

RIVAROL

**A selection
from his work**



INTRODUCTION - TRANSLATION

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[[Unfortunately, P.K.'s selection of Rivarol's texts has not been included with this introduction owing to the inordinate amount of time needed to locate and or translate the relevant excerpts into English]]

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Main Title Page in Greek:

Ρ Ι Β Α Ρ Ο Δ

Ἐπιλογή
ἀπὸ τὸ ἔργο του



ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΗ-ΜΕΤΑΦΡΑΣΗ

Παναγιώτης Κονδύλης



στιγμή

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INTRODUCTION

Just as when he lived, thus also about two-hundred years after his death, Rivarol constitutes more (so, of) a name connected with proverbial, almost biting and scathing, aphorisms, and less (so, of) a form visible in a constituted, structured work. In actual fact, if we see Rivarol's work as a whole (totality), we shall find it uneven (inconsistent and not uniformly well-balanced) and heterogeneous; if, again, we seek decisive access to the creator by identifying and equating him on each and every respective occasion with only one of the major aspects of his work, we shall have, every time, the feeling (sense) that many and important things are being left out. The *littérateur* (man of letters, literary man) and the essayist do not suffice in order to characterise Rivarol generally as a *littérateur* or essayist; his brilliant and much-read treatise about the French language never engendered in someone the idea to regard him (Rivarol) primarily as a linguist; his aphorisms, as a rule, were not worked upon one by one to contribute to the cultivation of the kind (genre [[of the aphorism]]), and certainly they (Rivarol's) aphorisms do not place him in the very first line (i.e. amongst the greatest) of the great moralistes (moralists), even if some of them (Rivarol's aphorisms) bear comparison with whatever was the best of La Rochefoucauld (or: whatever La Rochefoucauld could best give/provide);¹ and his (Rivarol's) political texts,

¹ (Translator's note. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K.): I'm telling "everyone" now, La Rochefoucauld was one of the greatest greats – the social psychologist par excellence who saw behind *all* (even "philanthropic" or

as interesting as they are (can be), would mislead and deceive us in themselves, leaving, i.e. making upon us, the impression that Rivarol was nothing more than a witty (brainy) counter-revolutionary journalist. Under these presuppositions or conditions (In these circumstances), the (i.e. Rivarol's) personality overshadows (casts a shadow over, overclouds) the (his = Rivarol's) work, that is, the aspects (perspectives, views) of the (Rivarol's) work seem like extensions and dispersions (spreading(s)) of an intellectually(-spiritually) plethoric personality, who distinguishes himself (at a superior, brilliant level) intensely, but briefly and alternately in different fields.

Despite all of that, behind the fragmentariness and the inhomogeneity (non-homogeneity) as to kind and genre, a few general ideas – as thread and connective (connecting) web – are found. And if every one of them (the said general ideas), taken separately, cannot claim a particular theoretical originality, nonetheless, their combination constitutes a certain consideration of human affairs (things), and at the same time, an analytical tool for the comprehension and understanding of micro-sociological and macro-sociological situations, as we would say by using contemporary terms. This becomes obvious if we concentrate our attention on the way in which Rivarol makes use of (or exploits) the moralists' tradition, but also he (Rivarol) himself functions as a moraliste, in order to illuminate the shocking fact of the Revolution, and together with that, the nature of politics. Of course, the transition from the familiar objects (subject matter(s), topics) of the moralistes, to the anatomy of historical and political phenomena, was not self-evident, nor did it constitute a simple quantitative widening; it (the said transition) demanded that entirely particular or special instinct and gaze (look, glance), which many fewer (people) have at their disposal than those who usually chatter (waffle, blabber) about such things, and it also demanded, at the more personal level, an existential interest,

more broadly co-operative) human action, the "DEVIL" of self-interest, which in turn springs from the passions in social context. **READ AND STUDY LA ROCHEFOUCAULD!!!**

which was not exhausted in the identification, or in the fellow-travelling, with a or b of the factions fighting each other, but was transformed (or its various elements were morphed) into a theoretical interest. In other words, Rivarol's anti-revolutionary political preferences do not at all explain on their own why he interpreted the birth or genesis (coming into being) and the dynamics of the Revolution in this concrete (specific) way, and not in an essentially different way, because, for instance, he put weight (placed significance) on the magnitudes of social psychology, or on the inner logic of the shifting (displacement) of (in) the centre of dominant authority, instead of summoning or enlisting abstract philosophies of history and the secrete plans of Divine Providence, as other renowned counter-revolutionary authors (writers) did (his (i.e. Rivarol's) contemporary de Maistre, and the posterior (subsequent) Donoso Cortés). Here, manifest (patent, overt) capital and fundamental differences of world-theoretical orientation are taking place, despite the joint political course and action – differences which render understandable why Rivarol neither loved his political friends much, nor was he loved by them, and which, in (their) turn, become understandable in (the) light of the ascertainment that Rivarol, even if he were a resident and border of/at religious schools, was a child (offspring) and bearer of a completely secular(ised) paideia or education. One of the great paradoxes of political conservatism after 1789 was that most of its representatives, breastfed, i.e. brought up and formed/shaped – without expecting anything to happen – with ideas and concepts of the Enlightenment, tried and undertook to turn them (the said ideas and concepts of the Enlightenment) against its (the Enlightenment's) political consequences, that is, to combat the political Enlightenment with the intellectual(-spiritual) arsenal (armoury) which the Enlighteners (Enlightenment philosophers) initially used against the theologians.

Now, precisely the secularisation of anthropology, that is to say, the radical revision of the theological perception (view) regarding man, was the central contribution of the moralistes, with Montaigne first, in the history of ideas. That human nature is more than just prone, i.e. highly susceptible, to passions, especially egoistical and concupiscent and sensualistic (libidinous, lustful) passions, did not of course constitute anything new for theologians. But they (theologians) outbid [[everyone else]] in regard to such ascertainments, wanting to prove the always active effects and influences of original sin, and by seeking their (such [[negative]] effects and influences') curtailment through asceticism and repentance. The anthropological perspective is transformed essentially, i.e. substantially and substantively, when the affirmation (attestation, authentication) of the omnipotence of the passions is detached (broken off) from the theory of original sin and its ethical-practical concomitants (ancillaries), in order to flow and pour into an autonomous elucidation and disambiguation (clarification) of the psychological mechanisms, through which the passions, in summoning and enlisting (mobilising) for their goals (ends or purposes), logic and its (logic's) weapons, form and perpetuate social life as the plexus (mesh or network) of balanced and lopsided (uneven, unbalanced), friendly and inimical human relations. Rivarol, like many before him too, insists in particular on the vital role of the passions in this sense. The passions act as motive (driving) forces of individual and collective life, whereas logic (reason, sense, nous) describes simply their (the passions') action if it (logic) is satisfied in the role of the analyst, or finds the more effective means for the achievement of their (the passions') desires if it (logic) decides to act together with them (the passions), as occurs as a rule. Logic does not give the ultimate certainties, which are demanded for the practical orientation of individuals and groups, but feeling, emotion and sentiment (does), the ultimate judge and alert, awake guard of the interests of the existence [[in question]]. For Rivarol, the fact that man is possessed by, and moves because of, passions and feelings, emotions and

sentiments, constitutes an ascertainment and primary datum (fact), not a reason for the disdain and the scorning of man as a kind or species. At the same time, however, this anthropological reality constitutes a permanent reminder of what is permitted (allowed) for (to) someone to expect from (of) man (humans), if he wants to maintain contact with things (affairs, matters) (i.e. understand and or interact with human reality as human reality is), and what is not (permitted/allowed).

What do these (ascertainments) mean for a general theory of politics and of revolutions? Obviously and first of all, that it is not possible for politics, and more generally, social life – despite the announcements and proclamations of various philosophers – to be permanently regulated on the basis of the exchange of (well-)founded arguments between rational interlocutors. The character and role of logic is instrumental, even also in relations between a restricted number of individuals, where the terrain (ground, soil) for the (re)solution of (to) clashes and conflicts through rational arguments seems to be, in principle, more suitable, opportune or expedient. But wherever it is a matter of large (great) masses, of the multitudes which constitute the first, i.e. primary – and fate(ful)ly unrefined (raw) – matter (material) of the political community, there the domination (sovereignty) of the passions does not demand at all the more or less transparent casing (cover, shield(ing), integument) of logic. And even still further: the passions of the large (great) masses are not only more naked (bare), but also more elemental, they are simpler and deeper. In periods/times of normality (regularity), when the institutional and ideological (river(-))bed, where the life of the political community flows, appears to be steady and the direction given, the multitude does not but desire bread and circuses (and in these circuses, politics itself can wonderfully (fabulously, beautifully) be included). When the bread becomes rare (and is in short supply) or is in danger/at risk [[of running out]], then the circuses too become diluted and less frequent

and less regular or grow wild; and as the political community polarises, (correspondingly) the soul of the masses (accordingly) condenses in(to) one-dimensional and perspicuous (distinct) passions, which follow the logic of black and of white, without the sense (and feeling) of shades and hues, and without deepening in (regard to) facts and causes: (the) idols are contrasted and opposed to (the) daemons, and fanatical hate/hatred does not know of any alternative solution other than (the) blind worship (adoration, cult).

Since the masses are the raw material of politics, and since the masses are dominated and ruled by (the) passions, political activity could be defined as the manipulation or management (handling, administration) of mass passions. This (manipulation) again can be undertaken in two different senses and from two different positions, in accordance with the fundamental division of the political calendar into epochs (times, eras, ages) of normality (regularity), and into epochs of revolutionary tumult (fermentation). Whoever handles and manages the passions of the masses in/during a period of normality and from the position of the governor (commander, ruler), has as his main concern, their (the passions') bridling and reining in through a combination of ideology and coercion (compulsion, constraint, forcing), which varies and decomposes (disintegrates) in accordance with the conjuncture: whereby the ideological means waste away (weaken), coercion (constraint) intensifies, and wherever their (the ideological means') activity suffices, material violence can be exercised less frequently or more discreetly. In those historical cases (instances), where the handling and manipulation of mass passions on the part of the government is supported by or based on the correct – that is, in accordance with the demands and the peculiarity (oddity) of time and of place – mixing of ideology and coercion (forcing others), whilst parallelly the conviction is widespread that dominant authority (dominance, domination, rule, ruling (over others)) in general terms is exercised in a spirit of welfare and

justice, then the political community succeeds in having the – limited and restricted, of course, but by no means to be neglected – degree of perfection which the imperfection of people and human creations allows. Government and people constitute a viable unity of form and of matter in the Aristotelian sense of the terms, that is, a construct where the rational element penetrates, permeates and pervades (soaks) and controls the irrational (non-rational, unrational) element to a – satisfactory in practice – extent.

Such fortunate and happy equilibria are not eternal, and indeed many times, whatever appears as the stability of the political community is nothing but the appearance or pretence which the power of inertia maintains (retains), or the supplementary/complementary action of corruption (depravity, corruptness, depravation) and of cowardice (timidity, sheepishness). Revolution presupposes, of course, in some form and in some intensity, the dimension between government and people, however, this necessary presupposition is not also sufficient. Just as government is obliged to bridle and rein in the passions, so too, revolution is obliged to incite (actuate, foment) and to excite (stir, trigger, arouse) the passions – at least until it (revolution) prevails and holds sway (predominates), whereupon, now as government, this/it (the revolution as government) too will concern and occupy itself systematically with the job (work) of their (the passions’) bridling (reining in, curbing, controlling), perhaps with an even greater zeal. Just demands do not beget in themselves revolutions if they are not connected with/to mass hate (hatred) against the acts which are considered to be an injustice and against all those who commit them; in order to act revolutionarily, the demand of/for justice must be transformed (changed) into a slogan with religious and eschatological connotations in order to transcend the individual just demands, and to become so general and abstract, that it is mixed higgledy-piggledy with the fluctuations and the explosions of a volcanic collective soul. The great revolution wants to be a catharsis, the

catharsis is carried out and executed with bloodletting (bloodshed, the spilling of blood), and the bloodletting – no matter with what political or ethical arguments it is justified – has as a concrete (specific) act, an existential directness, and is accompanied by an existential excitement which obeys and abides by the self-action of passion, and often outflanks even the aims of the very same revolutionaries too. In other words, the bloodletting comes out of the ultimate depths of the mass soul, when these (ultimate depths of the mass soul) are shaken (up) (upset, disturbed, suffer turbulence) in revealing the roots from where once primordial, primaeval holy (sacred) rites and rituals and sacrifices sprouted (popped, sprang) (up).

There is no doubt that Rivarol, a foe of the Revolution, became aware of and felt (deeply) its (the Revolution's) frightening (terrifying), impersonal grandeur. However, whatever seems to be impersonal and elemental to the philosopher of history, to the contemporaneous and perspicacious, discriminating political observer appears as a plexus (mesh or network) of personal activities and relations, as the aftereffect (corollary, result, outflow, discharge) of specific (concrete) acts and subjective intentions. If for Rivarol, the government is [[about]] bridling and reining in (curbing, control(ling)), and the revolution [[concerned with]] the incitement (fomentation, instigation), of passions, nonetheless also in both situations, some (people) handle and manipulate and direct these passions, with [[their respective]] sights (i.e. aspirations or aims), of course, diametrically opposed. It was known who tried, without success (unsuccessfully), to handle and manage the passions of the popular (people's) soul in the Old Regime, whilst wanting to exercise and conduct the governing of the country: on the one hand, a shaken and undecided throne, and on the other hand, a heterogeneous aristocracy, uncertain about its values, and about its collective interests – a throne and an aristocracy which, furthermore, were found to be in continual (kinds of) friction(s) between themselves, and had

significantly been influenced by the Enlightenment's ideas, such that they did not have at their disposal enough self-conviction either to make full use of and exhaust the political possibilities of the traditional religious ideology, or to make full use of armed violence (force). Who, however, was the instigator and the manager or handler of the revolutionary passions? For Rivarol, as for Burke, and later for Tocqueville, the thing, i.e. matter/affair, was clear-cut. The Revolution constituted the continuation of the philosophy of the Enlightenment with the use of political means, it constituted, that is, the necessary political sublimation (transfiguration) of newer (more modern) ideas regarding man and his rights, for (as regards) the organisation of the polity on the basis of the social contract and of popular sovereignty (domination, dominance). But the political sublimation of the Enlightenment was, in (its) turn, the work of philosophers, rhetoricians, speech-writers and journalists, consequently of specific (concrete) persons, who located the essence of their intellectual(-spiritual) activity not in some abstract progress of knowledge, but in political action, which under (the) given circumstances, and in view of the radicality of their demands, could not but be subversive action. When he (Rivarol) speaks of "philosophers", in part, with a dismissive (rejective), and in part, with an ironic disposition, Rivarol does not so much mean the classical representatives of the Enlightenment, e.g. Montesquieu or Voltaire, as (he means) the politically vigorously active popularisers of the generation which stamped (marked) 1789, the terrible simplificateurs (= French = terrible simplifiers), who seemed to come out of (emerge from) Rousseau's work. The "philosopher" in this sense is not mainly the (a) theoretical thinker; rather, he is identified (equated) with that social type, which in the language of contemporary sociology is called an "intellectual" and, in opposition to the scientist, is not interested so much in the formulation of generalisations on the basis of empirical research, but, above all, in the public defence of certain values; his characteristic attribute is, thus, so-called "militancy (enlistment, mobilisation)". The philosopher-intellectual does not

analyse, therefore, coldly and from the outside, the texture (composition or nature) and the function(ing) of the passions, but gives the passions a form of ideology (e.g. he translates ressentiment (= French = resentment, pique), or the pursuit of social ascent (climbing), into the principle of equality), and indeed (a form) of ideology simple enough so as to emotionally move, touch and ((intellectually-)physically) mobilise the masses. All those who ideologise passions bring on (about) or provoke (stir up, cause) the mobilisation of the masses, and they channel it (the said mobilisation of the masses), for (to) their own political goals (ends, purposes), regardless of – as we have already said – whether these passions are attached or not to “just” demands. This here is the fundamental texture (composition or nature) of the revolutionary process, and for his reason, the fact that one of its (the revolutionary process’s) face(t)s (countenances, visages) is philosophy, and the other (face(t)) is terrorism (terror), does not constitute a contradiction.

Most statements by Rivarol bear witness (attest) to his conviction that the formation of a more or less self-sufficient stratum of philosophers-intellectuals tends to attach to social-political struggles, a new form and additional acuteness. If the prestige of the philosophers-intellectuals and of the people of letters already overshadows the luster (glow, shine, shining) of the thrones, then the pure force (power) of ideology is in a position to compete with every material and institutional dominant authority. In the extreme and typical case, the radical intellectual springs from (the) social nought, that is, he does not come from groups with old wealth and socially self-evident influence, but slowly(-slowly) creates a name from inside the conduits of the profession of being a lawyer (the legal profession) or of journalism, for instance. As a social type, he is, therefore, [[at]] the antipodes, or (there)about(s), of the hereditary aristocracy. His only, or his almost only, assets are ideas, and he uses them as the *beati possidentes* of the higher/upper classes use their material assets: as a means and weapon for the

acquisition (obtaining) and maintenance of social power. The intellect(-spirit), thus, becomes the product of polemics, not simply in the general sense that ideas turn as a rule against all other ideas, but in the special and concrete (specific) sense that ideas constitute an organ of the personal predominance and prevailing of certain people (men, humans), i.e. of all their respective representatives. When Rivarol, in a saying of unparalleled (unmatched, matchless) elegance (graphic representation), characterised typography as the artillery of the spirit(-intellect), on the one hand, he reminded [[us]] of the common origin (descent, provenance) also of the two inventions [[i.e. typography and artillery]] from the radical positioning of the New Times vis-à-vis technique (i.e. technology), whereas on the other hand, he suggested that the general development of the New Times favoured the polemical use of ideas; in order to express ourselves by paraphrasing Hegel's well-known apothegm (maxim, aphorism) regarding the invention of gunpowder, typography popped up (came into view) in the historical foreground when that social group was being formed which as – of its texture (composition or nature), and of its aspirations (scope) –, needed it above all. From this broader historical perspective, Rivarol considers natural – despite his philological (literary) inclination (propensity) and paideia (education) – to not see politics philologically (in terms of literature), but literature politically and, more generally, to seek the specific and concrete functions of philosophical and (inter)related ideas. This, incidentally, he (Rivarol) did not do one-sidedly, that is, by analysing the sermons (preaching) and the acts of the philosophers-intellectuals of 1789; he also saw and acknowledged the value of and in the content of traditional religion too, just as already Machiavelli [[had done]] for instance, first and foremost from a political point of view, that is, from the point of view of its (i.e. the content of traditional religion's) contribution to the constitution and the consistency of the political community.

If some people always, either as the government established in power since long ago, or as a revolutionary leadership appearing for the first time, handle and manage the passions of the masses, and if these people (i.e. the aforesaid “some people”) are relatively well-defined, distinct and closed groups, due to a way of (mode, manner) of life and of paideia (education) alien or strange (foreign) to the masses, then politics as activity – both conservative as well as subversive – is by definition a matter of the social élites.² Whatever, therefore, applies to an open aristocratic government, equally applies to a government or a revolution which declares equality and democracy. The “iron law of oligarchy”, as Michels called (named) it, acts (is active), and governs and dominates the formation of relations, inside the political community as a whole and inside the individual political organisations, whether the politically active groups adopt, absorb and espouse “progressive”, or whether they embrace “conservative”, values. This general comprehension or grasping of the political phenomenon allowed Rivarol just a few months after July of 1789 to predict that if the Revolution wins, political authority as dominance (domination) is not about to be dispersed into myriads of “sovereign people”, but on the other hand, is to be concentrated in the hands of an oligarchy coalescing (banding together) around a (military) general. A few years later, Bonaparte’s prevailing and predominance confirmed in a dramatic way that the oligarchic logic of

² (Translator’s footnote. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K. **DO NOT READ THIS!**): guess what that means today in ZIO-USA and its ZIO/USA-Vassal states!!! A-HAHAHAHAHAHA!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Satan, Satan, Monkey, Monkey, SATANIC CIRCUS MONKEY. THE HORROR AND HATE OF THE SICK AND DISGUSTING, ABSOLUTELY FILTHY ZIO-OTHERISING GROSSLY DISPROPORTIONATELY IN POWER INCL. THROUGH PRIMITIVE SECRET SOCIETY NETWORKING AND THE HISTORICAL CIRCULATION OF MONEY (MAMMONISING-ZIONISING-SATANISING) JOO-DEVIL-EVIL-ZIO-SATANIST (SATANISM) (AND THE PROTESTANT-PAPIST-ATHEIST COCK-SUCKING FEMINO-FAGGOTISING MENTALLY ILL FULL-SPECTRUM ZIO-LOBOTOMISED HATE-FILLED SICK ZIO-JOO-EVIL-DEVIL-SATANIC-SCUMBAG ETC. CORPORATE BANKING FINANCIERS ET AL. – OF THE HORRIFIC OTHER – TOO!) THE HORROR, THE HORROR, THE HORROR, THE HORROR, THE HORROR OF THE OTHER, THE HATE, HATRED, ULTRA-UGLINESS OF THE OTHER. BUT THE LOVE, AND, THE BEAUTY, OF THE FAMILIAR, ONE’S OWN TRIBE AND PATRIA. THE LOVE AND THE BEAUTY. BLOOD, SOIL, TRADITION, LIMITED BUT PRODUCTIVE INTERACTIONS WITH THE ABSORBABLE-SYNTHESING SELF AND OTHER (THE SELF-OTHER-SELF), PRODUCING AND RENEWING THE SELF AS HISTORICAL RUPTURES, BUT ALSO AS HISTORICAL CONTINUITY-IDENTITY. **DEATH TO SATAN!**

dominant authority is strict and harsh, and that the revolutionary slogans take their concrete (specific) historical meaning beyond the passions which moved the masses, and beyond the ideologies which moved the passions, when, that is, the logic mentioned above (i.e. the oligarchic logic of dominant authority) comes full circle (closes its cycle). The centre of dominant authority, having slackened and relaxed during the process of subversion and overthrow, shifts and is displaced from inside political gaps and vacuums, or from inside differentiated situations, in order to coagulate or congeal (to be solidified/to solidify) again at the other end of the political spectrum too, whereupon the revolutionary government, possessor now of dominant authority, pursues the same thing just like every previous government too: to bridle and rein in (curb, control) the passions of the masses, and first of all to bridle and rein in all the philosophers-intellectuals who had incited and instigated and ideologised these passions on account of the revolution. The history of our century [[i.e. the 20th century]], did not falsify this analysis.

Wherever passions and theories or ideologies are interwoven so narrowly, as in the field of politics, many margins obviously do not exist, i.e. obviously there is not much scope, for the spirit(-intellect) to be dedicated to serving the spirit(-intellect) in the search for superior and calm, unperturbed, placid truths (without waves). For such margins and such scope to be opened up and for such searches to thrive and flourish, the authentic philosophical nous (mind) ought to stand aside from the rowdy, cacophonous markets and from battlefields, and at the same time seek an object (subject matter), a level of thinking, where the passions, whatever they may be, with as many big-mouthed ideologem(e)s as they disguise themselves, seem to be humble, imperceptible and unimportant. Even though he was impassioned regarding politics, even though he was kneaded and fermented, i.e. shaped and formed by, and involved in, history, Rivarol feels the need for such a revival (emotional (up)lift and exaltation

[[pertaining to the relative tranquility of the passions]]), and for such a catholic (i.e. universal) calm (peaceful, tranquil, serene) supervision or monitoring (of things/affairs), i.e. introspection. The way in which he (Rivarol) talks about Nature shows us this. Whereas the historical activity of humans (people) can never constitute a perfectly complete and conclusive whole, remaining forever fragmentary and contradictory, Nature is from the very beginning and by definition an integral and a definitive Whole. The noose of its (Nature's) full (rich, pithy, succinct) harmony is never broken up, and on it, the disharmony of the segmented (sectional) and self-understood and self-opinionated human attempts and efforts are crushed like on a rock or cliff. Humans unwind and unreel their activity on the surface of Nature, without knowing its (Nature's) depth; however, at its depth, its laws and its intentions nest(le) (snuggle), and thus, being inconspicuous (obscure, dormant), they uninterruptedly (incessantly, ceaselessly) set up traps in the finite nous (mind), which is dragged by finite passions. The unbridgeable chasm between Nature and man, Nature and history, constitutes, if it is understood in this sense, the only source of inspiration, and of awe, of that philosopher who, in opposition to the philosopher-intellectual, raises or lifts himself above the thirst for ephemeral triumphs and for the innate partialities of the passions. When Rivarol outlined this idea of his regarding Nature, most likely he wanted to relativise and to downgrade, from the standpoint of the genuine philosopher, the theory and practice of the philosopher-intellectual; he forgot, nonetheless, that a consistent positioning towards such an idea regarding Nature does not entail only the rejection of certain political theses, but also excludes support for their opposites.

The underlining of the self-action and of the self-sufficiency of Nature, shows how saturated (impregnated or permeated) Rivarol[['s thought]] was with/by general and diffused ideas of the Enlightenment. His classicism also brings him close to the mundane-worshipping or worldly-worshipping Enlightenment.

Incidentally, a close logical and historical relationship exists between the classicistic comprehension or grasping of works of art, and the idea of Nature as harmony. The classical work of art (classical in the sense of ancient-worshipping classicism) does not simply constitute the imitation of nature as to its content; beyond this, it constitutes, as a form which tames and restricts, limits, confines (a) matter (material), the reproduction of (the) ideal Nature, which this too is meant as the balancing of the morphic (i.e. as regards form and or shape) and material factor. A successful work of art is thus equally fixed and permanent too as much as Nature as an ideal Whole, regardless of its genesis (birth) and its decay as to individual parts – in other words, the classical work is the substitution for Nature inside culture (civilisation), or the highest point of the approach(ing) of culture (civilisation) to(wards) (vis-à-vis) Nature. The same balanced engagement, tussle and intertwining of morphic (i.e. form-related) and material elements, characterises language as well, which for this reason, precisely appears to find its more (pre-)eminent or distinguished, but also more natural use, when it becomes the weft (threads in weaving, i.e. mesh) of classical works of literature. Rivarol develops very interesting ideas about language as the relationship of signs and sensorial data, or as the action of the bringing back or resetting of thought to the materiality of feeling (sense). But their observation and tracking would lead us far, because it would demand recourse to (inter-)related theories of the 18th century.

How, now, was philosophical contemplation (meditation, rumination, cogitation) of eternal and harmonic Nature reconciled in Rivarol's intellect(-spirit), or the aesthetic contemplation of the likewise perpetual – inside its morphic, i.e. form-related (formal), fullness and completeness – classical work of art, with the aphoristic and playful element, which equally appears fleeting and short-lived as a sparkle or flash? The question can be formulated as follows: the aphorism, as a literary achievement, is the classicism of one and only one

moment. Whether, however, it (the aphorism) comprehends something momentary, or whether it comprehends something momentarily, its classical dimension does not rest (is not based) on content, but on its form, which cannot be transformed even in the least without the aphorism being crucially (essentially, vitally) spoilt or falling into decay. Thus, through the aphoristic form, this sparkle or flash gains or wins as well, the eternity of Nature and of classical art. All those who imagine that they can attribute Rivarol's aphoristic oestrus, i.e. inspiration or verve – or related spirits – to an inexhaustible (boundless) maliciousness which tirelessly seeks increasingly newer victims, understand very little not only the general mechanisms of intellectual(-spiritual) creation, but also the very same motives of this aphoristic inspiration or verve. The malicious (i.e. malicious people) are very many, whereas the Rivarols are very few, and this on its own means that maliciousness does not beget aphoristic skill(s) (heightened ability), but on the contrary, aphoristic skill, wherever it exists, does not hesitate to even also mobilise (summon, enlist) maliciousness in order to satisfy the deeper need of (for) expression. The aphoristic register and style, moving waveringly (fluctuatingly) along the boundaries of oral and written speech or discourse, has its own life and its own logic – and *this* (aphoristic register and style) frequently collaborates, and intentionally, with sarcasm. The skilled practitioner in expression is interested in sarcasm as a field of exercise pertaining to language and literary register and style, and as an end-in-itself [[also]] pertaining to language and literary register and style, beyond and regardless of each and every respective person (identity) being mocked, attacked etc. with sarcasm; his (the said skilled practitioner in expression's) atonement (expiation, redemption), he draws or extracts it (this atonement) from the aesthetic result, and thus he can hold in contempt – in a light-hearted manner (i.e. without a heavy heart and not seriously) – the ethics and morals of those who are average, who, not being able to blow up and explode in irony, irony, and in a lustrous linguistic/language style and register, a more lustrous

linguistic style/register, fortify themselves behind social conventions (pacts) and codes of pseudo-nobility. However, only those who know of very high intellectual(-spiritual) refinements perceive and apprehend these things. And these certainly are not the many (many people).

Already, therefore, as a stakeholder in such refinements, Rivarol belongs to the solitary (i.e. those who are monastically inclined and alone (isolated, reclusive, hermetic)). But he also belongs to those who are alone (solitary), because he belongs to the defeated. The democratic revolution swept away his world, the inequalities and the prejudices or superstitions of this world, at the same time, however, also the exquisite (kinds of) pretentiousness(es) of its and his culture (civilisation). And democracy does not show to its foes more understanding (comprehension) and pity (sympathy, mercy) than what anyone else also shows (to) his own foes (enemies). Few people have at their disposal the high-mindedness (noble-mindedness) of the ascetic Roman to boast by saying: *victrix causa placuit deis, sed victa Catoni* (= Latin = "The victorious cause pleased the gods, but the vanquished [cause] pleased Cato."³). It was always much easier and much more convenient for someone to identify and equate themselves with victors, or with dominant views which are dictated to by victors; however, it is difficult and often dangerous to understand those who are vanquished (defeated), their standpoint and potentially (eventually) their justice (i.e. what is "fair (enough)" to (for) them). Particularly, a deeper approach of personalities like Rivarol demands in advance intellectual(-spiritual) virtues which are anything but self-evident today. Mass-democratic ethicism

³ (Translator's footnote. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K.): "... The grand exception to this generally bleak depiction of characters is Cato, who stands as a Stoic ideal in the face of a world gone mad (he alone, for example, refuses to consult oracles to know the future). Pompey also seems transformed after Pharsalus, becoming a kind of stoic martyr; calm in the face of certain death upon arrival in Egypt, he receives virtual canonization from Lucan at the start of book IX. This elevation of Stoic and Republican principles is in sharp contrast to the ambitious and imperial Caesar, who becomes an even greater monster [[= a very stupid and probably very unfair characterisation of Caesar (translator's note to this quote from Wikipedia)]] after the decisive battle. Even though Caesar wins in the end, Lucan makes his sentiments known in the famous line *Victrix causa deis placuit sed Victa Catoni* – "The victorious cause pleased the gods, but the vanquished [cause] pleased Cato."" (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharsalia>)

(moralism, morality) has fatally struck a blow to the sense of humour, especially in regard to its (humour's) professional representatives, [[i.e.]] "progressive intellectuals"⁴; and the production and consumption of newspaper writings by the flood-load, i.e. tonnes and tonnes of newspaper articles, opinions, etc., does not constitute the best possible preparation of intellects(-spirits) for pleasure and enjoyment in the highest (supreme, paramount) of performances (and achievements) as far as language-literary register and style are concerned. However, from Rivarol we do not just have a lot to be taught about literary register and style, as register and style of life, as way (mode, manner) of life. We also have a lot (much, many things) to learn about whatever we could call (the) realism of the vanquished (defeated). Because if the vanquished (defeated), in his despair (desperation, desolation), did not lose his mind and logic and his contact with things (i.e. his understanding of reality as reality actually is), it is possible for him (the vanquished) to know more than the victor (winner). He does not know only about the weaknesses and the vices, depravities and nefariousness (vileness) of his own faction/side, but also sees, with the perspicacity of hate (hatred), what is hidden behind the slogans and the pledges (promises) of the victor, taking his delayed, silent and pointless (unavailing, useless, fruitless), now, revenge when what(ever) was covered up and concealed at the time (in the hour) of the triumph of his foes, comes to light and is revealed. The vanquished (defeated) learns something earlier and better than the victor: that the final and deeper taste is bitter. Others, of course, taste it (the said final and deeper taste) by resenting it with dysphoria (anxiety and unease), or by excessively emotionalising things in an even more ungainly and inelegant manner, whereas others, (taste it) like Rivarol, knowing beforehand (about the said final and deeper bitter taste), and smiling until the end. And the difference between them – those who resent and emotionalise and those like

⁴ (Translator's footnote. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K.): classic P.K. sarcasm!

Rivarol who know beforehand and smile, as regards the final and bitter taste – is not at all insubstantial (immaterial).

There is still no complete critical edition of Rivarol's works and uncollected (or scattered) writings (remnants, residues). The deficient (incomplete) five-volume edition of *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris 1805) contains a fifth volume of a limited selection of aphorisms and anecdotes. The *Rivaroliana* (Paris 1812) constitute a collection of the – in the meanwhile – legendary anecdotal narratives, perhaps also concoctions, around (regarding) the person(age) of Rivarol. In 1836, Claude-François published the *Pensées inédites de Rivarol*, where amongst other sketches and texts, the *Notebooks* (*Carnets*) are included, but with a great many consecutive additions, erasures and amendments. Thus, concerning the text of the *Notebooks*, we based (supported) ourselves on the notable (distinguished) material of André Le Breton's always central monograph, *Rivarol. Sa vie, ses idées, son talent. D'après des documents nouveaux*, Paris 1895, where for the first and final, from what I know, time, the manuscript was taken into consideration. In subsequent editions of Rivarol's works, the collection of his aphorisms – which was gradually formed (put together) after his death, since he himself never published aphorisms – was widened (broadened, expanded, extended) with aphoristic sayings and thoughts (contemplations) excerpted from other texts. For our anthologisation, apart from Le Breton's monograph, two newer editions were used: *Rivarol, Les plus belles pages*, éd. Jean Dutourd, Paris 1963, and *Rivarol, Discours sur l'universalité de la langue française suivi de Pensées, Maximes, Réflexions, Anecdotes et Bons Mots*, éd. présentée par H. Juin, Paris 1966. Since there is no generally accepted classification (putting in order, ordering [[of Rivarol's texts]]), we offer to the reader our own (classification), with the only ambition being to make more visible the inner flow, continuity (coherence, train, ratiocination) and the central themes of Rivarol's thought.