

## PART 9: ORIGINAL CONSERVATIVES

At first, in the middle 1700s, Conservatives did not oppose all Liberal ideas and did not oppose thinking through economic, political, and social relations to see how they worked, if they worked well or poorly, and if humans could improve on what we already have through use of our Reason. Conservatives had brains and used them. "Make sense" made sense to them too. Conservatives knew fairness, knew that institutions should be as fair as possible without undermining the greater cohesion that made social life possible, saw that some institutions were unfair by any sane standards, and were willing to work to improve fairness and sense. Conservatives had hearts and used those too. You might ask yourself if this is still true of modern Conservatives. If not, why not?

The acknowledged founder of modern Conservatives, a great person, legislator, and thinker, is Edmund Burke, who flourished in England from the middle 1700s to early 1800s. As a Member of Parliament and in other roles in the government, Burke opposed repressive British policy in America. He sympathized with the colonists and felt they should have a voice in Parliament. He understood that "taxation without representation" was silly and not English. He knew that forcing colonists not to produce finished goods and to buy only English finished goods must cause unrest. He knew the arguments of Franklin, Adams, Hamilton, Payne, and Jefferson. He lamented that England and America could not reach better accord. In contrast, Burke hated the French Revolution although he also understood its roots. He predicted the horror that would come and he brilliantly analyzed the rising Terror. He did not live to see Napoleon or the wars in Europe but I think he would have understood and lamented those. The later evil in Russia, China, Cuba, Cambodia, Burma, North Korea, and Venezuela would have drawn a long sad "Of course, what did you expect?"

Revolutions have tended much more to chaos and terror than to replacing old institutions with better new institutions. Neither Liberals nor Conservatives have given good accounts of why. Conservatives have given a better account. They base their account on falling away from tried-and-proven institutions, perhaps God-given institutions. To rely on Reason alone when we should rely on a mix of Reason, social compromise as evident in institutions, what works as evident in institutions, and God's-Grace-in-social-institutions, is a clear example of the Sin of Pride, the sin of worshipping our own egos and intellects. To rely on Reason alone inevitably leads to a flowering of crazy ideas, many of which are also bad or evil, we will not be able to tell good ideas from bad, and will move toward bad ideas through their promise of power and our lust for power. There is much truth to the Conservative argument.

It is not all true. We must use Reason more than Conservatives would allow and we should be critical of tradition more than Conservatives would allow. We can allow a flowering of ideas without necessarily succumbing to the lure of bad ideas and evil power. It is hard but it can be done. Mao Zedong of China failed at this task but we don't have to fail. At the same time, I enjoy tradition more than most critical Liberals. You need to use Reason to decide what is best about arguments of Liberals and Conservatives, not only in the points given in this essay but in the points of the Culture Wars in America and in general everywhere.

Conservatives knew that any particular social relation or social institution, such as the country church, might not be the best solution to social needs and might not lead to the best imaginable outcome. It might not make the best imaginable sense. We can all imagine something better. We can all imagine doing better than the boss – ask anybody who has ever been a student, been a teacher, worked in a business firm, hospital, or government.

(1) But what we imagine might not really be better than what we have. If we put into place what we imagine, likely we would find it did not work as well as we had hoped and was not the best solution. As soon as we have the new thing, we then compare it to another second new thing in our imagination that we might have, and find the (now old) first new thing lacking. The community center does not always do better than churches, schools, parks, playgrounds, small shops, streets, and wild lands used to do. Maybe it does sometimes. We have to be able to say when so and when not so – before we change. If we were wrong about the benefits of the new, we have to be able to backtrack and recover something now lost. None of these tasks are easy.

(2) To get what we imagine entails destroying what we already have and building something new. It entails physical, social, cultural, and psychological destruction and rebuilding. It entails chaos, crime, and loss of old benefits during the transition, all of which add to cost. (This is why Shiva, Brahman, and Vishnu work in tandem in Hinduism.) The non-monetary costs of rebuilding usually are more than we could imagine, with unforeseen results, and the monetary costs always go three times over budget.

(3) The new thing that we make might bring more benefit than the old thing that we have now but the cost of making the new plus the benefit of the new might not equal the benefit that we get already from the old. It is not worth spending ten dollars to get twenty dollars when you already have eighteen dollars. It is not worth ending the Methodist Church-and-church to get an Episcopalian Church-and-church, or Roman Catholic, or Presbyterian.

(4) The new might not really be what you expect. Suppose we destroy all Women's Studies Centers in the United States and replace them with Gender Studies Centers in which it is mandatory PC (politically correct) that half the courses must be about men. Suppose we destroy all Black Studies Centers (African American) and replace them with Ethnic Studies Centers in which the number of courses about a race (ethnic group) can be taught only in proportion to that race in America. Gender and Racial fairness are desirable but at what cost?

(5A) The most common and most powerful Conservative argument: The old ways and institutions are the result of a long process of change and adjustment. The old ways did not arise from the fiat of the rich and powerful alone. Even if old ways first arose that way, they were modified by adjustment and compromise to be better than when they started. The old ways became established through good compromises. They have been tried, modified, and retried. They are not fair in all regards. They do not treat all people equally. Some people benefit more. But almost always everybody does benefit, nobody loses all the time, and nobody loses overall. This is what Parliament is like. This is what most churches

are like. Most local schools in America were like this before 1980. When we settle on computerized education, not as the result of any single plan but through many fits, starts, reversals, adjustments, and compromises, this is likely what we will have. Why destroy something that already works and already gives benefit so as to try something that will cost much socially and financially and that likely won't give nearly the benefit that you think it will?

(5B) The following point can be given separately and does not need (5A). But it does often come with (5A), especially in original Conservative thought. When the two arguments come together, they are quite strong, stronger than each individually.

Human societies are not put together like a stack of rocks where each part is isolated from other parts and does not depend on the others. You can replace one rock with another and it would not matter. In human society, each part, subgroup, operation, institution, and most human acts, depend on all others. Human societies are more like a living organism or like a giant family.

Whether a human society was built through changes, proposals, and adjustments, or not, it still comes all-of-a-piece with mutual dependence. A human society comes all-of-a-piece with mutual dependence especially if it was built over time with many mutual adjustments. Because most societies were made over time, we should think of human society in terms of all-of-a-piece with mutual dependence.

If you change anything that comes all-of-a-piece with mutual dependence, then you are far more likely to do harm than good, you are far more likely to get into trouble than to help. So you must be unusually clever before you change the pieces of human society, including institutions, subgroups, relations, socio-economic class, religion, and human acts. You have better leave it all alone until you are amazingly sure you will not do more harm than good.

The idea that Liberals have of making sense does not often take all-of-a-piece, mutual dependence, and coming-together-through-mutual-adjustment into account. It is easy to look at something in isolation like a church and say that it does not make sense. But that would be wrong. It makes perfect sense in its situation. You have to understand and use "making sense" that way. If you take away the church, or change it, then you change not only the church but the whole situation, and that is much more likely to go bad than good.

Maybe an American example helps. The original Electoral College was the result of much experience and compromise. As time went along, people got dissatisfied with the College and wanted to elect the President through direct popular vote. This seems to make sense. But, in changing the College to better represent popular vote, mostly by binding delegates, people opened up the College to conniving, to not electing the President by popular vote, and electing a President who is not best. Because the Electoral College was supposed to represent the popular vote but did not, we got George W. Bush instead of Al Gore and Donald Trump instead of Hilary Clinton. By not paying attention to the Electoral College in its proper situation, by forcing it to make sense in wrong terms, we got the opposite of what we intended. What if we insisted on going back to the past so no church ever could have women priests or insisted on

Mike Polioudakis, from "Democrats and Republicans", Part 9

going back to the future so all churches that wished state recognition and tax-exempt status must allow women priests and must actually have some women priests?

"The Warden" by Anthony Trollope is a good short novel on how this backwards evil happens so often, especially in societies where people try to do good by forcing situations to make sense in their own Liberal terms.

In original Conservative thought, seeing society as an organic whole did not block seeing the importance of individuals and changes. Seeing society as an organic whole did not diminish seeing how individuals built and changed institutions. Individual innovation is a part of coming together and staying together as a whole. It contributed to adjustments in the past that created the whole that we see today. Original Conservatives appreciated the action of aristocracy in making the Magna Charta, and they appreciated how the Magna Chart served England well. Original Conservatives certainly would have extolled the changes that Jesus made, and explained how the changes served as the foundation of a big integrated Church and big integrated communities. Even so, don't leap into changes.

The Conservative view is beautiful, appealing, and largely true. But it is not all true and often enough it is not even mostly true. Sometimes it is better to look at society as a whole and to see how the parts contribute to the whole. At other times it is better to look at society as made and remade by individuals acting in their own interests and interacting to make and remake institutions. Sometimes it is better to think of individuals as determined by social history and society and at other times it is better to look at individuals as autonomous, with free choice, making society, and making what will become history. When individuals make and remake society, sometimes they lead to goodness and sometimes they lead to badness.

I am not sure how modern Conservatives look at relations of individuals to institutions and to whole societies, account for changes brought by individuals, and account for the growth of institutions. Their thought is confusing because they want to have it both ways ad hoc when convenient without really considering which way tends to preponderate, when, and why. They do not have a general idea of the relation of individuals to society or of change and society. They are hard to pin down because they don't want to be pinned down so they can say what suits them. Modern Conservatives extol individual action in the free market, extol Reagan, Thatcher, and G.W. Bush, and stress choice. But they also insist that individuals should not change institutions such as by allowing women priests, gay marriage, allowing women free choice in pregnancy, or regulating a market even if it works badly and does not serve public good. Some Conservatives want to make all Americans into their view of a Christian even when the other Americans have their own old religions. This hypocrisy makes modern Conservatives look bad.

Looking at society as integrated, all-of-a-piece, with mutual dependence, is called "holism", regardless of how a society got to be that way. Looking at society in terms of the interactions of individuals is called "reductionism". See above. A good critic can look both ways, and appreciate both arguments even as they apply to the same arena. A good critic can guess well about when we should not do something and when we should. A really good critic can pick the argument that shows the best path to most morality

and most benefit. True deep Liberals and true deep Conservatives should be able to see the value in both arguments and should be able to apply them to all cases even if they are not as adept as a gifted critic. If you can't see it both ways even if you are not adept at seeing it both ways, then you are not a true Liberal or true Conservative. But cultivating the skill of appreciating both ways is quite hard, and in practice, critics and social scientists habitually take one stand or the other.

(6) Some change is inevitable. Change is part of life. Conservatives accept change. The old things that we have now developed to be as they are because of accumulated changes in the past. But we don't have to change quickly. The good things that we have now didn't get to be good quickly. Good change happens slowly even if it starts out as a brilliant idea. Ponder suggested changes. Take a few steps in the right direction. See what happens. If it looks like the change will be good, keep it. Try a few more steps. Yes, some changes have to be big and sudden but most changes don't.

(7) Just because an institution, relation, or act might not be as beneficial as an alternative that we can dream up does not mean the thing does not have a value that is hard to specify, hard to imagine. Things are beautiful, both natural things and human-made things. Even institutions are beautiful. We should not make changes that destroy those things just because we can imagine something that might be a bit more entertaining. Bach and Mozart are just as beautiful now as they were hundreds of years ago. We cannot give them up because we now have Bartok and jazz. Christmas is beautiful even if it has been commercialized almost to death. We can't give it up because we no longer believe Jesus was God, Jesus saved the world, and Jesus was born on 25 December 0000. Jazz is still beautiful. Classic rock of the 1950s and 1960s is still beautiful. Churches are beautiful even if they do make a mess of downtown traffic and parking. Muslims fanatics exploded Buddhist relics that were a thousand years older than Islam and that did nobody any harm. Would you tear down a big beautiful mosque in your city even after all the Muslims had left your city?

All of this makes sense. It is not foolish. It is good advice. It is worth taking to heart.

All the institutions that radicals made in the 1930s through 1970s are now "old hat". Ex-radicals now hold on to what once was new as the current tradition. They give the same reasons to keep the once-new-now-old institutions that Conservatives gave in 1965 when the ex-radicals tore down the past. So it was, and so it shall be for a while to come.

(8) Considerations of cost-benefit and of value do not apply to everything human and to everything in nature, for two reasons.

(8a) Some things we don't want to evaluate that way, mostly because of moral considerations that we wish to place beyond cost-benefit and value. Suppose we could prove that the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts were not cost effective, not even when we take character building into account. Do we still want to get rid of them? Suppose we could prove that private charity was not cost-effective, not even if we take character building into account. Do we want to forbid people from donating and volunteering?

(8b) Some things just are, especially human institutions. Sometimes they are net cost-beneficial and have a net value and sometimes they are not. Rather than get rid of them the first time they slide below the cost-benefit line, we might as well keep them and enjoy them as much as we can. Only if they cause problems consistently for a long time, should we consider what might be better. Sometimes playing baseball is cost-beneficial and sometimes it is not. Do we get rid of baseball the first time it drops below zero in our ongoing cost-benefit monitor? Sometimes public schools are cost-beneficial and sometimes not. Do we get rid of public schools in case some of them drop below zero in our cost-benefit monitor? Some particular churches are not cost-beneficial. Do we get rid of all churches because of those? Too often families are not cost-beneficial. Do we get rid of families and substitute barracks for children? If we are worried, we can improve what we have without ending its innate character. I would guess that most academic departments are not usually cost effective. Should we get rid of all those departments and subjects? Should we finally end formal study of sports, literature, religion, art, philosophy, and anthropology?

Would you pave paradise to put up a parking lot (Joni Mitchell)? Would you tear down Notre Dame in Paris to put up a fast food restaurant even if you could argue that Parisians and France would benefit more? Would you cut all the redwoods?

The idea that "human institutions and natural things often just are, and we should let them be unless we have good cause to interfere and destroy" is quite important. Keep it in mind.

It is important to keep all these arguments in mind for their own sake. It is also important to keep them in mind because Conservatives accuse Liberals of ignoring morality and the-simple-being-of-old-human-institutions yet Conservatives vigorously lobby for cost-benefit accounting and happily overlook morality when that suits them. Both Liberals and Conservatives apply cost-benefit, value, morality, and "simple being", arguments when it suits them and deny similar kinds of arguments on the other side when that suits them.

(9) Conservatives understood Adam Smith's argument and knew its implication that human Reason does not directly lead to the best good even if human Reason indirectly leads to great good. But they did not use this argument directly at first.

(10) When Conservatives argued that human Reason did not lead directly to the greatest good in making the right institutions, they were likely to argue God's Reason did. Institutions turn out well, and human will-and-intellect contribute to good institutions indirectly, because God designed it so. If God designed good institutions, even indirectly through human interaction, then why should mere humans tear them down? To think we can imagine better is an act of pride, the original sin. We in 2018 might not like this view but it was cogent in 1800. Now we would say that humans indirectly lead to the best good through the market or through social adjustments but our feeling is the same as if we used God.

(11) As mentioned above, Liberals tended to see all human nature as a projection of their ideal self, as rational, able to assess a situation fully, able to see all future results, cherishing goodness, and able to

make the best choice for the good of the self and for society as a whole. The most beneficial society comes of free individuals exercising free choice and freely interacting to form stable beneficial patterns. In reality, people are not like that and society is not like that. Conservatives tended to see a more complete, bigger, and nuanced view of human nature and of individual-social relations and society. For Conservatives, society is more than the sum of the parts, and more beneficial than individual planning could make, but not because of individual strategies. Their picture was idealized and not fully real but still more realistic.

(12a) The large majority of people are driven not primarily by Reason but by many sentiments. Reason does play a role but it is only one role among many and not often the dominant role. As David Hume noted, Reason can tell us how to get something done effectively (means) but it cannot tell us what we want done (ends) and it cannot motivate us to actually do it (drives). The general trick is to get people to feel the right passions to the right extent so they help society rather than hurt society. Part of the trick is to make sure people do not feel bad passions such as hatred toward society or toward the ruling class. The specific trick is to get particular groups, parts of society, to feel correct passions in the correct amounts for their place in society and so insure each group contributes much to society.

(12b) Nobody has a complete perfect aptitude for everything. Some people are better at some things than other people. Training makes a difference in both skills and character. Still, a good teacher has to see the natural aptitudes of students, develop those, and not try to make particular people into what they are not, or what they are not as adept at as others. A good teacher picks students to train into the roles that are best for them and for society as a whole. Few people are predominantly rational, like the Liberal view of humans, able to assess all situations accurately and able to make the best choices. We want our leaders to come from the people who are largely rational but not entirely rational.

(12c) At any one time, society does not need many good leaders. It needs a small amount of truly adept leaders, like the one leader George Washington or the one leader Winston Churchill. Not all people who have some aptitude for leadership can, or should, actually become the leaders. Because we need only a limited number of good leaders, all the good leaders that we might need are as likely to come from the old aristocracy as any other class, as did Churchill and, in effect, Washington and Jefferson. We cannot give all people the training that might bring out their leadership ability but we can give it to enough of the aristocrats so that they can provide our leaders. Maintaining an aristocracy and training it well is as good a way to get good leaders as any other way and likely better than general education.

(12d) The same is true of religious ability and religious leadership. Everybody has to get some religious training so, unlike the limited aristocracy, with religion we can look for religious leaders among a wider group of people. Besides, the duty of religious leaders is almost entirely to guide people rather than to make decisions under national stress so we need not expect the same qualities of leadership in religious people as with political leaders.

(12e) We want our leaders, religious and political, to be largely rational but not entirely rational because we want our leaders to feel some passions such as patriotism, love of justice, and mercy. We want them

to have family connections so they know what family passion feels like. We want them to have general connections to their fellows so they know what friendship and loyalty to persons feels like.

(12f) There is nothing wrong with giving general education to the general public and nothing wrong with spotting and training people of unusual ability from among the non-aristocracy for their aptitudes including leadership in the particular youth in truly exception, in fact, this is a good practice; but we need not expect our leaders to come from among the non-aristocracy.

(12g) Thomas Jefferson did not envision all MEN (no women) as able to lead but only a few, which he saw as the natural aristocracy. Not even all men in a democracy were able to pick leaders. Only select men could pick leaders. The general public helped pick the men who picked the leaders. That is the theory behind the Electoral College. Although it comes from men we now consider Liberals, it carries a big dose of Conservative thinking and can be taken as a model of the correct useful mix of Liberal and Conservative. I agree with this position.

(13) At first, Conservatives were hostile to business. Read this section slowly and let it sink in because it is the opposite of what people think now. Conservatives saw business, its people, its docks, factories, warehouses, mills, markets, pollution, ugly workers, and ghettos much as Tolkien saw Saruman and Orcs in "Lord of the Rings", much as we see Imperial storm troopers. Business caused all the problems with social change and caused crazy social theories and crazy schemes. Business supported Liberal ideas and thinkers. Business, with its disorder, and false promise of order through the market, was tearing apart a coherent beautiful agrarian society that had stood from before the Romans, before Jesus. Business people saw themselves as the new aristocrats and they did not respect old aristocrats. Business people usually belonged to churches other than good official churches. Business people did not understand or respect anything old or godly. Business people, through Cromwell, had tried to destroy the monarchy and in 1789 it looked as if they were at it again. The ravages of business could be withstood only with a strong king, lords, and Church, and a loyal citizenry. It is important to get this idea and hold it because the situation reversed later on.

(14) Original Conservatives knew the value of free individuals and individual free choice, both intrinsic moral value and value for society. Conservatives would have liked to give individuals as much free action as possible without undermining the stability of society and the goodness that comes of society. They would have liked to channel adept people into the occupations that would produce the most good and would have liked to take inept people out of positions of responsibility and authority. But you can't have perfection overnight. Continuity and stability have their value too. Without a reliable framework within which individuals can exercise free choice, receive the benefits of their work, and go to positions that they like, then free choice and action has no value, moral or practical. Individuals cannot be free apart from a social framework. To achieve that framework, individuals have to give up some freedom. This is not a paradox, it does not defy solution, and it does not mean that any compromise has to be a hidden betrayal of individual freedom. Originally this idea of a trade-off between freedom and needed framework was a Liberal argument (from Hobbes and Locke) but it served to bolster the Conservative side as well. Conservatives sought to find the best balance of individual freedom, free choice, and the

results, with an inherited tested true reliable framework. In this best balance, people could keep as much of the benefit of free action as possible and society-as-a-whole could show the most benefit both from itself and from the actions of free individuals.

The best balance is not something that we can think ourselves into immediately. Remember from both Smith and Burke that individual Reason is not as adept as interaction and history. The balance that we have now may be about as close as we can get, at least in Western European nations and in America. Whatever gain we think we get from changing toward an imagined better balance of individual freedom and social framework might not be worth the cost of the change. A change in the balance must be approached cautiously and slowly.

(15) The simple business-Liberal answer to this balance issue was "the free market" and "total individual freedom"; but original Conservatives, and any sensible people, knew that was not the real answer. In this issue, I think sensible Conservatives such as Burke and sensible Liberals such as Locke, Smith, Hume, Franklin, Jefferson, and Washington would have agreed. You need a lot more than the market.

Conservatives face a problem with, on the one hand, free individuals, free choice, and the free market versus, on the other hand, morality, stability, religion, and social good that cannot come of individual choice without a framework. Modern Conservatives, and modern Liberals, jump between the two poles without much sense except political expediency, usually short-term expediency. Modern Conservatives embrace the simplistic once-Liberal answer when it suits political expediency.

The simplistic old-Liberal answer involves a view of human nature that Conservatives would have, and should have, rejected. When Conservatives embrace that simplistic once-Liberal free market, they have to embrace a simplistic view of human nature as well, one that Burke rejected. Modern Conservatives have to pretend all people are always the best judges of their welfare and the welfare of society-as-a-whole, and never need any guidance from tradition, institutions such as Church (Mosque or Temple), or honest politicians, and cannot be duped by unscrupulous politicians and business people. All choice is good choice, and more choice is always better. This view contrasts with what Conservatives usually say about the need for a social framework. No original Conservative, or original sensible Liberal, would accept this view, especially not in exchange for short-term political gain. There are limits to hypocrisy.

Liberals also bounce between the two views of human nature, using whatever serves their short-term political expediency. People are autonomous sentient beings who can easily know what they wish to do and can easily set about doing it if not obstructed, and people should be totally free, yet we desperately need Liberal politicians to guide us and protect us, usually by limiting the actions of business, limiting our choices, and giving us addictive handouts.

(16) In 1750, the aristocracy and the king were not merely a part of government, they were the whole state. I think Louis XIV of France said "L'etat, c'est moi" (The state, it is me). Whatever interference and schemes they devised in their interests also were theoretically in the interests of the state and people. Of course, Conservatives knew this stance was not true, and could tell a good program from a bad. But

Conservatives did not have anything for or against a state program just because it was a program, it was from the state, or from the king and aristocracy. They would assess programs as programs regardless of the origin, they did criticize older programs and they did support some good new programs. Respecting both power and tradition, they did tend to accept existing institutions simply because they were existing and-or had come from the king, aristocracy, or clergy, but original Conservatives were not rigidly bound for or against that source of institutions.

Unfortunately, at the time, the theory of government programs was something called "Mercantilism", into which I cannot go here much, and which was wrong. Mercantilism, rather than aristocracy as such, was a large part of what Liberals and free market economists revolted against. Basically, Mercantilism promoted all programs that increased the wealth of the government in obvious terms such as hoards of gold or big plots of land (not necessarily the wealth of the country but sometimes that - keep in mind that the aristocracy and nation are the same), and the power of the government. Mercantilism used large merchants as tools to increase tangible wealth and power. It gave large merchants privileges if the merchants could use the privileges to increase tangible wealth and power and to pay back the state in taxes and fees. Conservatives supported all this much of the time. Mercantilism is the ancestor of today's Republican intervention on behalf of business and the Republican view that the wealth and the value of the nation is in material stuff and military power. Republicans are modern Mercantilists, and original Conservatives would be as wary of them for that reason as they were wary of Mercantilist schemes of their times.

(17) In our times, we associate Conservative with Strong Religion. Originally this was not so. I cannot recall any original Conservative who was an atheist, and Conservatives did adhere to the major religions of their nations. But Conservatives were not blind emotional zealots. They tended to be calm about religion, much as were Episcopalians and Lutherans when I was a boy in the 1950s and 1960s. As part of their well-rounded view of human nature, Conservatives knew that most people needed a religion. As part of their realistic view of the state, Conservatives knew that states needed religion. Conservatives understood the Liberal argument about separation of church and state but also knew that, in practice, all states come with an official religion that supports the state and every major religion wishes to be the official religion. If people and states need a religion, then the religion of the people and religion of the state might as well be the same religion, it might as well be a good religion, and it should be as true as possible. All major religion of Europe then were suitable not only because they helped the state and the state could use them but the religions were largely true. Conservatives would have doubted the truth of non-Christian religions but would have recognized the needed close relations between the state and religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, and Shinto. They would have understood the role played by Taoism and would have accepted it in a state as long as it did not cause excess. The original Conservatives were a lot like Confucians, and vice versa.

Acceptance of this practical relation between religion, people, and the state is one big root of modern Conservative ideas about making Christianity the national religion in America. It is the same realization behind Islam being the official religion of most Muslim countries, and that makes Buddhism the official religion of Thailand. The acceptance of reality goes along with real human nature and the real workings

of states. But in any strict form, it is not acceptable in modern plural democracies; it would not work in America; Thailand makes it work because Thailand allows totally free individual worship.

How Conservative got to be associated with Strong Religion is explained below. I consider this link to be a step backwards, and so would most original Conservatives like Burke. It is more akin to the fervor that fuels the terror in bad revolutions than it is to God working his will through humans.

(18) Liberals got into trouble because their only theory of human nature was that we are all moral, rational, capable of making perfect decisions, and we all need freedom. This view is incomplete and at least half wrong, so Liberals made up theories of human nature to suit particular proposals. This tactic left Liberals and Liberal political parties (Democratic Party) open to abuse by people seeking to become clients and gain benefits.

I said Conservatives had a better view of human nature but I did not specify what. The Conservative view changed over time and especially after Conservatives adopted ideas about the free market and individual choice. Conservatives (Republican Party) also come up with theories of human nature to suit particular schemes and that serve their needs for wealth and power. Conservative parties also are open to people seeking to become clients and get favors.

Then why is the Conservative view of human nature fuller and better? These days, the Republican view of human nature is only marginally better than the Democratic view, if any better at all. Republicans have lost the depth of knowing human nature that was found in people like Burke.

It is hard to give the Conservative view succinctly because originally it arose slowly over time as the result of experience with many social classes, socio-economic classes, politicians, and situations. The best I can do here is to offer a few hints.

People differ by temperament and training. Some people are astute about politics while others are great artists. Society depends not only on people using free choice to support freedom, it also depends on different kinds of people doing different jobs yet still working together. Conservatives always recognized an array of talents and people. They took ideas of talents and people from the experience of the Church and from the experience of justices in the local courts. They knew that people differ not only in talents but in degrees and kinds of rationality. Some people are adept at agriculture, some at raising falcons, some at fighting, and some at politics. Some people can figure out a strategy and some cannot. Some are born leaders while others are followers. Besides the need for choice and freedom, people had other real needs that guided how people choose. People need mates, security, a social context, a way to show off socially, success at a chosen profession, families, faith, and a community of the faithful. These needs shape what people choose and how they act. People often enough will give up some needs for a bigger achievement in other needs as when people trade freedom for security.

Seeing all this does not guarantee that you will keep a well-rounded view of human nature in mind, and base social policies on that. Some Conservatives stress free choice in the market while others stress our

need for religion and family morality. But seeing all this does mean that, if you don't use this knowledge properly, then somebody else who uses the same basis for knowledge of human nature can refer to the same fund and contradict you. If a politician tried to abuse his power, and came up with an idea of human nature to support the abuse, then a priest could go back to the Bible or could use the history of the courts and laws to counteract the abuse. That is part of the organic whole checks and balances of the Conservative view of society.

In our times, maybe the view of human nature held by original Conservatives can be found in famous family-centered TV shows such as "I Love Lucy", "Leave it to Beaver", or "The Andy Griffith Show", and in some of the gritty dramas about how lust for power get us into trouble such as "Game of Thrones" and "Boardwalk Empire". "Friends" and "How I Met Your Mother", despite the glib hipness of young people running around the big city, ultimately pair everybody up with a lifelong love mate, find all the people good jobs, and give most of them babies. Even "Seinfeld" is Conservative in that the bad selfish behavior of all the characters gets punished, especially at the end. The "Godfather" movies are studies in those quirks of human personality that get us into trouble, studies in how free action in a free arena is not enough, and how free actions often backfire into other kinds of servitude. Westerns from the 1950s and 1960s show the Conservative attitude toward people and society. Watching the show "Gunsmoke" through about 100 episodes does more to get across the good Conservative view than any words that I write here. These shows are unrealistic and naively idealistic but are realistic enough and show enough diversity of real human nature. If you think the characters on Seinfeld could run a real democracy, then you are naïve. If you are a Conservative, and you don't like the proposal of another Conservative, you can always say "Yeah, OK as far as it goes, but you see what happens when Barney Fife takes full control while the natural leader, Andy, is away". Movies starring John Wayne and Clint Eastwood also get the point across but they are too authoritarian, usually rely on violence as the only solution, and have too narrow a view of human nature. The John Ford movies with John Wayne are some of the best movies ever and do an overall good job.

Liberals can use all these same TV shows and movies to support Liberal ideas. John Ford was unusually sensitive to the innate humanity of Native Americans and to how badly they were treated without falling into the debasing counter-productive over-Romanticizing typical among Americans now. I chose art that is often Liberal to get across the point that original Conservatives had a wide view of human nature than Liberals and that many people share Conservative ideals without knowing.

(19) Original Conservatives supported the state as it was, and supported a big state. Conservatives thought the state was a good way to get things done, often the best way, and often the only way. Mercantilist schemes required a big state and their schemes enlarged the state – that was their intent - and Conservatives supported Mercantilism. Conservatives did not support only the state. They did support other institutions such as the Church and schools. But they did not think other institutions could take over the duties of the state or that other institutions were better solutions. They saw the state and other institutions as part of one big organic complex. The idea that the state should be as small as possible and that other institutions could do a better job would be quite odd to them. It would

be empirically false to them. That was a Liberal idea, one of those half-crazy ideas that get you into trouble if you take it too far.

Modern Conservatives say they support a small state and say that other institutions such as churches, private charity, private schools, the free market, and the NRA do a better job with many tasks, and they should be given particular tasks while the state does nothing on those particular tasks, such as relief for unwed mothers and health care for orphans. In fact, most modern Conservatives don't believe any of this. It is just a method to get wealth and power distributed to where modern Conservatives think best for their class or, sometimes, for the nation. Modern Conservatives use "don't rely on the state, let the private sector do it" as a ploy to move wealth around where they wish or to keep wealth from being moved away from where they wish. The federal government grew the most under Republican regimes, although groundwork for a big state was done by some Democratic regimes such as under Lyndon Johnson. Modern Conservatives support a strong police force under centralized control. Modern Conservatives deny food for school children but support state control of international trade so as to enhance US wealth and power as when President Trump denied the Trans-Pacific trade accords and he threatened to undo NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement). These are old Mercantilist policies about a big strong state that linger on in modern Conservatives. How this schizophrenia came about is described below.

(20) Original Liberals prided themselves on using logic to find what makes sense. Conservatives were also logical. They could reason as well as Liberals. They prided themselves on using logic to find what was good and practical about what we already have, points that Liberals overlooked. But they also insisted that human logic is not enough. The glib answer to what more we need is God's revelation but even religious Conservatives knew that answer was not reliable enough. God's revelation does not solve all problems. What does God say about invading France? As noted, we also have to consider morality. We have to figure out how morality and practicality work together. But moral principles alone also do not give a complete answer. Should the state make sure that employers paid employees enough so that their children did not starve? Much as we would wish, there is no ready answer to these questions. Liberal Reason does not answer all these questions anymore than does an automatic appeal to God. History can help. What we inherited from the past can be a fairly reliable guide to the future as long as we remember that real flesh-and-blood people built the past, facing similar problems, and the past did not fall ready-made from God's hands into their laps. Original Conservatives sought to combine all the sources and to balance the contribution of each source according to its weight in particular situations. Modern Conservatives have lost that sense of balance.

(21) At least one large group of original Liberals under Jeremy Bentham supported applying cost-benefit analysis not only to business firms but to social institutions such as churches and to the state. Modern Conservatives also support a position similar to what Bentham Liberals once advocated although they would exempt churches. In contrast, modern Liberals seem to avoid cost-benefit analysis like a plague. Below I go into what changed but here I would like to say a bit more about original Conservatives. They could be hard-headed and practical. They worked in real business and real practical government. But they were careful to make sure that morality, religion, and human feelings got full weight and were used

properly in the proper arenas. They understood that cost-benefit cannot always apply. They might have said that applying cost-benefit to churches or the care of children went against God's view of humans and family. Modern Conservatives too apply cost-benefit selectively. The difference is that original Conservatives had a more consistent and thorough sense of where they wished practicality or morality to be more important and how important. They did not apply morality where convenient and apply practicality where convenient. That opportunist practice reduces morality to practicality under another name, and this devious reduction is bad. Original Conservatives were clear about this devious reduction of morality to practicality and they condemned it. Original Conservatives accused original Liberals of precisely this bad practice and they said it undermined the entire Liberal use of cost-benefit. Modern Conservatives make this mistake of reducing morality to practicality, the same mistake that original Conservatives accused original Liberals of making. Conservatives now do know they do something wrong but can't resist the temptation.

(22) Almost every group tries to set itself up as the conscience of the nation and to decide what is moral, amoral, and immoral. To decide what is right and wrong is to have much power over the group, greatly help your own subgroup, and harm rivals. Before modern plural democracies, few people doubted that even whole nations should have one guiding morality and that some group, usually a high church, had the power to decide morality. When times change, then groups are more likely to argue about morality and about their authority to decide. It should be no surprise that Conservatives claimed the right to decide morality for the nation as a whole and that Liberals contested Conservative authority and wished to have the authority. When Jeremy Bentham offered a Liberal analysis of practicality he also offered a Liberal analysis of morality that supported his ideas about practicality and social institutions. Bentham championed what today we would "group functionalism" or "what is the greatest good for the group is also the most moral" – "the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few".

Groups that assert moral authority usually claim not only moral authority but authority about practical affairs as well. When the nation does what is right, the nation will prosper, the people will have what they need, and the people will be happy; when the nation does wrong, or does not do what is right with sufficient vigor, the nation will flounder, the people will want, and the people will suffer. The Tanakh (Old Testament) and the writings of early Chinese sages such as Confucius are full of this line. When Liberals wished to succeed as the moral authority, they talked about how strong the nation would be, how wealthy (Adam Smith's book is "The Wealth of Nations"), and how happy.

In battles for moral authority, except in times of real chaos, old usually has the stronger claim, at least at first. I do not go into why this might be so, what about evolved human nature might make us inclined to accept old ideas about morality as more likely true. Anyhow, Conservatives certainly claimed not only to know what is best for the nation morally but also practically. When Liberal ideas failed in France, the old Conservatives gained huge credibility for both their moral and practical wisdom, and the idea that old ideas about morality are the best ideas morality gained huge strength.

Modern Conservatives still make both claims, and we are still inclined to accept their claims because we still think old ways must be the best ways. It is fun to try out new ways for a while, but, when it comes

down to living your whole life and raising a family, do it the old way. Modern Conservatives claim all the moral authority they can get both from simple appeals to oldness and from the credit old Conservatives got when Liberalism failed on the Continent.

Modern Conservatives also claimed all the practical authority that usually comes with moral authority, and, as we will see, they claimed even more practical authority when business took over running most modern states. The new mix of old authority, old practical authority, and modern practical business authority did not always blend well. "You can't put new wine in old skins". The old morality that touts the family and the authority of the King does not always go well with "make the most money you can any way you can" and "let the market take care of order". Modern Conservatives have never resolved this problem and likely will not in the near future because they benefit from the confusion.

### **Stereotype: Conservatives as Apologists for the Class Structure**

Original Conservatives did defend the state but they did not defend blindly and did not resist all change. They got rid of policies or institutions that caused much trouble. They did not defend the state because it is the state but because its institutions grew so as to serve God and the people. To assess institutions, and change them, Liberals and Conservatives sometimes cooperated.

I don't need to explain how Conservative ideas can be used to support what already is (the "status quo") no matter how bad, or to support made-up scenarios about what used-to-be no matter how bad and no matter how much the scenarios favor some groups. Conservative idea can be used to support a bad class structure, and were. People with power and wealth are crazy to keep it, Conservative ideas can be used to do that, so people with power and wealth promote Conservative ideas even when they don't understand the ideas and don't believe in them. Some original Conservatives were mere apologists for power. That is where we get the term "chauvinist", from the name of a French aristocrat.

Modern Conservatives do abuse old Conservative ideas so as to keep wealth and power. For example, they stress "law and order" to keep down unhappy people from the lower classes, a different religious or ethnic group, and women, and they refuse to fund government agencies that do a lot of good and that might help groups that they don't like. Not funding is likely illegal and certainly immoral, an odd stance for people who say they are the guardians of morality and of the state. Modern Conservatives stress the power of individual states such as Texas ("states' rights") even while they whine about over reaches of the federal state, the power of which they helped build. They complain that Barack Obama abused his office but defend G.W. Bush and Donald Trump for greater use (abuse) of authority.

To give examples of how original Conservatives sought social goodness through existing institutions but were willing to accept some orderly change would require going into details of institutions in England and the Continent, details that would annoy, and that I do not know well enough to state succinctly, so I use well-known cases that might not be the best examples but do make the point. Slavery ended in the English Empire before it ended in the United States. Slavery ended both because it was economically outmoded and by fiat of the central government. It ended by joint efforts of Liberals and Conservatives.

The end of formal slavery in the Empire was peaceful, orderly, and total (wage-and-job slavery and debt slavery are other issues, not for here). Because America left England before England outlawed slavery, slavery continued in America at least 40 years longer than it should have if the only consideration was economic, caused more damage to persons, caused more economic hardship, and caused great damage to the nation through the Civil War.

Conservatives now do not condone slavery. True modern Conservatives do not condone exploitation of one group by another. True modern Conservatives condemn oppression of one group by another group. They do not often condone the use of one class by another. Every so often, judge modern Conservatives by these standards.

Conservatives did not defend traditional religion merely because it is traditional or religion but because it seemed like the correct compromise of Reason and Revelation, combined in the correct institutions, to serve the spiritual needs of the people and to properly guide the nation. Religion was an institution that had developed over a long time, in the context of other beneficial institutions, and so certainly was beneficial and likely was the most beneficial ideology that the people could have. It really did seem like the glue that held the country together. Modern people think the same thing of their religion. They think that about their pet dogmas. Liberals think the Liberal religion would do the best for the country if it were ever widely adopted. The following comment will offend Roman Catholics, for which I am sorry, but it helps to get the point across: English people know that the Roman Catholic Church was the parent of the English Church, and the Churches are quite similar. The Roman Catholic Church has precedence and tradition. Some English people, even now, embrace it for those reasons. But most English people do not think it serves the spirit and needs of England and they think the various churches that grew in England do serve its spirit and needs, perhaps especially the Church of England. So, English people cleave to the churches that grew organically within England.

Conservatives in England supported limitation of the Monarchy and supported Parliament and the Prime Minister in taking over some powers of the King. Conservatives did not blindly adhere to full Monarchy. Conservatives supported change because change worked in this case; it was Reasonable in Liberal terms. Conservatives saw what had happened in America and on the Continent. They saw that a flexible state made of qualified outstanding individuals was more effective than old monarchy. It served God and the people better. After Napoleon, it was better to get outstanding people in the state than force them to overthrow the state or oppose the state. Churchill is vastly better than Hitler or Stalin.