

Panagiotis (Panajotis) Kondylis (Παναγιώτης Κονδύλης) - Power and Decision

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POWER AND DECISION by Panagiotis Kondylis - plain English version (see below for the "alternative words and phrases" version including some German text)



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Panajotis Kondylis
**MACHT UND
ENTSCHEIDUNG**

Die Herausbildung
der Weltbilder und
die Wertfrage

- Klett-Cotta -

Ο ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟΣ ΔΙΑΦΩΤΙΣΜΟΣ

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Παναγιώτης Κονδύλης

ΙΣΧΥΣ
ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟΦΑΣΗ

*Ἡ διαμόρφωση τῶν κοσμοεικόνων
καὶ τὸ πρόβλημα τῶν ἀξιών*



στιγμή

"The animistic prehistory of the mixing of Is (i.e. Being or To Be) and Ought is discernible here in the angst (or fear) in the face of the magical power of the word and of the curse: whoever expresses something ominous, wishes it as well, and contributes eo ipso to its carrying out. The defence of the close relation between Is (i.e. Being or To Be) and Ought, as sober and epistemologically well-founded as it may sometimes sound, has always stood under the aegis of this primitive thought style. This ascertainment is not here meant disparagingly; rather, one should conclude from it that exactly in this ascertainment the vitality of that defence, namely its perpetual reference to the constants of the human drive of self-preservation, which inside of culture strive for an objective, that is, taking root in life itself, meaning of life, is seen."

"At the human level, a transformation, through the mediation (or agency) of the "intellect(-spirit)" and its symbolic mechanisms, of the biological magnitude "self-preservation" into an ideational magnitude takes place, so that the question of self-preservation and the, understood in the wider sense, question of power, are transubstantiated into a question of identity" [*Das Politische und der Mensch*, S. 242, referring to *Macht und Entscheidung*, S. 49ff., 80ff..]

Read the book...

which explains why a final "peace", "concord", "harmony", "reign of justice" or whatever else one may wish to conceptually concoct, will never be realised...

which explains why people, groups of people and the human race in general must struggle or fight to survive, without of course denying the existence of (even long-term, albeit macro-historically always temporary) cooperation, agreement, stability and peace, whilst acknowledging conflict is just as much as cooperation potentially and or actually existent in human interaction in many of its countless manifestations...

which describes and explains the existence of human culture and the mechanisms of power and domination which permeate all kinds of human action from outright violence, which necessarily quantitatively subsides as culture "increases", to in terms of content diverse, yet in terms of form identical, ideational influence, which signals the "development" of human societies. Even the "best" or most "humane" or "altruistic" of human conduct is thoroughly permeated - albeit to varying degrees and in innumerable guises - by power claims and striving for dominance. [The definition of power is all-encompassing and infinitely variable in degrees and forms thereof: human life itself (all humans are in (relation to) society), in so far as it continues, is

a form of power and extension or expansion of power; power resides as ideas (symbols) AND (potential) deeds, i.e. culture with roots always in nature (incl. biology), within individuals and groups (tribes, races, nations, institutions, corporations, states, etc.) and pervades all sorts of dynamics and combinations of individuals and groups; the political within the social is the realm within which power manifests itself in various forms through the mediation (or agency) of individual and group actors to bring about some kind of social cohesion and social order]...

which does not tell you what to do or what should be done, the book that does not concern itself with "change" apart from describing and explaining it, the book which explains that normative thought, and of course ideology, are socially necessary (as is the rejection of consistent value-free knowledge), but incapable of adequately describing reality scientifically. Even when the dominant ideology is "settled", read the book which explains the role of interpretation and why there is no "end of history" or "end of conflicts", but which also explains why the promotion of various ideological forms of Utopia (and or mythology) is an inevitable part of relatively "developed" (whether e.g. Aboriginal or advanced-technological) societies and their humans...

which is based entirely on historical fact and not on socially inevitable and indestructible fantasy or illusion, the book which does not try to fool itself and others that replacing one ideology with another ideology (e.g. a "failed traditional grand narrative" with a "micro narrative of harmonious pluralistic co-existence" based on "dialogue" or "universalistic human rights") can possibly constitute any kind of "progress" from a scientific point of view.

Read the book which explains why only strictly descriptive theory (accompanied by a certain perception of human affairs based on (historical) empirical evidence) is capable of explaining human behaviour (action), in all its (historical) variations as well as in its socio-ontological continuity or consistency, to the fullest extent that such behaviour (action) can be explained. The book which exposes why theory is never put into social practice on a mass-scale without being fundamentally altered by the reality of human action and the heterogony of ends...

which draws on the rich history of ideas to illuminate the main theoretical and ideological conflicts in that history with incomparable analytical insight, without of course ever losing sight of the fact that ideas as such do not exist, but only individuals in concrete situations, i.e. only people living in (or in relation to) society exist who make use of ideas in pursuing their own self-preservation and

power claims. Normativism will always prevail at all levels of ideational endeavour, which is always connected to concrete human actors, and the fusion of Is and Ought lies at the basis of all thought which seeks to be socially accepted or influential, from "animism" to the most "complicated and sophisticated" philosophical argumentation.

Read a general theory regarding the militant, polemical character, and the corresponding symbolic functions, of the "intellect(-spirit)"; the role(s) of interpretation, taste and power.

Read the "short" book without footnotes (by Kondylis) which touches upon some of the core elements of Kondylis's thought fully referenced in his two grand projects as exemplified by: *Die Aufklärung im Rahmen des neuzeitlichen Rationalismus* and *Die neuzeitliche Metaphysikkritik* (history of ideas), and, *Das Politische und der Mensch* (social ontology or "macro social theory").

[For the "half-educated" reader (or today's reader tainted by one or many of the various forms of "political correctness"): Kondylis was never a supporter or advocate of Carl Schmitt's decisionistic theory (in actual fact *Power and Decision* is, inter alia, a polemic against Schmitt's decisionism in favour of a "descriptive theory of the decision")*. Decisionism, or variations of it, or forms of existentialism that have used the concept of the decision (and or the friend-foe concept) have had various advocates at different historical moments and such thinkers were by no means of the same or similar political persuasions (e.g. as Kondylis himself has pointed out, Karl Jaspers and Karl Barth were not exactly outspoken supporters of national socialism, and it goes without saying that Kierkegaard (and also Nietzsche) lived in times pre-dating 20th century politics post World War I). Labeling thinkers and people in general based on a superficial understanding of their writings and positions is understandable if what is sought is polemical confrontation and ("final") ideological victory - it has, however, absolutely nothing to do with value-free (i.e. non-normative) description and explanation or analysis. Just as Kondylis acknowledged the extent to which slightly significant thinkers like Schmitt (Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck as exponents of the science of history were far greater influences on Kondylis than Schmitt), and extremely significant thinkers like Karl Marx were correct, he did not hesitate to point out their considerable shortcomings as well.

* Essential reading for a fuller understanding of Kondylis's stance in relation to Schmitt and decisionism, including in the context of the law, theology and political rule (sovereignty, domination or power), and also regarding the question of value freedom, with telling references to Kelsen, Bonald, Donoso Cortés, A. l' Houet, is: Kondylis, P. "Jurisprudenz, Ausnahmezustand und Entscheidung. Grundsätzliche Bemerkungen zu Carl Schmitts "Politische Theologie"", esp. pp. 343-344, 350-351, 352ff (pp. 154-156, 166-169, 170ff. in the Greek text: «Επιλεγόμενα» (στην *Πολιτική Θεολογία* του Carl Schmitt))]

READ "the book" ... "the dynamite under the delusions of philosophers and theorists in general hardly anyone wants to touch" (C. F.).

TRANSLATOR'S HINT TO BEMUSED READERS: Whilst whatever I say cannot be a substitute for the hard work needed to read and understand Kondylis, the following may be of assistance: one of the points made in *Power and Decision* is that every kind of society creates its own ideologies and ruling dogmas, which all have a common conceptual structure, through and behind which concrete individuals and groups exercise power, i.e. influence and or govern others, and thus have differing and opposing thought content. In the Western context, the ruling dogma or ideology once said e.g. that the Son of God was God and born of a mortal Virgin. To openly doubt such absurdity would be punished harshly. Today, in certain sectors of society, "rape has nothing to do with sex", "everyone (i.e. individuals from all over the world as compared to one another, and not individuals of the human race as compared to other non-human species of the animal kingdom or natural world) is the same", "women and men are equal" (even though their hitherto unchangeable biological differences as biology without human intervention are not exactly hidden and unknown - even to laypeople), "x race is inherently "good" compared to y race which has a history of inherent "evil" (even though race, however defined, does not really exist, whereas racism does)", "human rights exist notwithstanding that they are not enforced in respect of all humans everywhere (or are enforced only selectively on the basis of power politics)", "love and open borders will overcome hate and division", "even though humans are natural beings, human culture is totally separable from nature", "Islam is the religion of Peace [and only Peace]", or the once prominent: "people (i.e. humans) of x race are sub-human or not human", "Christianity is the religion of Love [and only Love]", etc., despite being such logically inconsistent (not to say ridiculous and ludicrous) statements or notions with no empirical foundation whatsoever, are nonetheless (blindly) believed and supported with zeal and fanaticism by (both relatively intelligent as well as mentally challenged if not retarded) people. Inevitably, such people, riding the high tide of polemics, emotion and sloganeering, will do everything within their means to sideline any doubters so that certain individuals and groups can wield power over other individuals and groups, i.e. the polemical zeal behind power claims overrides any logical coherence and correspondence with empirical reality. Thus, without supporting any dogma or ideology, i.e. thought content, what *Power and Decision* does is describe the basic thought forms through which human (social) action takes place, with an emphasis on world images, world views, ideologies, as they pertain to self-preservation, power, the intellect(-spirit), identity, meaning, the friend-foe spectrum as to common thought structures but disparate, opposed thought content, etc. (*The Political and Man (Das Politische und der Mensch)*) gives readers a more rounded and far deeper view of human (social) action, encompassing: 1) the social relation both as to its (friend-foe) spectrum, and as to its mechanism (understanding, rationality, language), which bring about the endless types of (historical-)sociological content; 2) the political as the interaction of all interactions achieving social coherence and social order (social disciplining); and 3) the anthropological, whereby human nature is culture, with humans always being *both* natural and cultural beings, no matter how much culture can shape and control, rule or change nature) [neither Hobbes, nor Rousseau are absolutely right about human nature as far as "good" or "evil" is concerned; or, both are only partially right - both their positions are encompassed by empirically

observed human action throughout known history. Furthermore, as far as we know, the Sophists first proposed that society was founded by way of contract between individuals, and that society is therefore seen as ensuring the exchange, utility (benefits) and protection of its members. On the other hand, the notion of "community" points to the always pre-existing reality of collective human and social existence, without being adequate, like the equally stylised aforementioned notion of "society", as a social-ontological concept (see *Das Politische und der Mensch*, S. 290 [= p. [coming soon], *The Political and Man*], referring inter alia to Aristotle's *Politics*.)]

A note on terminology (the following acts as an introductory understanding of key terms and concepts. A reading of Kondylis's notes and reflections contained in:

1. «Ταυτότητα, ισχύς, πολιτισμός» (πενήντα δελτία) ("Identity, power, culture (civilisation)" (fifty statements (proclamations or assertions)), Εὐάγγελος Γκανᾶς (ἐπιμ.) in *Νέα Ἑστία*, Year 78, Volume 156, Issue 1769, July-August 2004,
2. „Reflexion[en] über Gewalt, Herrschaft, Macht“. (Zettel 3850-3880 und 3569-3577), übersetzt und kommentiert von Fotis Dimitriou In: IABLIS. Jahrbuch für europäische Prozesse, 12. Jg., 2013 http://www.iablis.de/iablis_t/2013/kondylis13.html ,
3. „Macht und Entscheidung - Nachgelassene Notizen zur Sozialontologie“. Aus dem Griechischen von Fotis Dimitriou. In: Tumult. Vierteljahresschrift für Konsensstörung, Sommer 2014, S. 36-44,
4. „Faktoren der Menschwerdung - Nachgelassene Notate zur "Sozialontologie"“. Aus dem Griechischen von Fotis Dimitriou. In: Zeno. Jahrbuch für Literatur und Kritik, Heft 35 (Jg. 36), 2015, S. 58-71,

indicates that there are many further, finer levels and gradations of meaning and distinctions between at least some of the key terms and concepts...

“Power” („Macht“, in Greek: «ἰσχύς») is (human) life and (human) life’s continuation (self-preservation) in human culture (society), informed by the acceptance of meaning («νόημα», „Sinn“) (not found in the non-human animal kingdom), i.e. (restricted by and) relative to other (individual and collective) crystal(lisation)s of (forms of) power, as well as, in its broadest sense,

encompassing all forms of the (in part usually, not always, overlapping in meaning) terms: dominance, predominance, domination, rule, ruling (over others), authority, sovereignty, dominion, control, influence, pre-eminence, hegemony,... violence,... force (as human coercion, strength, violence, etc. and not in the strict sense of the natural sciences as energy), etc.. Power and all its aforementioned manifestations can be physical and or (more often) ideational (ideological), and ultimately always refers to (human) society (and its culture, and the multifarious manifestations of identity, of individuals and groups) as the (a) political (collective) with some form of social order and social cohesion (as well as social disciplining)^o. ("Power" in a more general sense that is beyond human culture/society, i.e. in the non-human animal kingdom and in nature in general, is force akin to mere energy in living and surviving). [Nietzsche's conception of power is undifferentiated and refers to both organic and inorganic, animal and human nature, and thus is tantamount to force (energy) in the sense of the natural sciences; man then becomes the bearer of the Will to Power - and the concept of power loses its hermeneutic precision in relation to humans (i.e. lacking in Nietzsche is a social-ontological and sociological-historical understanding). Nietzsche's distinction between a healthy-innocent(-extra-ethical) (existing in all of the universe) and sick, degenerate (religion and ethics-based) Will to Power, notwithstanding his disparate (contradictory) positions through his life, leads him to comparing a bad nihilism to a good nihilism (when nihilism is simply normatively Nothing, i.e. (ethical and religious) Value Freedom), and to overlooking that any kind of power must take place in human society as human culture and amongst the humans and relations therein, including the falsehoods and lies necessary for the preservation of human (social) life. See p. 27-28 of Kondylis, P. (ed.), *Der Philosoph und die Macht* (Anthologie). Hamburg: Junius. 259 S.. Einleitung = Introduction S. 9-36, i.e., S. 27-28 = pp. 82-85 of *Ἡ ἡδονή, ἡ ἰσχύς, ἡ οὐτοπία* (1992)). Foucault, building on his interpretation of Nietzsche, effaced the conceptual boundary between power (Macht) and dominance (domination, ruling over others or authority; Herrschaft (ἐξουσία)) (but cf. S. 34, loc. cit., where Kondylis clearly shows that Autorität = κύρος = κῦρος (p. 94 of Greek text) = authority, in relation to Jaspers; at S. 24 (p. 79, Greek text) Autorität = ἐξουσία = authority (dominance or dominion), in relation to Diderot). Even though Foucault correctly understood that power permeates all of society as a network of relations or correlation of forces, he did not see that power crystallises into innumerable forms so that power becomes an object of historical investigations, and not just anthropological and psychological investigations. Foucault did not explain the social hierarchisation of the relations of power and of institutions, nor the existence of relations of power outside of the institutional grip (or control) of the state. Furthermore, Foucault's microphysical way of looking at power is incapable of analysing the coming into being, character and decline of social formations, and ends up ideologically reflecting the circumstances of

Western mass democracy, including the interweaving of Public and Private and bidding farewell to traditional notions of power. The individual and its self-realisation (Selbstverwirklichung; *αὐτοπραγμάτωση*) take centre stage so that oppression is experienced in the affluent society; "... and so he is declared a great philosopher, [he] who promotes liberation through the unmasking of the mechanisms standing behind [such oppression]" (= Kondylis is telling us, in effect, that Fame (and a kind of Deification) goes hand in hand with what (a section of) the Public Believes, Wants and Craves, and has Nothing to do with Science as the absolutely consistently dispassionate and non-normative Observation of Human Affairs = As soon as the fundamental circumstances of Western mass democracy end, the post-modern CIRCUS will leave history's stage; then it becomes a question of whether another circus will take (its) place or whether the elements of Anomie will lead to greater relative Disorder (= relatively low levels of Order) or to relatively heavy-handed Authoritarian Order, under which the Fun is not so free and widespread). See, loc. cit., S. 35-37 = pp. 97-99] [Conceptual distinctions can reach rather frustrating levels of complexity: e.g. Kondylis in note 3656 (see °° below) confines "power" to something like "influence", as opposed to "authority", which is like "dominance", "domination" with a strong component of "force" as "violence". See also my discussion of „Herrschaft“, which highlights that "authority" in English, at least as it appears to the translator, does not carry the weight and force of "domination/dominance" it used to when Parsons did his translation of Weber many decades ago (when the full effects of e.g. *The Wild One* (Brando) and *Rebel without a Cause* (Dean) had not fully "blossomed"). Presumably the new translation of *Economy and Society* by Keith Tribe will be of interest on this point. In any event, Kondylis's notes are NOTES, i.e. not in any "final form" (with the context of specific, refined distinctions between definitions being fully laid out), and fine conceptual-terminological distinctions always bear within them the Danger of losing Sight of the Bigger Picture, and to be frank, they don't interest the translator that much - there is ultimately nothing better, if one wants to go into the greatest possible conceptual detail, than learning German!]

There is usually no, at least at first instance or first glance, necessarily strict and absolute distinction made between the terms related to "power" (with the notable exception of „Gewalt“ as "violence" and "force" meant strictly physically):

„Herrschaft“, which is usually translated as "dominance" and far less commonly as "domination" or "rule" ("ruling (over others)") [Talcott Parsons's translation is mainly "authority", though "domination" is also used not infrequently, and Parsons observed that whilst there was no satisfactory English equivalent for the term „Herrschaft“, "imperative control" as used by N. S. Timasheff was

nonetheless closest to Weber's meaning (see Weber Max, *Economy and Society*, Vol. 1., pp. 61-62, note 31, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1968, 1978; see also: pp. 217ff. („legale Herrschaft“ = "legal authority"), 226ff. („traditionale Herrschaft“ = "traditional authority"), 241ff. („charismatische Herrschaft“ = "charismatic authority"), 262ff. („Herrschaft“ = "authority"), etc. - elsewhere in the same edition of *Economy and Society*, as already noted, „Herrschaft“ is translated as "domination" (pp. 53ff., 212ff.) or as "legitimate domination" (p. 212ff.); "legitimer Herrschaft" is translated as "authority" (p. 215ff.), etc. Kondylis's own Greek rendering of „Herrschaft“ as «ἐξουσία» or «κυριαρχία» suggests the English word "authority" (or even "power", "control", "dominion", "governance"), or in the case of «κυριαρχία», "sovereignty", "domination" or "dominion", rather than just "dominance". The translator's view is that "authority" in English does not adequately convey a sense of the relatively high degree of "power" or "imperative control" contained within „Herrschaft“ and «ἐξουσία» or «κυριαρχία» (keeping in mind as well the diminution and or dispersal in the force of actual (top-down) "authority" in the West in the decades since Parsons was intellectually active), and therefore has opted for "dominance" ("domination" or "rule"/"ruling (over others)"). This is not to say that "authority" is not a valid choice, however the translator notes that in Kondylis's notes there is a clear distinction made between „Herrschaft“ and „Autorität“ (provided the German is an adequate reflection of Kondylis's Greek terminology), and if „Herrschaft“ is to be translated "authority", where does that leave „Autorität“? [I have however occasionally seen it as appropriate to e.g. translate „eine Herrschaft“ («μὴν ἐξουσία») as "an authority (a regime of dominance)"] [In "The philosopher and power" I found it useful to translate „Herrschaft“/«ἐξουσία» often, though not always, as "authority as dominance", rather than just "dominance", in particular in contrast to „Autorität“/«κῆρος»/"authority"] [In e.g. "'War and politics': Clausewitz's position" I rendered «ἐξουσία» as "dominant authority"].

(3850) Gewalt ist das Mittel, Macht ist der Zweck; wer Gewalt nicht als Mittel zur Macht einsetzt, ist politisch belanglos (so z.B. ein Verbrecher) [Violence is the means, power is the end (goal); Whoever does not use violence as a means for power, is politically inconsequential (thus, e.g. a criminal)].

(3851) Autorität: Gehört zur Herrschaft, bildet das, was an der Herrschaft Macht ist. Die Autorität gehört wesensgemäß zur Macht, nicht zur Herrschaft [Authority: Belongs to dominance (domination, rule or ruling (over others)), [and] constitutes that which is power in dominance. Authority belongs of its essence (nature or texture) to power, not to dominance (domination)].

(3852) Macht = die Fähigkeit eines individuellen oder kollektiven Subjekts, das eigene Selbstverständnis als objektiv wahre Schilderung durchzusetzen. (So

wird Einfluss gewonnen usw., vorausgesetzt im Selbstverständnis ist der Anspruch enthalten.) [Power = the ability of an individual or collective subject to impose its own self-understanding as objectively true description (or account). (In this way, influence is gained, etc., provided that the claim is contained in the self-understanding.)].

(„Reflexion[en] über Gewalt, Herrschaft, Macht“. (Zettel 3850-3880 und 3569-3577), übersetzt und kommentiert von Fotis Dimitriou In: IABLIS. Jahrbuch für europäische Prozesse, 12. Jg., 2013 http://www.iablis.de/iablis_t/2013/kondylis13.html]);

„Vorherrschaft“ (in Greek: «ἐπικράτηση» or «κυριαρχία») as “predominance” (another proposed translation, not adopted here, is “pre-eminence”, which in German is or can be „Vorrang“ (Greek: «προβάδισμα» or «πρωτεΐα»; usually translated here as “precedence”;), or „Vorrangstellung“);

„Beherrschung“ («ἔλεγχος», «συγκράτηση», «ἐξουσίαση» or «κατεξουσίαση») as “control(ling)”, “domination” or “absolute domination”;

„Gewalt“ («βιαιότητα» or «βία») as “violence” (in relation to Montesquieu and the separation of powers, „Gewalt“ = «ἐξουσία» = "power");

„Kraft“ («δύναμη») as “force” or “strength”, and less often “power”;

„Autorität“ («ἐξουσία» or «κῦρος» or «κηδεμονία» (in the Montesquieu introduction)), „Instanz“ («βαθμίδα δικαιοδοσίας») as “authority” (or "authority (custody, guardianship)" in the case of „Autorität“ as «κηδεμονία» - though strictly speaking, P.K.'s German „von der Autorität des höheren Willens“ is rendered in Greek: «ἀπὸ τὴν κηδεμονία ὑπέρτερων ἀθθεντιῶν» = "from the authority (custody, guardianship)/custody (guardianship, authority) of the higher will (or: of higher authorities)");

„Durchsetzung“ as “imposition” («ἐπιβολή») or “predominance” («ἐπικράτηση») or “prevailing” («νίκη»);

„Souveränität“ («κυριαρχία») as “sovereignty”;

„Hegemonie“, which is rarely used, («ἡγεμονία») as “hegemony”; „hegemonial“, which is much more commonly used than „Hegemonie“, («ἡγεμονικὸς») as “hegemonic”;

in the case of „Großraumaspitant“ («ὑποψήφιος ἡγεμόνας τοῦ μείζονος χώρου»), the English rendering is “aspirant to a large space (i.e. prospective hegemon of a large space”; „Großraumaspiranten“ («ὥστε νὰ προβάλλουν μὲ τὴ φιλοδοξία τῆς ἡγεμονίας σ' ἓναν μείζονα χῶρο») as “aspirants to a large space (so much that they have the ambition of hegemony in a large space)”, or when «ὑποψήφιος γιὰ τὴν ἡγεμονία σὲ μείζονες χώρους» as “aspirants to a large space (i.e. Powers which are candidates for hegemony in large spaces)”.

It appears that the English common usage of “hegemony” today is for Kondylis more like „Herrschaft“ («ἐξουσία», «κυριαρχία»; “dominance”, “authority”); „Autorität“ («ἐξουσία», «κῶρος»; “authority”), or, „Vorherrschaft“ («ἐπικράτηση», «κυριαρχία»; “predominance”), without the totally physical phenomenon „Gewalt“ («βιαιότητα», «βία»; “violence”). Kondylis understands and uses “hegemon”/“hegemony”/“hegemonic” much more in Machiavellian, rather than in Gramscian terms (and never refers to “soft power” (which relates to “(pre)dominance”, “authority”, etc.), and “hard power” (which is “power” with “violence” always as a physical phenomenon));

„Gebiet“ can be defined as “dominion” («ἐπικράτεια»), though more often as “field”, “area”, “sector” («πεδίο», «χῶρος», «τομέας»);

„gebietend“ («ἐξουσιαστικὸς») as “commanding”;

„Einfluß“, and less often „Wirkung“ («ἐπήρεια», «ἀποτέλεσμα», «ἐπιρροή», «δράση», «ἐπίδραση», «ἐπενέργεια», etc.) (primarily, but by no means exclusively, “effect”), as “influence”;

„Geltung“ («κῦρος») as “prestige” and or “authority”, though Kondylis has translated „Geltung“ into Greek as «δράση», «ἰσχύς»,... with my choice in English usually being “validity”;

„Ansehen“ («κῦρος») as “prestige” and or “authority”;

„Prestige“ («γόητρο») as “prestige”;

„Kompetenz“ and „Zuständigkeit“ («ἀρμοδιότητα») (which while denoting skill, capability, etc., are by no means ever independent of (some kind of) considerations of (or forms of) power, or power-related phenomena such as „Interpretationsmonopol“ (= «μονοπώλιο τῆς ἐρμηνείας», “monopoly of interpretation”), „Verbindlichkeit“ (= «δεσμευτικότητα», “bindedness”), etc.) as “competence”, or, in the case of „Zuständigkeit“ also as “domain” or “responsibility”, along with “competence”;

„Hierarchie“ (or far less often „Status“) («ἱεραρχία») as “hierarchy”;

„Energie in der Natur“ («ἐνέργεια μέσα στὴ φύση») as “energy in nature”;

„Lebensenergie“ («ζωτικὴ ἐνέργεια») as “life's vital energy”;

„Wille zur Macht“ («βούληση γιὰ ἰσχὺ») as “will to power”;

in the case of „(ob)walten“ (verb) and „Obwalten“ or „Walten“ (noun), the situation is literally that of a dog's breakfast, with Kondylis himself using in Greek «ἐπικρατῶ, προεξάρχω, δεσπάζω, κυριαρχῶ,...», «ὑπερίσχυση», «κυριαρχία»,... and I choosing almost always "prevail", "prevailing", with the other possible choices being "dominate", "rule" or even "take the lead", depending of course on the context;

and so on, and so forth...

The translator is not in principle opposed to the making of strict(er) definitional distinctions between the above-mentioned terms, however, due to the degree in the overlapping of such terms' meaning, neither Kondylis nor the translator has engaged in such an endeavour. Definitional distinctions are important. They cannot or should not however constrain the relative elasticity of meaning when exactly such flexibility is epistemologically appropriate. The fact that some non-human animals can and do exercise some forms of power over other animals not necessarily through direct physical contact or violence, and can control their impulses or instincts to some degree in certain circumstances, does not alter the fact that the non-human animals as social animals which display such self-control, do not *behave* („verhalten“, «συμπεριφέρομαι») in a way which could encompass human-like *action* (*acting*, *act(s)*) („Handeln“ («πράξη», «δράση», «πράξεις», «δραστηριότητα»), “Handlung” («δράση»), „Akt(e)“ («πράξη», «πράξεις»), “Tätigkeit” («δραστηριότητα» = “activity”; and “Tun” («δραστηριότητα», “activity” or “doing(s)”)°°° accompanied by a symbolic network or “system” of meaning (language etc.) created by humans beyond what pre-existed, or exists without human intervention, in the natural world.

[Perhaps the basic starting point should be that "power" is the most general form of energy *plus and in relation to* meaning (social relations, interaction and identity (/recognition)), created by humans through symbols etc.; that "dominance", "domination", "authority" implies acquiescence of the person who is "obedient", but under at least the threat of "force" and (stronger) "violence", whereas "influence" can be seen, though not necessarily, as containing no such threat. "Violence" is always physical, and there is no such thing in Kondylisian conceptuality as "verbal violence", or Foucaultian "microaggressions", etc., or any other such inanities and or biased use of present-day "theory", which is

more interested in the exercise of power and control over certain (i.e. a particular class of) people, in favour of certain other (i.e. particular classes of) people, than in understanding social phenomena in a dispassionate, non-normative value-free manner (diachronically, macro-historically and social-ontologically-anthropologically).]

Furthermore, terms such as:

„Weltbild“ («κοσμοεικόνα») (“world image”),

„Weltanschauung“ («κοσμοθεωρία»), „Weltansicht“ («κοσμοαντίληψη») (“world view”) or „weltanschaulich“ («κοσμοθεωρητικός») (“world-theoretical”),

„Weltauffassung“ («κοσμοαντίληψη») (“perception of the world” or “world view”), and „Weltwahrnehmung“ («κοσμοαντίληψη») (“perception of the world”),

„Ideologie“ («ιδεολογία») (“ideology”),

„Ideologeme“ («ιδεολογήματα») (“ideologems (i.e. kinds of sub-ideology)”),

„falsches Bewußtsein“ («ψευδής συνείδηση») (“false consciousness”),

„Religion“ («θρησκεία») (“religion”),

and,

„Interaktion“ («διάδραση») (“interaction”),

„Wechselwirkung“ («ἀλληλεπίδραση») (“interaction (or mutual influence)”) [in the Montesquieu book/introduction, „der Wechselwirkungen“ is rendered in Greek also as «τῶν ἀλληλεξαρτήσεων», which I translated into English as "of the interactions and mutual influences (or mutual dependencies)"]],

have more or less overlapping but also context-specific meanings e.g. when defined strictly or more broadly, etc.; by no means are they always meant totally mutually exclusively.

„Entscheidung“ («ἀπόφαση») as “decision” ultimately pertains to the question of identity (Identität («ταυτότητα»)), which in turn can only exist, be (re)formed or solidify, become more fluid, etc. only in connection with power and within or in relation to pre-existing society encompassing the friend-foe spectrum etc. (cf. *Das Politische und der Mensch*, S. 257-258).

„Absonderung“ («ἀποχωρισμός» or «διαχωρισμός») is translated as “segregation” in order to convey a stronger sense of separation („Trennung“ «ἀποχωρισμός» = “separation”, whereas when «διάκριση» = “distinction”; „Teilung“ («χωρισμός») = “division”).

„Geist“ («πνεῦμα») is usually, but not always, translated as “intellect(-spirit)” (it is felt that “spirit” alone in English often does not sufficiently convey the role of the mind within the “spirit” of both the German and the Greek terms („geistig“ («πνευματικός») = “intellectual(-spiritual)”). "Spirit" and "spirit(-intellect)", as well as "spiritual(-intellectual)", have nonetheless also been used, including in relation to Hegel and the past more so than as regards the mass-democratic present.

„Kultur“ («πολιτισμός») is always translated as “culture”, even though "civilisation" is not (always) necessarily a wrong choice („kulturell“, «πολιτισμικός», as “cultural”), and the relatively rarely used „Zivilisation“ (again «πολιτισμός» in Greek) as “civilisation”, though conceivably in certain instances “culture” would also be appropriate; however, “culture” is never chosen for „Zivilisation“.

Given Kondylis only ever uses one term for each of the pair “friend-foe”, i.e. „Freund-Feind“ («φίλος-ἐχθρός») („Freundschaft-Feindschaft“ («φιλία-ἐχθρότητα) = “friendship-enmity”; „freundlich-feindlich“ («φιλικὸς-ἐχθρικός») = “friendly-inimical”), and given that the meaning of common words can and does change throughout history and according to context etc., I see no point whatsoever in worrying about an “enemy-foe” distinction in English, even though others like G. Schwab ("interlocutor of Schmitt") might choose to do so, for whatever reason (e.g. the Latin "hostis" - "inimicus" distinction, etc.), and even though “enemy” is just as valid as “foe” in English. “Foe” to me simply sounds better in contrast to/with “friend”.

The careful reader will no doubt notice a number of other key terms which have customarily been and can be rendered into English in ways other than those chosen by the translator. Of utmost importance here is the conveyance into English of as many nuances in the German (and Greek) as is possible, and not the English as attractive or "easy-to-read" English. In any event, whoever wants to really study Kondylis in depth will have to learn German - there is no other way. Of course, it is well-known that Kondylis in his translations of other authors into Greek, as well as in regard to his own works, nearly always chose one word to signify another word, and placed great importance on the translation seeming like it was written in the language being translated into; and whilst we cannot but agree with the wisdom of such an approach to translation, for the purposes of this site, and because of the desire to make concepts more clearly understood or "fleshed-out" in English so as to encourage eventual recourse to the original German, another approach has been taken. Were the translations contained in this site to be published in book form, in order to be sold in the world's book market, so to speak, then further editing and "textual adjustment" would obviously be necessary.

° For a more detailed discussion, bearing many fine distinctions, of various aspects of "power" and "dominance/domination/rule/ruling (over others)" (or "authority"), see the following: Petridis Raymond, ""Power" and "Authority" in Panajotis Kondylis's Late Work", first published in Greek (*Νέος Ερμής ο Λόγιος* (*Neos Hermes ho Logios*), Έτος (Year) 4, Τεύχος (Issue) 10, Καλοκαίρι (Summer) 2014, Αθήνα (Athens), Εταιρεία Μελέτης Ελληνικού Πολιτισμού (www.emep.gr), pp. 118-162) - notwithstanding a number of perhaps "annoying" but "inevitable" differences in the translation of key terms, an advanced student of Kondylis's thought has much to gain from Dr. Petridis's

study, and the initial "instinctual hunch" is confirmed, THAT if someone wants to study Kondylis's thought to the full extent possible, **learn German!**:



[Petridis Power & Authority in Kondylis's Late Work.pdf](#)

Size : 6540.934 Kb

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[Πετρίδης Ρεϋμόνδος «Ισχύς» και «Εξουσία» στο όψιμο έργο του Π. Κονδύλη.pdf](#)

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°° Excerpt from p. 113, Petridis Raymond, ""Power" and "Authority" in Panajotis Kondylis's Late Work", containing Kondylis's Note 3656.

⁵⁶ Let us recall here one of Kondylis' c
someone to do something against his w
belief that this is his will" (note no. 3656
respective definition of domination: "...
will (*command*) of the *ruler* or rulers is
ruled) and actually does influence it in
occurs as if the ruled had made the con
own sake. Looked upon from the other
Economy and Society. University of Calif

°°° The distinction between animal *behaviour* and human *action* (*acting*, *act(s)*, *activity*) is useful when making certain comparisons, but the terms are also interchangeable, depending on the context.

See the Summary Notes to *Theory of War*, particularly at pp. 48-51ff. of the Greek book (= pp. 45-51ff. of the Summary Notes) on, inter alia, the distinction between power and violence. It is absolutely compelling theoretical material, uniquely set out in the history of ideas. You are very privileged (even if you don't fully understand it (yet or ever)) to be a part of reading such **thoughts** (and of course dismiss outright or treat my comments in [[...]] with extreme caution, as you will and probably must...).

For Greek-language readers, this is a thought-provoking and interesting article (it should be translated into English)!



[Σαμαρτζής «Δύναμη, ηδονή κι ελευθερία στον Κονδύλη».pdf](#)

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Initial thoughts: man as vegetable exists before and (presumably) after man as animal, and "man" as mineral exists before man as vegetable, but the ontological layers in man distinguish man from plain animal and plain vegetable because man is human (social-personal) action with ideas, and those ideas, for man to live "for the term of his natural life", must have some sort of relationship with ideology, because societies operate per definitionem with ideology (ideologies), whilst man can only withdraw from ideology into "ideationality" consistently as a scientific observer of human affairs, without proposing or imposing norms, and by testing his observations against empirical reality, no matter how multi-ontological and complicated such reality might be, whilst also not contradicting himself, but at some point

man must return to his relationship with ideology, for otherwise man would not be part animal, and without the animal in him, as vegetable, man is DEAD.

POWER AND DECISION (MACHT UND ENTSCHEIDUNG) by Panajotis Kondylis - alternative words and phrases version with some German text



[Power and Decision \(Macht und Entscheidung\) by Panagiotis Kondylis \(=Panajotis Kondylis\).pdf](#)

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