom.” A “limited and civilizing empire,” not self-aggrandizing conquest, develops the distinctively human virtues in both rulers and ruled. Although in ancient times virtue required the small *polis*, in modernity, with its “mass society,”

Only imperial powers are of sufficient magnitude to provide scope for the most splendid and demanding forms of moral and human excellence. Only at the head of an extensive empire can the truly great-souled man have his day.

Without empire, democracy might not warrant the devotion of a Churchill. Perhaps worse, it might not even produce one.

Wayne C. Thompson and Jeffrey D. Wallin contribute articles describing Churchill’s prudent subordination of military strategy to political aims. In a most informative essay, Steven A. Maaranen presents and assesses the ideological assumptions behind the foreign policy of the British left between the world wars. Although British conservatives deserve and receive much of the blame for the government’s lethargic and cowardly response to Hitler throughout most of the 1930s, a mixture of fear and utopian hope—what Maaranen too generously calls “the political and philosophic thought of the left”—contributed its share to the disaster. One must say that although Churchillian imperialism might school men in courage and moderation, evidently British imperialism failed to produce a sufficient number of Churchillian imperialists.

Churchill made war on Germany and allied himself with France, Soviet Russia, and the United States. The book’s last four essays concern statesmanship relating to Churchill’s allies. Angelo M. Codevilla considers de Gaulle, rightly

defining the primary “problem of modern politics” as “how to cause men who are immediately and primarily interested in their own preservation and gratification to subordinate themselves to a common purpose and, if called upon, to give their lives in its pursuit.” This good essay is marred by its final section, wherein Codevilla mistranslates a Gaullist description of Soviet communism, misattributes a question on life’s meaning (Malraux asks it, de Gaulle only repeats it), and misinterprets a Gaullist statement on modern individualism, making it appear to be an endorsement of modern individualism.

Edward J. Erler shows that Solzhenitsyn, praised by Jaffa earlier in the volume, regards a great writer as a kind of statesman. Erler’s description of Solzhenitsyn’s effort at refounding the regime of Russian Orthodoxy leaves this reviewer asking the kind of questions Marlo Lewis raises concerning the relation of politics to Christianity. If, for example, “Orthodoxy is the antithesis of ideology” and modern ideology owes its beginning to Machiavelli, Solzhenitsyn’s critique of the West’s lack of civic courage, a critique characterized as “more in the spirit of Machiavelli than an orthodox defender of the faith,” raises fascinating questions. Erler does not attempt to answer those questions here.

Jaffa concludes the volume with two more short essays of his own. One vindicates Churchill against the charge that he deliberately allowed the American ship *Lusitania* to go into an area patrolled by German submarines. The purpose of Churchill’s alleged (in)action is said to have been to embroil the United States in the first world war. Jaffa’s refutation exemplifies the principles of Churchillian historiography Jaffa commended in his introductory essay. The second essay praises Franklin D. Roosevelt for “maneuvering the Japanese into firing the first shot” at the United States in 1941, thus embroiling Americans in a war that a large majority of them did not want to enter. “[T]his was his finest hour.” Taken together, these essays invite us to reflect on practical aspects of the more theoretical considerations advanced earlier in the volume.

Statesmanship numbers among several books in the “Studies in Statesmanship” series published by Carolina Academic Press. The series includes or will include books by Emmert, Wallin, Maaranen, and Codevilla elaborating on the subjects discussed here. It may not be utopian to hope that these efforts will help citizens of commercial republics know and prize true statesmanship.

Winston Churchill wrote voluminously, with eloquence and candor. Those who write of him have little to clarify and nothing to embellish. They may wish to demonstrate some order in his thoughts, however, and they may hope to judge today’s circumstances in the light of Churchillian criteria. Kenneth W. Thompson does both.

He finds today’s opinions about peace and war disorderly, a jumble of improvisation, naïve empiricism (“piling facts on facts”), and equally naïve utopianism. The concatenation of these opinions yields such trivial dualities as ‘optimism’ vs. ‘pessimism,’ ‘moralism’ vs. ‘cynicism,’ and ‘internationalism’ vs.

'isolationism.' In contrast, Churchill understood that "the essence of politics requires men to choose goals and objectives which are fragmented and limited"—"lesser evils." "Only in pure thought can policies and actions remain uncorrupted. . . ." Courage and practical wisdom animated both Churchill's character and what Thompson calls Churchill's "philosophy." The immediate purpose of Churchill's courage and practical wisdom was the quest for British security and power; British security and power resisted tyranny, preserved British manners, customs, laws, and traditions. "Churchill viewed political leadership in the tradition of the British philosopher Edmund Burke."

Burkean political leadership has achieved justifiable fame for its noble failures. Thompson seems to blame mass politics for this; democracy has defeated aristocracy. "The great, good-hearted and collectively shrewd" democratic citizenry "can succeed in distinguishing the truth only with immense difficulty." The realistic statesmen must therefore cast his policies "in moralistic molds," an effort he will find "demeaning" "in a certain sense." Patriotism is the usual sentiment evoked by such statesmen. Yet Thompson chooses as his example of Churchill's noble failure the proposal to attack Nazi Germany through the Balkans, "the soft underbelly of Europe." Not democratic citizens but democratic politicians resisted this proposal. Thompson thus suggests that certain politicians obstruct statesmen more than ordinary citizens do.

Thompson would therefore educate future politicians to aspire to, or at least defer to, statesmanship. Politicians have failed to do either one in this century because they persist in imagining "the bright signs of inevitable progress" in "repeated tragedies, conflicts, and failures." Modern science, at best an "essentially . . . amoral or neutral force" in Churchill's estimation, mesmerized almost all of his contemporaries. "Democracy and science, which had been heralded as solutions to war, have increased its intensity and ferocity." "[F]or Churchill war constituted the ultimate human problem," a problem modern ideologists exacerbate while trying to solve.

Unlike Jaffa, Thompson proceeds not further into philosophy but to Churchill's statecraft and to the advice we may derive from it. Two examples must suffice. In July 1934, Churchill told Parliament, "When you have peace you will have disarmament," not the other way around. In August 1950, Churchill brought this insight into what was already called 'the nuclear age':

It is indeed a melancholy thought that nothing preserves Europe from an overwhelming military attack except the devastating resources of the United States in this awful weapon. That is at the present time the sole deterrent against . . . Communist invasion. No wonder the Communists would like to ban it in the name of peace.

By reminding us of this trenchant statement, Thompson may cause us to reflect that just as a philosopher begins with wonder, the statesman must encourage citizens to deliberate on circumstances and then say, "no wonder."

Richard Hooker and the Politics of a Christian England. By Robert K. Faulkner. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1981. x + 190 pp.: cloth, \$24.50.)

With “the old Adam of religious warfare” still “before our eyes,” we may learn much from Richard Hooker’s “diagnosis of religious strife and of the civic possibilities and problems endemic to religious zeal.” Hooker’s diagnosis and prescriptions earned him a reputation for judiciousness; Faulkner “weighs [Hooker’s] judiciousness, so to speak.”

His was a mixture of Christianity and Aristotelianism—and it is an old question whether these two mix well. The most serious task of a student of Hooker is to clarify the consistency of this mixture and, fundamentally, the merits of each part.

To undertake this task seriously, one must consider both Hooker’s *Laws* and Hooker’s circumstance.

Faulkner considers that circumstance in Part I. In its first chapter, he describes a weak Anglican Church in need of a new foundation, a church endangered by three classes of external enemies: “atheists, Catholics, and reformers.” Each of these receives a chapter’s attention. Perhaps the most interesting facts brought to light concern the Elizabethans’ firsthand knowledge of Machiavelli, which was more extensive than many scholars recognize. Faulkner meticulously describes Hooker’s subtle response to the “wise malignant,” later showing how Christian zealotry of the reformers would “leave the church defenseless” against such worldly wisdom. As a defense against these extremes, Hooker would explore reconciliation with the Roman church, an institution with much experience in dealing with extremes. Hooker “restores practical judgment to reformed theology,” an accomplishment one appreciates only after seeing that Christianity heightens the religio-political problem by advancing a doctrine of “faith in otherworldly substance, in Christ’s saving grace.” By exacerbating the zeal and fear of the Christian flock, reformers diminished “deference, judgment, and moderation”—all required for decent politics. Hooker attempts to reconcile the faith behind Christian zeal and fear with the practical reason politics requires. He does so by arguing that since the end of the age of prophecy, “grace illuminates now by prompting reason.”

Part II follows logically from this. In this central division of his book Faulkner contrasts Hooker’s Christian ethics to Aristotle’s ethics. He quietly amends the assertion made in *Natural Right and History*, where Leo Strauss describes “Hooker’s conception of natural right” as “the Thomistic conception.” Faulkner observes that Hooker “admires Augustine among churchmen more than Aquinas, and differs markedly from Aquinas,” particularly distrusting the Thomistic doctrine of conscience, *syndaresis*. Hooker differs from Aristotle in more sharply distinguishing ethics from politics, in more strongly emphasizing law, command, and duty (will, not habituation, is near the core of his ethics), in his certainty (he brings to ethics the deductive method Aristotle reserves for science),

and in displacing of friendship with charity and religious community. “Although he diminishes politics and political prudence” in contrast to Aristotle (even as he fortifies them in contrast to Calvin), Hooker’s “moral expectations prepare a stringent polity” wherein statesmen impose laws that “guide even nature depraved to a right end.”

Part III concerns Hooker’s Christian politics. Christian political prudence, in Hooker’s words, consists of “the wisdom of serpents tempered with the innocent meekness of doves”—a formulation some readers may find a bit daunting. As Faulkner understands this tempered wisdom, it requires that “Christian salvation” displace politics from the relatively high place politics enjoys in Aristotle’s thought. Human nature is social but not political; “Biblical universality points to universal fellowship under God’s rule, not to particular politics under human rule.” In this Hooker departs not only from Aristotle but from Aquinas. Politics, culminating in “the exercise of virtue in ruling,” must be strictly subordinate to rule by God’s law. “Law is natural in the best sense . . . politics not so.” Hooker’s *Laws* replaces Aristotle’s regime theory. In practice this means subordination of temporal government to church government, a meaning Hooker took care not to trumpet in Elizabeth’s England. In contrast to Aristotle, Hooker would substitute belief for music and action, instruction in true doctrine for political education, and the Christian church for civic religion. Churchmen guided by Hooker’s *Laws* will supply needed practical wisdom to the ecclesiastical polity. In a most interesting passage, Faulkner writes that “The judicious Hooker seeks with respect to belief or theory the mean, that middle but fitting path, which Aristotle had thought restricted to practical conduct.” This suggests that Christian “belief or theory” finally points to action, not thought. “Christian wisdom is a kind of practical wisdom. . . that finally ranks prudence ahead of a simply theoretical wisdom.” It comes to us by what one might call a divine action, grace. With Hooker, faith in divine grace is always a “judicious faithfulness.”

Hooker’s judicious faithfulness produces what Faulkner calls “a political-theological miracle”: a reconciliation of Christ and Caesar that even Scripture itself finds unlikely. Hooker “manages to inform his flock with both the moderate political wisdom of the philosophers and the theocratic political practice of the Jews.” “It seems that Christ denied the temporal sword only because His political judgment saw it then impolitic!” Faulkner exclaims. But now temporal coercion can be “both politic and divine.” It is tempting to say that a judicious political philosopher has been graced with a judicious interpreter.

Education and Culture in the Political Thought of Aristotle. By Carnes Lord. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1982. 226 pp.: cloth, \$19.50.)

Modern estheticians make much of ‘creativity’—transformation “effected and appreciated by a faculty of ‘imagination.’” Classical estheticians regard art as mimetic or ‘imitative.’ If this imitation includes the imitation of men “not only

as they are but as they should be,” art can “serve as the core of a civic education” by providing “models of moral and political behavior.” Imagination, however, can do this only by threatening to break the audience’s hold on reality. Moderns thus tend either to dismiss art as daydreaming or conscript it for propaganda.

In the last two books of the *Politics*, Aristotle discusses the right place of education and culture in the best regime. Addressing himself to gentlemen—“potential or actual statesmen or legislators”—he also offers them “practical guidance . . . even and precisely in regimes where they do not constitute a ruling class in the political sense.” For such men, “musical culture” should have a “central place,” as it both “reinforces moral virtue and prudence” and “serves to moderate the claims of politics.” Thus Aristotle can present a glimpse of part of the best regime to certain nonphilosophers without causing their utter alienation from the regimes in which they live. Unlike some moderns, “Plato and Aristotle were unable to dispense with poetry . . . because they recognized that, given the limits imposed on man by nature, philosophy or reason could never be fully effective in political life.”

Five chapters follow Lord’s introduction. The first concerns the relation between education and politics in the best regime. Aristotelian education is political in the sense that citizens learn (by means of habituation) to be ruled and they also learn (by means of *logos*) to rule. Learning to be ruled consists of training the body and the passions; this continues until age twenty-one and encompasses no philosophy. (Indeed, “one is tempted to suggest that scientific or philosophic education in the best regime will be fundamentally a private affair . . .”) The public education of gentlemen should consist of letters, gymnastic, drawing and painting, and “music.” The latter’s purpose is “noble leisure”—not mere play but “a way of life or an activity that combines the seriousness of occupation with the pleasures of play.” Music education will alternate with gymnastic: Both will teach the courage required for the military duties of young citizens. Music education will also teach the noble leisure or noble pleasure of the mature citizen. “Music education is above all an education in moral virtue,” not philosophy. Moral virtue requires not theoretical but practical reason.

In the second chapter Lord examines the relation between music and practical reason. Aristotle commends “the enjoyment and judgment not so much of music itself as of the ‘decent characters and noble actions’ which music is able to represent.” While mere play causes us to forget pain and the purpose pain serves, noble leisure restores the individual with a view toward future exertion. It is prudent whereas play is childish. “[W]hat is most fundamental in music is its capacity to affect the character and the soul,” that is, its capacity for moral education. It does so by imitating and simultaneously encouraging its audience to imitate. Its power is not limited to children or young men but extends to the mature. And the “judgment” it forms is “not of those imitations as imitations [esthetics] but rather of the things they imitate—of ‘decent characters and noble actions.’”

In the third chapter Lord examines the relation between music and the pas-

sions, particularly the phenomenon of catharsis. All tunes and harmonies are “imitations of character” and therefore ethically important; “passion is a constituent element of the soul broadly understood.” Aristotle distinguishes between “enthusiastic” catharsis—the cure for a kind of madness—and the “normal enthusiasm” aroused by cathartic tunes, which is harmless and delightful to most men but does not bring catharsis to them. Tragic catharsis, however, is for normal men; it moderates those normal passions, pity and fear. It is not for all normal men. Noncitizens will hear the more extreme harmonies, particularly at their religious festivals. Tragic music is for citizens only.

Tragedy of course involves the verbal music of poetry as well as nonverbal harmonies. The fourth chapter concerns the relation between poetry and education. We remain in the realm of the passions, but language necessarily points to things beyond the passions. Tragic catharsis involves all passions associated with the experience of pain, including pity and fear. These passions have to do with *thymos* or spiritedness. Obviously, as a colleague of Plato, Aristotle knew of both the indispensability and the danger of *thymos*, which can guard reason or overthrow it. Tragic catharsis purifies the spirited passions of “their dangerous excesses,” thus moderating “spirited gentlemen” when they are at their most dangerous—at home, in peacetime, with no external enemies to fight. “The catharsis of anger will be brought about, not by anger, but by pity and fear.” Pity and fear will be aroused in the spirited gentlemen by dramatic imitation of the *harmartia* (tragic flaw or error) of heroes and of the destructive results of such error. Thus the gentlemen will view a man rather like themselves; while imitating the hero’s virtues they will wish to avoid his error. They will admire practical reason all the more. Comedy, too, can serve as a vehicle for spiritedness and for instruction against error. Only poetry combines universals and particulars in a way similar to the operation of practical reason. Thus it excels either philosophy or history in the education of gentlemen. “. . . Aristotle appears to presuppose what would be denied by the thinkers of early modernity—that prudent action involves and indeed is inseparable from moral virtue.” Lord does not explicitly elaborate on his choice of the word “appears.”

His final chapter, on the relation between politics and culture, does contain some suggestions in that regard, however. From “a certain point of view” one can “identify the actions deriving from moral and political virtue as the primary content of the leisured pastime” of gentlemen. From another, superior, point of view, moral and political action is necessary and useful but not truly noble. Culture, not moral and political education, is “the cultivation of the mind in a manner that is at once pleasant and serious or noble.” This may resemble the activity of philosophy, but Lord takes care not to allow us to confuse culture with philosophy. The “fundamental political fact” remains spiritedness—a species of the irrational. (Lord writes that the necessity for a foreign policy alone ensures this; one might add that even a ‘world state,’ were one possible, would involve it.) The gentlemen are and must remain spirited. At the same time, “most men are

somehow aware that political activity by itself cannot be the end of the best life"; one rules for the sake of rewards, including leisure and the "good things that are enjoyed by leisure." Yet most gentlemen can never engage in philosophy; their very spiritedness prevents it. Aristotle's recommendation for such men is "the leisured enjoyment of music and poetry." Good music and poetry can fortify moderation and justice (a word seldom seen during the course of Lord's argument) without weakening courage and endurance. The gentleman will not be a philosopher but a *philomythos*. He will share with the philosopher "a sense of awe or admiration for the noble and beautiful" but he will lack the philosopher's "sense of his own ignorance," his "desire to remedy it," and the "strength of mind" needed to remedy it. The *philomythos* "remains within the horizon of habit and convention." Most important, this magnanimous man will engage in politics while tolerating philosophy.

A classicist's knowledge of Greek culture, particularly Greek musical theory, embellish Lord's study. Combined with a sensitivity to the way Aristotle develops his argument as a *political* philosopher, this gives the book its admirable balance of erudition and insight.

Machiavelli's New Modes and Orders: A Study of the Discourses on Livy. By Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1979. 460 pp.: cloth, \$34.50.)

What responsibility has Machiavelli for modernity? Mansfield intends to show those readers who firmly intend to follow the argument. A firm intention to follow Mansfield's argument requires what might be called 'active' reading; the reader must "find a point for a story, or a cap for a point," rather than passively wait for Mansfield to spell things out. In this Mansfield almost follows Machiavelli's own technique: "he will not reveal his intention, but will leave it to be uncovered by the potential princes whom he addresses according to their competence." Mansfield is somewhat more 'open' than Machiavelli, but a measured interpretive openness can be its own defense: few readers will follow a daring *and* complex interpretation. Mansfield writes of Machiavelli, "boldness hides his boldness, for men are not ready to believe that a bold man who seems bold is bolder than he seems"—even, one might add, if this boldness is exhibited by a commentator.

Mansfield presents a textual commentary on Machiavelli's own commentary on Livy's book. As he follows the many turns of Machiavelli's argument as it proceeds—parts marching, parts stalking—from chapter to chapter, he shows how what seems a defense of liberty in fact excuses tyranny, what seems to commend patriotism in fact merely uses it. "Since [Machiavelli's] fortune is broader than Italy's, indeed 'all fortune,' 'all forces' are his." Or: "Quoting the Bible once, and in that quotation rendering God's motive as the motive of a human

king, is Machiavelli's striking way of saying that the new prince must imitate God rather than obey Him." Thus we see a blasphemous interpretation of the *imitatio Christi* commended by theologians. "Machiavelli not only sends out captains of his own, but also he himself is a captain sent out by the preceding prince," the Prince of Darkness. "Machiavelli is determined to laugh at everything," Mansfield notes near the beginning of the book.

At the same time, the universalist and historical/teleological character of Christianity attacks the far less optimistic view of human life seen in the classics. Machiavelli adopts—adapts—the universalism and 'progressivism' of Christianity while denying the religious insistence on transcendency. "One may suggest that Machiavelli learned these new remedies from Christianity, which after all, with its own methods but in a way contrary to its own intention, will irreversibly change the world." With Christianity, Machiavelli teaches that nature as we know it shall be conquered; he will attempt to begin doing so, of course, without the assistance of the Christian God. Mansfield notes that the Italian word for "election" means "creation," a fact that can be manipulated one way or another by one who writes in Italian. Generally speaking, "creation" itself is said by Machiavelli to be an affair of malleability.

Book II of the *Discourses* shows that "Machiavelli, who initiated the modern enterprise of expanding man's control over nature, was farsighted enough to seek a remedy for its success." In the course of this seeking, Machiavelli discards an older political science:

Machiavelli does not use an equivalent for "regime" (*politeia*), the notion which is the heart of classical political science. His "modes and orders" lead through the domestic politics of republics and principalities to test the limits of human empire.

Before conquering his enemies—the religions and the classical philosophers—Machiavelli divides them, setting them against each other. The radical character of the conquest he intends may be seen in this passage, outlining nothing less than a new epistemology:

[Machiavelli] thought it necessary to drop the assumptions that nature or God takes account of human choice, and that some conformity exists between human speech (which is the mode of articulating choice) and nature or God as intelligible by speech. Choosing must come to choice, with firm spirit and sudden execution; then words must be accommodated to the deed.

Mansfield's account of the central chapters of the central Book of the *Discourses* is therefore aptly titled, "The Modern Army." Mansfield draws attention to the discovery that the word "soul" never appears in the *Discourses* or, for that matter, *The Prince*. The 'lost' soul is replaced by the human body and the calculating, willful human mind. One might go so far as to say that the body of the Christ is replaced by the bodies and minds that comprise the modern army, no organization of Christian soldiers. The central argument of the central section of the cen-

tral chapter of the central Book of the *Discourses* concerns the limited risks taken by the captain of the forces that oppose Christianity. Some pages later, Machiavelli takes the “old man,” the *vetus homo* of Christian tradition, who is ‘of the earth, earthy,’ and uses him for a new purpose. Or one can say that Machiavelli builds a new, better kind of fortress: “a book so devised that it gathers ‘sons’ in friendly and enemy countries yet without making them so dependent on an authoritative text that they cannot fend for themselves or learn from experience.” Because Fortune has “no end or design beyond showing its power,” devotees of Machiavelli’s book can choose unhesitatingly to conquer Fortune, without consulting or supplicating Fortune. To impose human force upon nonhuman force is the new meaning of ‘humanity.’ Belief in the progress that requires a constant spiritedness guards against its own success by refusing to rest satisfied with present circumstances, whatever they are. Thus Machiavelli requires a sort of perpetual youthfulness, both in regard to youth’s spiritedness and its malleability.

In Book III Machiavelli more thoroughly considers the relation between domestic and foreign policy. This “disarmed captain with a spiritual army . . . transcends the distinction between foreign and domestic affairs because he is not devoted to any one ‘public’ or state.” The ‘spirituality’ of this army is in fact not spiritual but spirited; Machiavelli’s philosopher-prince is more princely than philosophic (in the Socratic sense). The Machiavellian philosopher’s true homeland is this world, not the world of speech or ideas. This follows, of course, from Machiavellian epistemology, which might be described as less noetic than technical, employing speech not dialectically but conspiratorially. Without a “standard of natural right by which to improve or instruct existing morality, [Machiavelli’s] politics is more rather than less dependent on convention”; it makes new conventions instead of freeing men from conventions. Unlike the classical political philosophers, Machiavelli depends upon the political success of his pupils. He thus takes a decisive step, perhaps the decisive step, toward historicism. He attempts to have others take this step:

Machiavelli causes men to think sinful thoughts, each according to his capacity. To cause men to sin in thought or intention is to put them under threat of God’s punishment, and thus impel them to face that punishment or join Machiavelli’s conspiracy.

Machiavelli ‘forgets’ Christian grace in a chapter Mansfield compares to “a long drink of poison.” This might be contrasted to a Christian sacrament.

“Machiavelli has substituted a necessity that can be managed to unite the new and the many—ambition—for a necessity that divides prudent men from peoples—religion.” This again comports with ‘progress’ and betrays the tendency toward an egalitarianism that Machiavelli himself despises. Machiavelli would replace the worship of Jesus with the worship, however unwitting, of Machiavelli. (“Moderation means staying out of sight; it does not mean taking moderate actions.”)

An obvious criticism of *Machiavelli’s New Modes and Orders* would be that

Mansfield is too much *in sight*, too ingeniously overinterpreting the spirited Florentine. Mansfield responds with a challenge: “Anyone who thinks it possible to exercise his ingenuity with a consistent interpretation of an inconsistent text, and not be caught, should demonstrate that he can do it.” It might be added that anyone who produces a consistent, new interpretation of an inconsistent text has thereby ‘revolutionized’ that text. Those who would deny the accuracy of Mansfield’s scholarship—and before him, Strauss’s—must then credit the perhaps even more discomfiting presence of original thought. So far, such critics have neither “caught” nor credited Strauss and Mansfield.

Rousseau’s Social Contract: The Design of the Argument. By Hilail Gildin. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1983. viii + 206 pp.: cloth, \$22.50.)

Rousseau’s apparent self-contradictions frustrated his readers from the beginning. Gildin quotes the philosopher’s reply to the complaints: “There are still more readers who ought to learn how to read than authors who ought to learn how to be consistent.” Gildin shows his own readers how to find the way through one section of Rousseau’s labyrinth, the section titled *The Social Contract*. Gildin’s six chapters exhibit all due concision: “I sometimes found that the same point arose more than once in the course of the argument,” he writes. “The repetition has been permitted to remain when it serves to clarify the point.” As in any labyrinth, some near-circular paths lead to the center while other near-circular paths lead to dead ends. Gildin keeps us on our way to the center while noting the dead ends.

One of Rousseau’s shortest paths leads to the blank wall of modern ‘radicalism.’ According to those who camp in its shade, Rousseau celebrates ‘nature’ and calls for the unimpeded expression (speech alone would be too restrictive) of the ‘general will,’ that is, the uninhibited desires of ‘the people.’ Gildin discards this bean sprout of a sentiment in his first chapter:

Rousseau does not promise to show men how to win release from their political bonds and regain their original freedom. He promises to show them how their chains can be made legitimate. Whether men are rulers or ruled, legitimate slavery is the best that political society has to offer them.

Legitimate slavery, that is to say political freedom, yields preservation and prosperity, a kind of happiness for the mass of men who are equals.

Political freedom consists of obedience to the “general will,” which is not natural but a result of that artifice, the “social contract.” This obedience will not lead to tyranny because “Just as the will of a private individual has that private individual’s interest or good for its object, so the general will has the general or common interest as its object, and what is not of universal concern is not a proper

subject for the sovereign's commands." The most general or common interest of all is self-preservation; thus no genuine expression of the general will can yield rule by terror.

To arrange this in practice and not only in theory, one needs the wisdom to establish laws that will supplement the individual's desire for self-preservation with the public-spiritedness that preserves a nation. Enter "the legislator," whose existence belies the myth of Rousseau's egalitarianism. The legislator has "the desire, one might almost say, for divine glory," and his "most important task" is to shape unwritten 'laws' of opinion. These are not really laws at all because they are not acts of the general will.

Notwithstanding this, the myth of Rousseau's egalitarianism remains important. In order for a people with well-founded laws and opinions to avoid corruption as long as possible, they must resist the snares of would-be rulers. At the same time, Rousseau sees what his epigoni do not see: For the sake of individual and national preservation, the sovereign people must obey the lawful commands of their government. Thus "the people must be too weak distributively to disobey the government and too strong collectively to be disobeyed by it"—no easy thing to arrange. Gildin devotes his longest chapter to this problematic relationship.

"The fairness of the general will," he writes, "where that fairness is understood as derivative from its equal directedness to the preservation, security, and freedom of each citizen, and the perception of that fairness by the members of the city, are at the center of Rousseau's teaching regarding the sound political order." The general will is not the same as justice; Rousseau means it to be justice's "reliable political embodiment." To maintain the institutions that defend it, the general will founds, first, a "provisional democracy." "Democracy is the only form of government that can be brought into being by a simple act of the general will, because where all govern no decisions need be made regarding who is to govern"; that is, by founding a democracy the general will avoids becoming a *particular* will, a will that directs *these* men to govern and not *those*. Were the general will to designate specific men as rulers it would be unjust, as no one knows or cares more about the individual's preservation, security, and freedom than the individual himself. Rousseau's "last word" on government in *The Social Contract* endorses mixed government, "with pronounced democratic features," to be founded by the provisional democratic government.

Still, individualism buttressed by pronouncedly democratic institutions needs a source of cohesion. Rousseau therefore prefers the economic communalism of agriculture to the institutionalized selfishness of commerce. Perhaps more important, civil religion must endow the laws with "a sacred character." Rousseau emphasizes the civil character of this religion; with Machiavelli, he deplores the "divided sovereignty" that noncivil religion causes. Gildin carefully distinguishes Rousseau's civil religion from "ancient national religion," as seen in Sparta, Jerusalem, and Rome.

Ancient national religion as well as ancient slavery made possible a republican spirit far more powerful than any spirit one could hope to establish in their absence. A political life based on Rousseau's principles of political right will be more just and more humane than political life in ancient times but it will not be as heroic. Something that it would be wrong even to try to recapture is therefore irretrievably lost to political life in modern times according to Rousseau.

What replaces ancient religion and ancient philosophy for Rousseau, as distinguished from those for whom he legislates? Gildin observes that Rousseau's most political book nonetheless begins with "I" and ends with "me." Gildin directs us to "the writings of Rousseau the subject of which is Rousseau himself." Thus Gildin leaves us closer to the center of Rousseau's doctrine.

Rousseau's State of Nature: An Interpretation of the Discourse on Inequality. By Marc F. Plattner. (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1979. 137 pp.: cloth, \$9.50.)

According to Rousseau in his *Confessions*, the *Discourse on Inequality* reveals his thoughts "with the greatest boldness not to say audacity." Nonetheless, one must note that Rousseau's maximum boldness never entirely abandons certain defenses, not to say camouflage. Plattner carefully guides us to Rousseau's argument's as it were natural state.

Plattner divides his book into six chapters. In the first he describes the paradoxical character of Rousseau's political philosophy, the combination of individualism and communitarianism that marks the political 'left' to this day. Plattner rightly identifies nature as the central concern of the *Discourse*; Rousseau derives individuality (directly) and political community (indirectly) from nature as he conceives it.

In the second chapter, Plattner disposes of false paradoxes in the *Discourse*—those set to frustrate enemies and to confuse the innocent. Books, including theologically authoritative books, can lie; nature does not. Indeed, nature does not speak at all; in the third chapter, Plattner discusses the problem of deriving human speech and the society it supports from subrational nature. Evolution based upon accident appears to explain this, particularly as one notices that "accident" can only mean necessity in a nonteleological and a-theistic cosmos. "Perfectibility," according to Rousseau, results from "the chance workings of mechanical causation." "In short, man's humanity is the product of his history," and Rousseau "is the first philosopher to indicate that the modern scientific view of man's origins and man's nature must lead" to the conclusion that "man as we know him is a *historical* being."

This teaching makes morality problematic. The fourth chapter contains Plattner's assessment of Rousseauan morality in the light of Rousseauan nature, and he concludes that human 'goodness' in Rousseau means animality—man's exist-

tence as “just one more part of the blind mechanism of nature.” Plattner’s most controversial interpretation here should be his argument that Rousseau presents man’s natural pity or compassion for other men more as a guard against critics than as an innate characteristic of humanness.

The fifth chapter contains Plattner’s attempt to capture and dissect the Rousseauan paradox after pursuing it through the various subpolitical fields. Politically, Rousseauan nature constitutes a thoroughgoing denial of the right to rule. This makes agreement or contract authority’s only real basis. Agreement or contract constitutes the basis not of ‘goodness,’ which is natural, but of political morality or right. Right *denatures* man, and sound political institutions serve right.

However, Plattner’s Rousseau recognizes that the complete political conquest of nature cannot occur. The natural desire for self-preservation remains “the chief principle of human conduct.” Individuality runs deeper than community. “Full citizenship in a good political society is merely the best that can be done for the great mass of men to minimize the evils of the unnatural condition to which they have been condemned by history.” Yet if “Man becomes a moral and rational being by chance and not by nature” and, “Therefore, no moral law or ‘law of reason’ can be a law of nature,” one must ask Plattner’s Rousseau: What has become of the apparent identity of chance and nature required by the principle of mechanical causation? What is this ‘history’ that does not quite rule this ‘nature’?

Plattner concludes by describing civil society as “an *accidental* necessity”—a phrase that well expresses the final paradox of his Rousseau. Accidental necessity, one may think, is the logical outcome of egalitarianisms: the denial of natural hierarchy and nearly the denial of any natural order. It is a perplexing denial. As Plattner observes, it can lead toward attempts to ‘perfect’ politics or it can lead away from politics altogether. But the question remains: if nature and human nature are inchoate, who or what shapes them? If the legislator shapes political men and the philosopher escapes politics, how do legislators and philosophers come into existence?

Plattner’s finest achievement is to help us question Rousseau with care.