

# Thinking in and of the Decision

(Thinking (with)in(side) (regard to) (and of) the Decision)

Volker Gerhardt

[[Translated by C.F., ©, February, 2019, from the German: Gerhardt Volker, „Denken in der Entscheidung“ in Kondylis Panajotis, *Machtfragen. Ausgewählte Beiträge zu Politik und Gesellschaft*, WBG (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft), Darmstadt, 2006, S. 7-19. The translator also consulted the Greek translation by Kostas Koutsourelis (Κώστας Κουτσουρέλης) (and translated into English directly from the Greek translation of Gerhardt’s German speech, Greek text section “1.”, which was not included in the German text published after the Greek text’s publication): Gerhardt Volker, «Σκέψη και Απόφαση (= Thought and Decision)»<sup>i</sup> in Κονδύλης Παναγιώτης, *Μελαγχολία και Πολεμική. Δοκίμια και Μελετήματα*, Θεμέλιο, Αθήναι, 2002, σσ. 219-236.]]

1. ii

Nothing puts our strength to live (through) a greater test than death – and this, above all, on account of our sorrow (woe, anguish, agony) for what we have to live, without those who leave before us.

They say that death equalises us all. Perhaps this somewhat consoles all those who suffer from the differences between people (humans). Something which happens from time to time to everyone. Because, nonetheless, it is also the differences between humans which allow us to live and to hope, the story-telling and fairy tales (fables) as regards this equality in the face of death, has its limits. Since everyone ought to live his own life, the existential dissimilarity of humans does not release (exonerate, absolve, spare) anyone [[from life and death]] (*or*: set anyone free). Whoever, however, does not accept absolutely any

difference, creates a (point of) prejudice (bias), which finally (in the end, ultimately) destroys every value.

In reality, even (also) death itself confirms the singularity (uniqueness) of existence. Because it teaches us in an irrevocable manner that every one of us has his own fate (destiny). The singularity (uniqueness), which becomes obvious with/at birth<sup>1 + iii</sup> and whose reality, man himself shoulders – paradoxically– during the course of his life, is sealed by his death in a certain place and at a certain time. Even if general laws exist which govern or dominate the body, even if every person participates in what is destined for his own epoch (era, age), for his own people, for his own family, for his own profession and – mainly– for his own character, with regard to death, the life (biotic, living) cycle (circle) of/for an individual, closes. It is also only for this reason that the death of others warns us irrevocably that we too shall die. What could strike (manage, bring about) a more formidable (mighty) blow against/to the charming (fetching, entrancing) singularity (uniqueness) of our existence as much as the sight of a dead person?

Even also the previous image/picture in respect of the fear of death is of an irreplaceable individuality: I myself have to recall in my memory the sorrow (woe, anguish, agony), the unspoken (unspeakable) horror, my absolute inability in view of death so that I could be afraid of him/it (i.e. death). I have to bring before my eyes my own inability, my own lack of resources/strength to proceed/go forward, and, my own perplexity (bewilderment, puzzlement), or even the potential end of my own existence, in order to be able to comprehend death as liberation (emancipation). And finally, I have to already know about my own death so that I can discover in it (my own death) the destiny of the Other.

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<sup>1</sup> I (shall) explain myself: every birth takes place at its own time, in its own place by a certain mother – and to this extent is singular (unique).

Only in this way do we get acquainted with depression in relation to the death of another person. In its spontaneity, the feeling of depression constitutes participation in pain as regards the loss which afflicts the Other. We believe we know how much (many things) death –at this age, with the charismata which distinguished him, with the hopes (which) he nourished– deprives him of. We lament his already frustrated (confounded, thwarted) possibilities as if they were something already realised.

Nonetheless, these possibilities have meaning only when they have to do with a life, which already continues without him. Sadness (Affliction, Grief, Dolour) stems from the present, where the dead man does not exist anymore. Death is painful and distressing (harrowing, sorrowful) because it constitutes a loss for all those who continue to live. And this (i.e. living), the living must do (it, i.e. living) every time for (them) themselves, even if they gather together at a memorial function to console and to encourage one another. Every society has meaning only as much as it helps the individual live his own life. Because this meaning cannot concern but the acts of an isolated existence.

## 2.

The greatest legacy of a dead man is when he sets (gives) an example for (to) the living with his consciously lived sense of existence (being there, presence). I can admit (profess, confess) exactly this – for myself (my very self) – in respect of Panajotis (Panagiotis) Kondylis: he dedicated (devoted) himself with all (his) passion, against the greatest of resistance(s) (opposition(s)), and on his own (all alone), to a philosophical work. He demonstrated in an exemplarily fashion (manner, way) what it means to strive after (for) knowledge. He also philosophised without the supporting (supportive) and protecting (protective) regulations of an institution of his own accord (off his own bat, on his own

initiative, based on his own drive and motivation); he went his own way – in Heidelberg and in Athens. Finally, he was not deterred or discouraged by the adverse (unfavourable, malevolent) zeitgeist (i.e. spirit of the times) – which was favourable neither to his approach, nor to his themes (topics, subject matter(s)) – from self-thinking (i.e. thinking for himself).

With all of that, he (Panajotis Kondylis) provided to the – believed to have been lost (since) long ago – title of “private scholar (man of erudition and learning)”, a renewed prestige, repute or standing. Because a philosopher is (suited to being) a philosopher only exactly as much as he can also perform as a “private scholar”. If we take together (i.e. summon or combine) both of the common(ly used) titles in the Enlightenment for philosophers – “self-thinker, i.e. he who thinks for himself” and “world-wise, i.e. he who is wise (knows wisely) about the world” – then the “private scholar” appears or emerges, who amongst the all-pervasive claim of the public, makes exactly the form of existence known which one needs all of the time, if one wants to think one’s own thoughts. To make (think, present) one’s thoughts public(ally), that is the profession (vocation) of the (a) philosopher. One could accurately define it (this profession of the philosopher) by means of the oxymoron of the private scholar.

Naturally, it is not for me (it lies far from me) to speak (talk) negatively (detrimentally, inimically) about the philosophy of the university and its professors. Wherever there are universities, philosophy necessarily belongs to them (universities). However, the productivity of thought has little to do with that. Because the insights of philosophy are bound (tied) to the individuality of individual thinkers. The number of their assistants is, in the course of this, completely irrelevant (insignificant, inconsiderable). A philosopher can yield (produce, deliver, supply) a decisive (crucial) achievement (accomplishment, performance) [[in philosophy]] only with one’s own mind/head and brain(s).

And here the life achievement (work) of/by Panajotis Kondylis withstands (endures, sustains) every comparison with the “state scholars”, with the public/civil servant teachers (professors, tutors, masters) and thinkers; of course, nothing would have drawn me to this sad (sorrowful, mournful) occasion in Athens if I were not convinced that Panajotis Kondylis, not only in his scientific form of life, but also in his philosophical-systematic output (yield, return, fruits) gave us an eminent example.

In order to speak with all [[possible]] clarity: with Panajotis Kondylis we have not only lost a knowledgeable and learned (well-informed, rich-in-knowledge) historian of philosophy, not only a full-of-temperament and spirited theoretician (theorist) of politics, not only a consistent critic of ruling (dominant) opinion, not only a publicist (communicator [[e.g. through his approx. 15 long newspaper articles etc.]]) of noteworthy presence, but, above all, an original philosophical mind (brain, head).

### 3.

Panajotis Kondylis wrote noticeably (conspicuously, strikingly, extraordinarily) little about *death*.<sup>iv</sup> Death or dying, after Socrates, the actual (real, true) theme (topic, subject matter) of philosophy, appears (crops up, is found) in him (i.e. Panajotis Kondylis’s [= P.K.’s] work) only in passing (parenthetically, incidentally) as the *problem of other philosophers*.

However, there is an observation (comment, remark) which reveals (shows, suggests), despite its distanced matter-of-factness (objectivity, practicality, functionalism), how much in his (P.K.’s) eyes *death* concerns the *individual* (person, human).<sup>v</sup> And since this observation stands/is at the centre of his own philosophising, it has an extraordinary weight. On it (the said observation),

depends, namely, the (giving of) proof (line of argumentation, adduction of evidence) for/as regards the *(f)actual indispensability of metaphysics*, which is founded on the *need* of man, *to not resign himself to (or: to not come to terms with) the world, as it actually is.*

The world, as it actually is, does not seem to be made for humans (men). It (The world) is *pure facticity*, an *against one another of forces* (i.e. forces which are against one another), a *biophysical mechanism* which does not have of its own accord at its disposal all (things) (everything) which man needs for *his own way (conduct(ing)) of life (lifestyle)*. Indeed, it is manifest (obvious, clear) that this world has not until now hindered or prevented human life. But if it truly should (ought to) be human life, then man has to *make ends meet and to adapt to circumstances himself. He must decide* what he *prefers* and what he *neglects or rejects*. First, *his decision* is that which distinguishes something as *valuable and worthwhile*, or rejects (discards, dismisses) (it) as *valueless and worthless*. First *his decision (Entscheidung)* gives his representations and notions an *aim*.

Thus, first it is only the *willful and deliberate (volitive, volitional) decision (Dezision)* of man which brings (a) *sense (i.e. meaning) into existence (being there, presence)*. He is, of course, as to individual (particular, specific) matters, issues and details, tied and bound to physical and physiological given facts (factual realities) – not all things (everything) are/is (stand(s)), in regard to the setting of a goal, open. However, in regard to the great questions of (as to the) meaning (sense) of existence (being there, presence), man's claim necessarily goes beyond (surpasses) details and has the chance, i.e. opportunity of *his own (e)valuation* [[of things]]. Since he needs (an) *orientation towards the Whole* of existence (being there, presence), *metaphysical questions (in respect) of value(s)* are unavoidable too. In regard to them (the said metaphysical questions), *man's need for meaning* gains acceptance (or is announced). That is the "metaphysical need", of which Schopenhauer had (has) already spoken and

which Kant, as is known, put under [[as the foundations of]] (subordinated to) all metaphysics – critical metaphysics, as well.

4.

Already in his dissertation on (regarding) *The coming into being (emergence, genesis) of (the) dialectic(s)*,<sup>2</sup> Panajotis Kondylis pursued (went after) or investigated (followed up) this *metaphysical desire, demand(ing) (requirement, requiring, call(ing)) (in respect) of/for meaning (sense)*. With meticulous attention to detail, he traced (tracked) and looked (went) into (investigated) it (the metaphysical desire, demand or call for meaning) in the development of the young Hegel, in order to pursue it up to the point in which it (the said metaphysical call for meaning) will be made independent (autonomous) (be autonomised) in the powerfully effective (or determinative) method of professed world history (looking ahead, pretending or feigning). The *need for meaning* of an – in the beginning deeply unsure (uncertain, unnerved) individual (i.e. Hegel) by way of religious doubts, the critique of Reason and political revolution, who adopts (accepts, assumes) the difficult, strenuous and tiring [[to comprehend]] insights of his friends Hölderlin and Schelling, finds satisfaction only after he (Hegel) can prove himself in a world-dominating (world-commanding) law.

The (P.K.'s) outstanding dissertation, praised (extolled)<sup>3</sup> by criticism/critique and cited up till (until) today (to this very day), verifies that already the *pregnant, heavy or laden-as-to-effect (or crucial) transitions from philosophy to politics and history* concern the doctoral candidate (Ph.D. student)[[, P.K.]].

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<sup>2</sup> Die Entstehung der Dialektik. Eine Analyse der geistigen Entwicklung von Hölderlin, Schelling und Hegel bis 1802, Stuttgart 1979.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Thomas Kesselring, Auseinandersetzung mit der „Hegel-Legende“, in: Philosophische Rundschau 22, 1982, 233-240.

Nobody cared about such matters in the Heidelberg of the 1970s any longer;<sup>vi</sup> one would have to go back to Max Weber, Ernst Troeltsch or Karl Jaspers in order to encounter in the same place, related interests.<sup>4</sup> In 1975, one had long become encapsulated (i.e. one had withdrawn into one's own space/world/rabbit hole) *philologically, hermeneutically* or *analytically*, and had lost all attentiveness (alertness or awareness) in respect of existential questions regarding life. Max Weber's great theme (topic, subject (matter)), the transition *from the meaning of life to the conduct(ing) of (one's) life*, from the *individual motive to societal (social) structure*, had been since long ago/before pushed aside by mere questions of method (methodological questions) and editorial problems, as well as by the revolutionary rhetoric of the generation of 1968. Dieter Henrich made only in the *Fluchtlinien* known that he had not forgotten the metaphysical questions of existence (being there, presence). When the book appeared in 1982, Henrich had already left Heidelberg in the direction of Munich.<sup>5</sup>

The studies by Kondylis tackled after his doctorate, about *The Enlightenment*,<sup>6</sup> about the aristocratic provenance (origin, extraction) of *Conservatism*,<sup>7</sup> about the *Theory of War*<sup>8</sup> and, above all, about *The new-times critique of metaphysics*,<sup>9</sup> are all together to be understood out (in respect) of (from) the

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<sup>4</sup> See in relation to that, the interview with Martin Terpstra mentioned further below, in which Panajotis Kondylis talks about/speaks of his efforts and endeavours regarding "ideal-typical reconstructions" [[C.F. adds that the "further below" here refers to the book *Machtfragen* containing Volker Gerhardt's text, whereas English-language readers can refer to the "Answers to 28 questions" at [www.panajotiskondylis.com](http://www.panajotiskondylis.com) for P.K.'s answers to Martin Terpstra's questions, including as regards "ideal-typical reconstructions" (Q. 8).]]

<sup>5</sup> Dieter Henrich, *Fluchtlinien*. Philosophische Essays, Frankfurt/M. 1982. – One may (ought/should) not alongside (next to) the Heidelberg philosophers, of course, forget the Heidelberg historians of those years. Thus, Gerhard Gieselher drew my attention to Werner Conze's and Reinhart Koselleck's influence.

<sup>6</sup> Panajotis Kondylis, *Die Aufklärung im Rahmen des neuzeitlichen Rationalismus*, Stuttgart 1981. In relation to that, also: Panajotis Kondylis, Nachwort (Zur Darstellung der Aufklärung), in: Karl Vorländer, *Geschichte der Philosophie mit Quellentexten*, Bd. 3: Neuzeit bis Kant, Reinbeck 1990 [[= "The multi-dimensional Enlightenment" at [www.panajotiskondylis.com](http://www.panajotiskondylis.com)]].

<sup>7</sup> Panajotis Kondylis, *Konservatismus. Geschichtlicher Gehalt und Untergang*, Stuttgart 1986.

<sup>8</sup> Panajotis Kondylis, *Theorie des Krieges*. Clausewitz, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stuttgart 1988.

<sup>9</sup> Panajotis Kondylis, *Die neuzeitliche Metaphysikkritik*, Stuttgart 1990.

(his) desire to make graphic (vivid, clear, concrete) the *historical-societal/social dynamic(s)* which are driven by *metaphysical need*.<sup>vii</sup>

Finally, also his (P.K.'s) examination (investigation) of/about (research into) the *Decline of the bourgeois thought form an life form*,<sup>10</sup> shows how it (the said *Decline*) comes, or leads, to the flattening or leveling out of productive developments as soon as the exponents of the spirit(-intellect) only settle for, or just take an interest in, *soci(et)al structures, semiotic shifts (displacements), medial (mass-communicative, pertaining to the mass media) mediations (connections, exchanges, arranging, imparting, conveying)* or for/in the *idling, wastage or empty (hollow, vacuous) course (or purported wisdom) of mere mutuality (reciprocity)*.<sup>viii</sup> Whoever overlooks the necessary for his whole existence (being there, presence), for his “world” – reaching-out (grasping) – *desire, demand or call for meaning by man (humans)*, (he) can even lapse or fall into the illusion of the “End of History”. The post-modern retirees or veterans (pensioners) of History had no presentiment (foreboding, notion, idea, suspicion) that man precisely in a situation without prospects dreams of a *future*. Even (there) where nothing more gives him hope, he seeks *speculative reasons* for his state (of affairs) (situation), which for him, *because of that alone*, becomes (turns into) a historical moment.

## 5.

When Panajotis Kondylis, in his monumental historical tableaux (paintings), shows (demonstrates) how much the *modern world* organised precisely by material technique (i.e. technology) moves from (because of) *speculations* and

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<sup>10</sup> Panajotis Kondylis, *Der Niedergang der bürgerlichen Denk- und Lebensform. Die liberale Moderne und die massendemokratische Postmoderne*, Weinheim 1991. Also see in relation to that: Panajotis Kondylis, *Planetarische Politik nach dem Kalten Krieg*, Berlin 1992.

*hopes*, from (because of) *metaphysical reasons*, *theological dogmas* and *political ideas*, then his interest is not satisfied with/by the ascertainment of the real effectiveness of this or that idea. Even if the factual or objective result of his historical investigations is already taken, of itself, as being of eminent importance (significance), and as a profound reply (answer) or retort to the *historiography of the structuralists* (in accordance with the model (pattern) of the French *Annales*), of the *sociological materialists* (in the wake of (or succeeding) Marxism) or of the *anecdotal pointillists* (in accordance with the kind (sort, manner, type) of Blumenberg), [[even if this factual or objective result of P.K.'s historical investigations and research]] deserves the greatest attention (observance, notice, consideration), the demonstration of the effectiveness (effectuality, potency, efficacy) of ideas by no means satisfies the author (i.e. P.K.). He (P.K.) would like to detect (ascertain, establish) the *origin* (*provenance, extraction*), still better: the elementary-living(vital) *function* of ideas, and consequently be able to say how it (i.e. things, we) come to this History after all – and why for the time being it (this History) will not end.

Kondylis is the *philosopher* amongst the historiographers of the modern era (modernity) because he will not only describe *that* – and *how* – it (the modern era) moves, but he also wants, in regard to all of that, to know, out of (for) what/ which motives this happens. In (the) historical processes, he seeks the *motor of movement* – and finds it (the said motor of movement) in that “metaphysical need” (of man), (in) the imperative and essential “world image apparatus” of man, also being used for the *production of world-comprehensive meaning* (*sense*) (i.e. meaning which gives meaning to the whole of the world as seen by man).

6.

In exactly *that* passage now, in which Kondylis seeks to describe this *productive force of human history* fed by the *expectation of meaning (sense)*, in regard to him (in his work), there is talk of *death* – sober, almost in passing (parenthetically, incidentally) and without any personal (e)valuation.

Nevertheless, it becomes clear that we here have before us the *nervus rerum* (= Latin = main/essential thing, driving force, nerve centre) of a *philosophy*, which is founded entirely (completely) alone on the *decision of individuals*, a philosophy, which self-evidently can convince only *individuals*, and whose truth is bound or tied to the *individual claim on/of self-preservation*.

When Kondylis calls (names) his philosophy a “value-free descriptive decisionism”, he conceals (covers up) its own individual pathos (or emotionalism) behind a methodologically seeming label (i.e. behind the facade of a method). With that, he beats back and wards off (repulses), completely similarly as Weber [[had]] already [[done]], the exalted programmatic positioning (stance and or style) which (had) Nietzsche demonstrated and brought into disrepute (discredited) by his own example. In regard to this matter (case) (*or*: In practice), of course, exactly this *individual starting point* of philosophising (the philosophising man), which (who) since Kant is manifest (overt), and already for that reason/because of that, can no longer be denied, because we, now – after Kierkegaard and Nietzsche – recognise that all philosophy has its origin (provenance) in *its own thinking (thought)* and *its own deciding (decision)*.<sup>ix</sup>

With that, the starting point of man’s production of meaning steeped in history uncovered (laid bare, exposed) by Kondylis in his own thinking/thought goes back (returns) to the *beginnings of philosophising in this city* (i.e. Athens)! In relation to that, I *must* at this point say a word, precisely because it is also for

me a puzzle (riddle, enigma, mystery) why Kondylis, even in both of his two nice (beautiful) studies on *Marx and Greek antiquity*,<sup>11</sup> in which he comes nearest (closest) to his homeland in terms of the history of ideas, does not show or make a note of (notice) it/that (i.e. philosophising began in Athens). Merely (Simply, Only) in his anthology on the contributions of philosophers to the question (problem) of power<sup>12</sup> does he allow it to be (make it) discerned (known, recognised, perceived, seen, realised) how near (close) he felt to the Sophists, and in particular to their “more ingenious student” Thucydides.<sup>13</sup> But his observations and comments (remarks) on the paradoxical situation of philosophy between meaning (sense) and power, as well as his selection of texts by Plato and Aristotle, (document and) verify that from (out of) the proximity or nearness (closeness) felt to the *philosophes maudits* of antiquity,<sup>14</sup> there was no resentment against/towards the founding figures in Athens – Socrates, Plato, Aristotle – [[translator adds: of philosophy (as systematic, larger-scale, written thought)].

*Athens* is the birthplace of philosophy. The claim of/on *individual self-knowledge* is for the first time expressly attested to (witnessed) out of/from (in) this city. It (The claim of individual self-knowledge) was here for the first time *methodically questioned (problematised), examined and systematically taught*. Here it became (turned into) the *principle of philosophising*. And it revealed (showed, indicated) here in So(-)crates’s fate (destiny), for the first time [[ever]], the (what is) *tragic* [[element, dimension]], which is laid out (set up, structured, invested, created, moored, docked) exactly in the fact that an *individual* has *general insights*, and that is why (because of that), this individual

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<sup>11</sup> Panajotis Kondylis, *Marx und die griechische Antike. Zwei Studien*, Heidelberg 1987. [[Translated into English at [www.panagiotiskondylis.com](http://www.panagiotiskondylis.com)]]

<sup>12</sup> Panajotis Kondylis, *Der Philosoph und die Macht*, Hamburg 1992, here, in particular in the introduction: p. 10ff.. [[Translated into English at [www.panagiotiskondylis.com](http://www.panagiotiskondylis.com)]]

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12 and 35.

*himself* – and if need be, also entirely alone – wants to take his cue from, and comply with, them (these general insights).

Certainly (Of course), the *principle of self-conscious reflection upon one's own life* is no invention (fabrication, concoction) of/by Socrates. We have known for a long time that the coming into being (birth, emergence, genesis) of philosophy is closely (tightly, narrowly) connected with the development of democracy in this city (i.e. Athens). Besides, we already see Hesiod and Heraclitus, Parmenides and Anaxagoras, but above all, the great tragedians stepping over (across) the threshold to *consciously seized (grabbed, grasped, apprehended, taken up) individual self-knowledge*.

However, in (the case of) Socrates, the individual answer to the *question he himself posed*: “How should I live?” (= Greek = «τί δ' αὖ τό ζῆν;» = “what again about living?”)<sup>15</sup> has an expressly – *chosen by himself* – consequence, for which he must accept (put up with and pay the price of) *death*. His life and death vouch for and guarantee the possible unity of his own insight and own deeds (doing, act(s), acting, action). Whoever for (as to) the claim lying therein, is unresponsive (unreceptive, insensitive), turns philosophy into a *puzzle corner* or *brain teaser*; under scientific conditions, from that, at best, there will be an *interdisciplinary test bench (test block)* (i.e. interdisciplinary close scrutiny) *of/for logical arguing (argumentation)* – but just (precisely, exactly) no *philosophy*.

Yet even if university (school) philosophy today does not want to know about that (i.e. what was just mentioned/referred to): Socrates has had an effect (been effective), above all, through the *existential impulse* of his thought. Plato brought before our eyes (i.e. made known/clear to us) the (his) teacher (Socrates), in a *completely new literary form*, as *an individual*, and made us

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<sup>15</sup> Plato, Politeia (= Republic) 353d.

aware what it means to have a *philosophical problem*: according to a remark in *Protagoras*,<sup>16</sup> it (i.e. having a philosophical problem) is *every real problem* about which no-one can speak reasonably and appropriately (aptly, properly, suitably, commensurately, moderately, proportionately, favourably) without, in the process, *himself becoming or turning into the problem*.

## 7.

This interrelation (context, connection) (between philosopher and philosophical problem) remained in the history of philosophy protected (and preserved) (kept alive, looked after) even if its *existential radicality* from time to time (in places, in parts) fell into oblivion. It was never lost. We only need think of Cicero or Seneca, Plotinus, Boethius or Augustine. In the New Times, it (the said existential radicality) was known in Montaigne and Bruno, in Hobbes, Pascal and Rousseau, before it was renewed in an immense, vast, incalculable way in Kant and Fichte, and via them, in Romantic nihilism<sup>x</sup> up to Nietzsche. – And in this tradition does Kondylis stand, notwithstanding that (even though) he does not make (render, cause or produce) from that any personal pathos (emotionalism).

I cite:

“There is [...] no final, conclusive solution and no happiness (fortune, luck) not in danger (at risk) (*or*: no unthreatened (safe, assured) felicity). Whoever believes in final, conclusive solutions(, that person (man)) has (feels) angst and fear before (in the face of) missing out on the certainty of happiness not in danger.

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<sup>16</sup> Plato, *Protagoras* 333c.

That is the “ultimate reality”, as value-free descriptive decisionism apprehends (grasps) it. Almost all men (people, humans) would – without doubt – not like to live in “such a world” – although they in actual fact do it. Aversion (Distaste, Dislike, Repulsion, Abhorrence) to (against) it (i.e. “such a world”) must indeed be very lively and sincere (honest, genuine), otherwise people (humans, men) would not have made (thought) up (conceived, concocted) any ethics and any metaphysics in order to beautify their world and to be able to make it (in)habitable – and over and above that, in order to somewhat (to some extent/degree) reconcile themselves with death, which is actually not any future event, but a part of daily life, and not merely consists in biological demise (passing, becoming deceased), but also in the inexorable, relentless, implacable finiteness and relativity of all human undertakings.”<sup>17</sup>

The “inexorable, relentless, implacable finiteness and relativity of all human undertakings”, which death teaches us too: who should experience them (the

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<sup>17</sup> Panajotis Kondylis, *Macht und Entscheidung*. Die Herausbildung der Weltbilder und die Wertfrage, [The page number(ing) corresponds to the present edition here [[i.e. *Machtfragen*, 2006]]:] p-123 = p.128 (= p. 168 of the English translation at [www.panagiotiskondylis.com](http://www.panagiotiskondylis.com)). – The systematic meaning of this book (i.e. Power and Decision) is illustrated by a remark (comment, observation) by Heiner Hastedt, who still complained in 1998 regarding that [[i.e. the concept of the decision in general]], that after the critique (criticism) of the formal character of Heidegger’s concept of the decision by Christian Graf von Krockow (*Die Entscheidung* (1958), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Frankfurt/New York 1998), the philosophical meaning (significance) of the decision had as good as (almost) been forgotten. Because of that, Hastedt, with good reason(s), promotes or introduces a rehabilitation of the concept of the decision (H. Hastedt, *Der Wert des Einzelnen. Eine Verteidigung des Individualismus*, Frankfurt 1998, p. 227ff.). Hastedt overlooks that Kondylis, in relation to that, in *Macht und Entscheidung* (= *Power and Decision*) had produced (rendered, achieved, accomplished, performed) the essential preliminary (preparatory) work (pre-work). I say “preliminary or preparatory work (pre-work)” because Kondylis paid very little attention to the ethical dimension (whose meaning (significance) he – with Nietzsche – fails to appreciate (underestimates, misconceives) [[C.F.’s addition: I can’t say whether the Prof. Gerhardt’s comments have any validity as I haven’t read the texts he has referred to, but at this stage “I don’t see where the problem lies”. The whole point of *Power and Decision* and P.K.’s oeuvre, grosso modo, is to separate Is from Ought, Reality from Ideology, Description from Normative Values and Ethics. My first (incl. “gut”) reaction is that Prof. Gerhardt is simply wrong, though I obviously should (perhaps) “explore” the matter further (even though I know I won’t find the time)]]]. – Hastedt demands (calls for) the rehabilitation of the *decision* in the context of a stronger paying attention to the *finiteness* of human life [[C.F. says: prima facie this to me seems silly – everyone knows collectivities (as it were, encompassing individuals) can and do last much longer than individual lives, etc., and P.K. refers to both individuals and to a number of the main kinds of groups in *Power and Decision*]]. And through that, we become aware how disconcerting (strange, odd) the slight attentiveness vis-à-vis the problem of *death* by Kondylis is [[C.F. says: as mentioned earlier, *The Political and Man*, esp. Ch. III, deals fairly extensively with the question of death, etc.]].

said finiteness and relativity)? For whom should they mean something? Who should evaluate or appraise them, if not the individual man?<sup>xi</sup>

## 8.

According to Kondylis, there are *three possible subjects*, which are worth considering here as an answer [[to the questions above]]: the *genus (kind, species, race<sup>xii</sup>)*, the *group* (“in its most varied social and historical forms”) and the *individual*.<sup>18</sup>

“Genus (Kind, Species, Race)” means man’s natural-historical generational continuity, connection or interrelation (*or*: man’s continuity as to generations in terms of natural history), in which the corporeal and psychical (mental-spiritual-emotional-psychological) patterns or models as to acting (action) come into being. It (The genus) brings forth the basal (basic) *schemata of stimulus and reaction*, in regard to which the knowledge and (e)valuation of reality take place (are carried out/executed). Man is bound (tied) to these biopsychical mechanisms, even if they let (allow) individual (isolated, separate, solitary, in detail) *kinds of room to move (spaces to play/of leeway)*, and are (the said biopsychical mechanisms) on the whole (by and large, overall) *capable of development*. Nature does not fix (stipulate, determine or establish (set)) anything final and conclusive (definitive), but posits (sets) the *primacy of the (e)valuation (appraisal)* before (in front (ahead) of, above) all knowledge, which, according to Kondylis remains constantly (perpetually) in dependence on the original (primordial) *dynamic(s) of self-preservation*.

Limits (Boundaries, Barriers) are, with that, set (put, placed, erected) in regard to/against *intellectualism* and *rationalism*. In all events (occurrences and

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<sup>18</sup> Macht und Entscheidung, p. 46.

processes (proceedings)) of life, a *dominance of organic processes* rules (dominates),<sup>xiii</sup> which also becomes evident (comes to the fore) in the *autonomy and independence of sensory/sensorial perception*. We do to man an injustice when we reduce his achievements (accomplishments, performances) primarily to understanding (cognition, comprehension, mind, intellect) and Reason. Kondylis, hence, alerts (cautions, warns) us of man's *intellectualistic self-misunderstanding* because it tends towards the *radicalisation of the extremes*.<sup>xiv</sup> The dominance of ideologies, which have already brought Europe in this [[20<sup>th</sup>]] century to the brink (edge, border, fringe, periphery, point) of self-destruction,<sup>xv</sup> were in his (P.K.'s) eyes excesses<sup>xvi</sup> of a freely floating intelligence. Also, for this reason, the fact is so (very) emphatically referred to, that we as humans (men, people) are *beings (creatures) of nature*, that is (*beings) of the genus (kind, species, race)*.

In the process of the evolution (development) of the “genus (kind, species, race)”, the “first great models or patterns of the decision” are created, which man in his history follows. In the course of this, man obeys (follows, responds to) a biopsychical “mechanism of the decision”, to which he remains subject(ed) (subjugated, subordinated) both in the sociological formation of the “group” and as an “individual”.<sup>19</sup> That applies to the constitutive aims of *self-preservation* and in particular to the elementary distinctions (differentiations, differences) between *friend and foe*.

## 9.

Whoever regards this – as is known, already introduced by Heraclitus and made capable of theory (i.e. of being theorised) by Plato – dichotomy between *friend*

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<sup>19</sup> Macht und Entscheidung, p. 48.

*and foe* as a barbaric relic of archaic epochs, might want (like) to read the (a) newspaper(s). If that does not help, he may imagine what *friendship* means to him: it encompasses (includes) all solidarity-related modes of behaviour of man from motherly love via preparedness and readiness (willingness) to help (i.e. (immediate) helpfulness), up to (being) law-abiding (conformity with the law). Whoever, however, cannot exclude [[the fact]] that there are people (men, humans) to whom motherly love, preparedness to help or being law-abiding of *others* do not mean anything under certain circumstances because they have *their own* representations and notions (ideas) of family/relational(kindship, familial)-friendly stirrings, impulses (sentiments and emotions), (he, that person/man) has already conceded the possibility of *enmity*.

He needs, thereafter, only to still make clear to himself that men (humans, people) alone, already on the basis of an *equal* situation of interests must (necessarily) come into conflict. Exactly, through that, he has, however, also admitted (conceded) the *unavoidability (inevitability) of enmity*. Only individuals, who do not have something in common can avoid (evade, obviate, dodge) existential contrast(ing) and opposition; only where there is enough space (room) to be completely out of the way [[of others]] for a lifetime (period/time of a life), is there no need for struggles to take place. Since, however, man like no other being of nature (natural being (creature)) is absolutely dependent on *his own kind (his peers, his equals* (in the sense of being a human as opposed to a non-human animal)), he must necessarily live in (regard to) and with *conflicts*, in case of need – that is (there), where the *law (right, justice)* fails – also in *struggle (battle, combat, fighting)* and *war*.

In times of peace, this is an unpleasant truth. It is, however, a *command of intellectual honesty (probity, uprightness)*, to not only speak of the *indispensability of friendship*, but also of the – exactly through that (indispensability of friendship) given – *unavoidability of enmity*. Kondylis has

drawn to himself, alone through this honesty, much *enmity*, [[from people]] who regard it more convenient and comfortable to simply deny the *reality of enmity* and to transfigure and glorify everything indiscriminately through *friendship* or *solidarity*.

*Honesty* is obliged (bound, indebted, beholden, under an obligation) to *reality*. It is a desire (longing, yearning, craving, hankering) dominating (commanding, controlling) Panajotis Kondylis's whole (entire) work of apprehending the *reality of human existence (being there, presence)*. That is why he called his "value-free descriptive decisionism" – for many irritatingly – always "polemical" too.<sup>20</sup> In fact, the pacifistic illusionists take that into account (i.e. they agree with P.K.) whilst they polemicise (polemicising) against Kondylis. And so, he (P.K.) retains (is), without needing (requiring) an argument, (the position of being) right against his fiercest (harshes, severest, sharpest, acutest) opponents.

## 10.

The second "subject", that of the "group", consists of man's *social (societal) formations*. The progressive taming of nature, forces (compels, coerces) men (humans) into constant collective forms of existence, which find their expression in *myths, religions and ideologies*.<sup>21</sup> Also in these (myths, religions and ideologies) Kondylis sees a "decision" take and have an effect (act, operate) on each and every respective occasion. That (i.e. the decision) is the resulting "separation or segregation" of the (what is) – for a group – "relevant" from (out of) "concrete situations". Moreover, what is important for groups, societies

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. in relation to that, his explanations in the interview with Martin Terpstra: Only intellectuals assert that intellectuals understand the world better than all others, see below 157 (= esp. Qs. 3, 6-8 of *Answers to 28 Questions* at [www.panagiotiskondylis.com](http://www.panagiotiskondylis.com)).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Macht und Entscheidung*, p. 48ff..

come to (arrive at), also only through separation (segregation) from that which is held to be (considered) unimportant. Here too the *either-or* demanded from us by *nature inside us* as well as *outside us*, dominates us, which (either-or) leads to *alternative options (choices)* for (as regards) *common (jointly held) values*, and first of all opens up the *general perspectives of meaning* connected with them (the said common values).

These separations (segregations) have their specific meaning (sense) through the bindedness towards the inside (inwardly). In the course of this, the alternatives must – at least in the case of conflict – be *conscious*; otherwise, the decision inside of the group would be without meaning. With that, however, the decision of a group must fall back on or have recourse to the *decisions of individuals*.<sup>xvii</sup> If the decision was/were conceived (of) at the level of the genus (kind, species, race) simply (merely) *by analogy in respect of/with the individual*, in sociological processes this *individual himself* comes – and indeed *as an actor* – into play and makes himself felt(; he has his say).<sup>xviii</sup>

## 11.

Hence, it is not surprising that Kondylis, who as a historian of ideas essentially deals (occupies himself) with (looks into, works on) the decisions of historical groups, in his systematic [[intellectual(-spiritual)]] foundation (or treatise), already after a few sentences, is (finds himself) at the *subject of the third kind*, namely, at *individual man*.<sup>22 + xix</sup> In actual fact, his (P.K.'s) polemically laid out (set up, structured, invested, created, moored, docked), “value-free descriptive decisionism” comes to its *starting point* – and indeed both in the *real* as well as in the *methodological* meaning [[of the term]]. Because all basic (fundamental)

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Macht und Entscheidung, p. 48ff..

concepts of this philosophy: *self-preservation, decision, sighting (sifting, sorting, combing out, examination, inspection, hierarchisation), (e)valuation (assessment, rating), perspectivity, orientation, description, polemics, knowledge or power* characterise performances (efforts, activities, achievements, accomplishments), which we know only *of (from, by means of) us ourselves*, and which we only, as long as we know them of (from, by means of) us ourselves, can transfer as analogous events and processes to nature and society.<sup>xx</sup>

Consequently, the subject materially being backed up (substantiated and consolidated) and formally (in terms of form) being founded, is only that of the *individual man (person, human)*. Basically, this philosophy is an *anthropology*,<sup>xxi</sup> which however, with that, goes through with (carries out) grasping and comprehending man equally as a *naturally-bound* (i.e. as to nature and biologically), *socially (societally)* and *historically* mediated as well as an – in regard to everything (in particular) – always *intellectual(-spiritual)* being (creature) too. Out of (From) him (man), is everything conceived (thought) (of). The “act of the decision (decision act)”, which founds everything, be it (that everything,) worlds or epochs, systems or ways of life (modes of living), is – apart from the process – the everyday (daily) yes or no which is the decisive factor for us ourselves.<sup>xxii</sup> And when it is stressed that every act of the decision is lost “in the unfathomable (inscrutable) bio-psychical root of existence”,<sup>23</sup> then (still) in the *concept of existence*, the *paradigm of individuality* as the elementary configuration of this thought (thinking), comes to the fore (become evident (and stands out)).<sup>xxiii</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Macht und Entscheidung, p. 50.

We know that not only Kant and Nietzsche have (wrestled and) struggled around (for) a *philosophy out of/from the perspective of man*. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Feuerbach, Stirner and Dilthey would (have to) (should) be named; then came Peirce, James, Dewey, Scheler, Plessner, Jaspers, Cassirer, Merleau-Ponty, and finally add Popper<sup>xxiv</sup> too.<sup>24</sup>

That (This) is the tradition of singular thinkers, in which Panajotis Kondylis stands.<sup>xxv</sup> It (The said tradition) connects him, of course, with Montesquieu as well, against whom he had last measured himself (come up).<sup>25</sup> And it (this tradition) points via Hobbes and Machiavelli back to antiquity more intensely (strongly) than what he (P.K.) had indicated.<sup>xxvi</sup> – In relation to that, much is to (could) be said, in particular also as to his much discussed relationship with Carl Schmitt.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> That/This is a tradition still not traced (portrayed) in the historical representations (depictions, accounts) of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, whose objective (factual) context (connection, interrelation) should be, however, obvious straightaway (immediately) to the knower [[of the history of ideas]]. It is above all the stressing of the living (vital) nature of the corporeality and sensoriality as well as of the pragmatism connected with the decision, which makes this line [[of thinkers (philosophers)]] consistent and can include Kondylis [[C.F.'s addition: see endnote xxv]]. At the same time, in regard to all of this, the polemical distance from Heidegger stands out (distinguishes itself). When Heidegger discovered that he, in *Sein und Zeit* (= *Being and Time*), had come to or arrived at, in principle, an anthropology too, he turned away from (warded off, averted) conceptual thought (thinking) and became (turned into) a theologian of Being (Is). He, therefore, does not belong – completely (altogether) apart from his political aberrations or perversions (delusions, fallacies, errancies) – after *Sein und Zeit*, to this tradition.

<sup>25</sup> Panajotis Kondylis, *Montesquieu und der Geist der Gesetze*, Berlin 1996. [[Translated into English at [www.panajotiskondylis.com](http://www.panajotiskondylis.com)]]

<sup>26</sup> German critics (reviewers) have become accustomed (gotten used) to naming (referring to) Panajotis Kondylis in the same breath with Carl Schmitt, the dashing Romantic of the 1920s, “court (crown) jurist” of the Third Reich and *spiritus rector* of (the) Federal German Constitutional Law (Jurisdiction, Court). That is a superficial (frivolous, shallow, trivial) judgement. Whoever really (truly) knows both authors, would not see, even in a dream, a parallel between the nomadic shrewdness (acumen) (*or*: astuteness (ingenuity) leading a nomadic life/existence) of the philosophically dilettante (amateurish) jurist and the (dead-)serious (grave, earnest) thinking (thought) of a philosopher [[C.F. adds: I think Prof. Gerhardt is underestimating Schmitt; P.K. warned to neither overestimate, nor underestimate Schmitt’s value!]]. One only thinks in regard to that, how Schmitt, only in order to be able to polemicise against parliamentarism, jointly fakes (falsifies, forges) a historical-systematic contrast and opposition between “democracy” and “representation” [[C.F.’s note: with respect, dear Prof., Schmitt’s general notion that democracy and representation are not the same is in terms of the strict science of concepts ABSOLUTELY CORRECT. Democracy – as known in the Hellenic world, with its remnants in the Ekklesia/Ecclesia of the Demos right up until the end of the Ottoman Empire and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, had its emphasis on active participation (incl. obligations) in governing of all the citizens, so per definitionem, democracy is not about representation – at least as far as the *differentiae specifica*e of democracy

Yet in relation to this (much discussed relationship with Carl Schmitt), I want to in the end (i.e. in closing) keep (be, remain) silent, as in respect of his (P.K.'s) relationship with *right (law, justice)* and *reason*. Here he (P.K.), like Nietzsche, uncovered (exposed, revealed) widespread illusions in order to remind man (humans, people) – in (with) all urgency (forcefulness) – of the ultimately unsafe (unhedged, uncovered, exposed) *risk (hazard, peril) of one's own decision*. That is and remains the duty of the Enlightener.<sup>xxvii</sup> But I am sure that Kondylis, in the course of this (at the same time), underestimates the – to us ourselves – mandatory (compulsory, binding) force (strength, power) of *truth*,<sup>xxviii</sup> a *truth*, which he in his “value-free descriptive decisionism” in actual fact devoted himself (and espoused).<sup>xxix</sup> If, however, *value freedom* and the *truth of a description* can be decisive (substantial, significant, relevant) aims and objectives, then a *reason (logos) (Reason)* must already be effective (efficacious, effectual, operative), which obliges (beholdens) us not only as to *honesty (probity, uprightness)*, not merely as to *polemical Enlightenment*, but above all as to *justice*.<sup>xxx</sup>

Nevertheless, as we have said, there should – in closing – not be talk about that. It must suffice in Panajotis Kondylis to have recognised and named a *thinker of individuality*.<sup>xxxi</sup> The more do we feel pain, to have lost by a much too

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goes in terms of strictly descriptive-explanatory science (cf. Contogeorgis). Now, if “democracy” as ideology and practice has since roughly the French Revolution been associated with parliamentarism, that is a different kettle of fish, as is what Schmitt’s purposes might have been in making an at least in part correct observation (obviously Schmitt probably simply wanted to discredit parliamentarism to promote a (kind of, sort of) Führer principle, but that in itself does not alter how democracy is defined conceptually as to the science of actual democracy in concrete time and place as opposed to a historical-sociological-comparative ideal type (e.g. P.K.’s “mass democracy”), or as mentioned, ideology mixed or not mixed with Western-European and American practice and reality]]. In actual fact, the assertion of an objective (factual) proximity (nearness, closeness) between Kondylis and Schmitt is supported (underpinned, shored (backed) up) by a few concepts, which Schmitt and Kondylis jointly used. There, is the concept of the *decision*, then that (concept) of *conservatism*, and above all the distinction between *friend and foe*. All the others, which in Kondylis ring, or remind one, of (sound like) Schmitt, one must understand as being by/of/from Nietzsche [[C.F. adds: take it easy Prof.! Not sure about that!]]. See in relation to that, Kondylis’s critique of Carl Schmitt’s “militant decisionism” in: *Jurisprudenz, Ausnahmezustand und Entscheidung. Grundsätzliche Bemerkungen zu Carl Schmitts Politische Theologie*, in: *Der Staat* 34, 1995, 325-357.

early (premature) death, this unique (singular, one-of-a-kind) man. To him the final word is due:

In his well-aimed (striking, telling) interpretation of Plato's vision of a dominance and rule of philosophers, whose (main) point (punchline) consists in pos(it)ing or setting the highest power claims for philosophy, and at the same time, of emphatically renouncing (relinquishing, foregoing, abdicating from) political power,<sup>27</sup> Kondylis ties (attaches) an observation on (about) philosophers as "producers or administrators (managers, stewards, handlers) of meaning (sense)", who, with that, at the same time, can be called (named) "producers or administrators/ managers of power". And there it says (we read):

"The in part tragic, and in part comical [...] situation [of philosophers] consists in that they cannot translate (transpose, sublimate) this power into their own social dominance (dominant authority), and accordingly, may (should) (are allowed (ought) to) dream of rulers one day philosophising, rather than dreaming of philosophers ruling (dominating)."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Der Philosoph und die Macht, 1992, 15.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

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**All endnotes are by the Translator, C.F., including as an Insane Satirical-Literary Persona of a very low IQ born before 1000 A.D. somewhere in Rome, and have ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH VOLKER GERHARDT or P.K. unless expressly stated otherwise. DO NOT READ THESE ENDNOTES! YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME. FIGURE THINGS OUT (FOR) YOURSELF!**

<sup>i</sup> Kostas Koutsourelis's note to his Greek translation of Volker Gerhardt's text „Denken in der Entscheidung“ reads: “This speech by Volker Gerhardt, professor of social philosophy and of legal philosophy (philosophy of right/law/justice) at Humboldt University (Berlin), was delivered (pronounced, given) on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1999 at the philological (literary) memorial (commemoration, requiem) which the German Embassy organised in honour of Panagiotis Kondylis at the Goethe Institute of Athens.”

<sup>ii</sup> The Greek translation's “1.” does not appear in the German text. Hence, the Greek text's “2.” is the equivalent of the German text's “1.” (or rather, the opening of the German text, as there is no actual “1.”), and the Greek text's “3.” is the equivalent of the German text's “2.”, and so on and so forth, until the Greek text ends with “12.”, and the German text with “11.”.

<sup>iii</sup> This footnote does not appear in the German text, so German-text footnote “1” is the Greek text's “2” etc., and this English translation, because it includes the Greek text's footnote “1”, follows the Greek text's sequence (and numbering in respect) of the footnotes.

<sup>iv</sup> I assume (on not unreasonable grounds – and I stand corrected) that Volker Gerhardt's speech was given before the publication of *The Political and Man* (or before V.G. had read the said book), which contains quite a bit about death (esp. Ch. III).

<sup>v</sup> There is definitely this “individual's” aspect of death, but it is clear from *The Political and Man* that death as a biological constant also affects society and individuals as social beings, too.

<sup>vi</sup> But cf. footnote 5.

<sup>vii</sup> So e.g. in the case of war, the body as such – without mind and emotions (“spirit”) – has no view of victory and defeat, life and death, friend and foe. It is the metaphysics involved of the (immaterial as such) mind/intellect and emotions/soul, i.e. the “spirit”, – housed (so to speak) in the body – ,which desires victory for oneself and for one's own side, the defeat and or death of the foe, domination over others, etc..

<sup>viii</sup> (**DON'T READ THIS!!!**) And in this context, all I see is [[I was going to write something similar to what I have written before elsewhere in regard to highly disproportionate over-representation and accumulations, concentrations and crystal(lisation)s of forms of power and wealth as regards a particular group of people in particular countries, but I've decided this time to show some self-restraint given I'm a self-elected Sancho Panza to the non-and-anti-Don Quijote P.K., and not to Prof. Gerhardt.]]

<sup>ix</sup> I don't dispute that, though, again, every specific, concrete philosophy with that specific, concrete individual philosopher's input – which distinguishes it up to a (some kind of) point from other philosophies – is still produced, incl. in polemical heat against and or agreement with, previous and or contemporaneous philosophers, interlocutors, et al., and obviously within an overall linguistic-cultural-social-societal context or framework.

<sup>x</sup> I assume La Mettrie and de Sade are meant (with Hume as a kind of, sort of – but not quite – contemporary “parallel lives” “fellow-traveller”, or precursor in the case of the Marquis).

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<sup>xi</sup> Again, this is one way of looking at things. At the end of the day, every individual human refers to social (group) phenomena (social facts), one way or another, too, so from another point of view there are various dominant concrete group views of death in addition to the way an individual might view death. Prof. Gerhardt goes on to refer to the three main human subjects of *Power and Decision* in the next and following sections, anyway.

<sup>xii</sup> If one defines “race” as pertaining to the “human race”, then it follows whites, blacks, browns, yellows etc. would make up broadly (and crudely, but nonetheless to a point, validly, defined) “sub-races”, and within “sub-races”, there would be “peoples”, “ethne”, “nations” etc.. Of course, there are other ways to set up one’s definition of “race” too, which linguistically-conceptually may not be as logically compelling, but which nonetheless amounts to the same or a similar thing.

<sup>xiii</sup> My understanding is that mind/intellect and senses/body (with “the spirit” being the interaction of both mind and senses), always co-exist in humans, and to say that the senses “dominate” or “rule” would be valid only from the point of view that all human life ultimately emerges from the non-rational, non-human animal kingdom (which in turn “sits” in nature/the natural world), and, all life must end in death (and starts with newborns relatively undeveloped (compared to adulthood) as to thinking etc.). Otherwise, mind/intellect and senses/body co-exist, and which of the two main areas – abstracted from a reality which allows no actual separation – comes to the fore or is more prominent on any given occasion, is a matter of and for examining the concrete situation in question.

<sup>xiv</sup> Since science qua the scientific observation of human affairs (which only describes and explains if it can, logically consistently and in terms of empirical evidence) could not care less what man does – even if it is “extreme” – it is possible that the phrasing of this sentence can be misinterpreted, because it might be construed as implying that P.K. in his strictly scientific work had some kind of value-judgemental or ethical concern as to “extremes”, when obviously he did not (cf. endnote xvi below).

<sup>xv</sup> This is wrongly put. Either we take the view that there is in all societies, in all historical periods, a distinction between ideology as false consciousness, and, reality (which is what is valid strictly scientifically (i.e. in terms of social ontology), so that “ideology” includes “religion” etc. (see P.K.’s studies on Marx)), and or, we distinguish – for the purposes of (historical-sociological) classification – between political ideologies and e.g. the traditional great religions etc., in which case one could say that the 20<sup>th</sup> century European-centric “world wars” were partly driven, fuelled or nudged along – apart from the underlying (geo)political and economic reasons – also by ideologies pertaining to “civilising” imperialism, nationalism, communism, fascism, etc. as opposed to “religious wars” of previous centuries in European history. The fact of the matter is that wars have always occurred throughout all of human history and as a social phenomenon go way beyond narrowly defined “20<sup>th</sup> century ideologies”. Anyone thinking that one could put an “end” to violence and wars through e.g. international “free” trade and or further “feminof????tising” society, for instance, is either a nut-job or a ??? and or a ???’s ???-sucking friend/stooge wanting to justify GROSSLY DISPROPORTIONATE accumulations, concentrations and crystal(lisation)s of wealth and power, in particular in a certain group’s hands in certain countries with roots going back centuries in International Banking, Finance, Trade, and then Corporations etc.. [[= Lack of self-restraint in this endnote! Naughty me!]]

<sup>xvi</sup> This phrasing is more or less in accordance with P.K.’s strictly non-normative, scientific (descriptive-explanatory) stance, even though it may not seem so at first glance, because sometimes we just have to say “excesses” or “atrocities and crimes”, and not use a phrase like: “relatively extreme acts of violence on a mass scale commonly expressed and described as mass brutalities, etc.”, which would eventually make texts unreadable.

<sup>xvii</sup> This is correct. But it must be added that the individuals decide in the context or framework of a pre-existing group and its human-social culture. The actual point where there is a transition from ape to man (to put it very crudely) extends over (dozens and dozens (?) and dozens (?) of) millennia, and or longer, and is of no interest to us concretely per se. It is within the domain of evolutionary biology/anthropology which obviously is relatively limited as to what it “exactly” knows when compared to what is known – ceteris paribus, mutandis mutatis – about, say, 1950s USA.

<sup>xviii</sup> See endnote xvii above.

<sup>xix</sup> In jest, whilst I understand that there is a North-European-Teutonic-Protestant/Papist/Atheist obsession with “individuals”, and whilst all human groups *qua* human groups can only ultimately be made up – materially – of

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individual humans and nothing else, it is quite clear to me both in *Power and Decision*, but much more forcefully in *The Political and Man*, including as regards the discussion of Durkheim and social facts, that every individual human cannot but relate to other individuals both biologically (because he was born of other humans) and culturally-intellectually-spiritually/emotionally (because no human “invents himself out of nothing”, since all humans take not insignificant “things” (viewpoints, ideas, etc.) from the culture he is born into and raised in, notwithstanding that he might “mix them/those things up” in his own way and create his own identity which distinguishes him to some kind of point from other identities. At the end of the day, in the real world, every individual is absolutely inseparable from at least the effect of some social relations affecting or otherwise relating to him, though notionally, as individual thinkers, we can make abstract from reality the idea of an individual as being separate from the social whole, and use this abstraction for our own theoretical purposes, incl. musings, even though, as we have said, in the real world, the individual is never without some kind of reference to the social (which is the effect of the collective action of individuals relating themselves to the(ir) social).

<sup>xx</sup> But we know all that as individuals because as every one of us as an individual, like all individuals, has a social framework, social points of reference. An individual may be born and live and die alone *qua* an individual abstracted in our thoughts, but in reality, we observe that all individuals – in one way or another – refer to other individuals who refer to other individuals, i.e. internal and external social relations and social action, social facts,... (see *The Political and Man*, esp. Ch. II and IV).

<sup>xxi</sup> *Power and Decision* is fundamentally about world images and values, and fits within *The Political and Man* which revolves around society (the social, the political) and culture, with magnitudes such as power, identity, rationality and understanding, the friend-foe spectrum, being prominent throughout both works. As P.K. repeatedly points out in various texts, anthropology, social ontology, sociology, history, psychology, “philosophy” or theory, epistemology, etc. all – without exception – at some point overlap (up to a great extent), and we distinguish between the disciplines (as necessary theoretical abstractions) based on the specific, concrete analyses of specific, concrete (social-human(-biological/natural)) phenomena, (inter)relations, (inter)actions and situations.

<sup>xxii</sup> From the English translation of *Power and Decision* at [www.panagiotiskondylis.com](http://www.panagiotiskondylis.com), we read that: “De-cision (de-cisio, Ent-scheidung) is the act or process of segregation, out of which or from which a world image results, which is capable of guaranteeing the necessary ability at orientation for the purpose of self-preservation. Before the decision there is no world as a concretely ordered Whole in the perception of a correspondingly concrete subject, i.e. a subject occupying a certain place in this Whole; there is merely a pre-world, i.e. a motley variety, or a more or less loose sum, of in themselves equivalent materials, impressions, movements and tendencies, which in this meaningless primordial state cannot provide either a reliable framework of orientation or motivate action promising success, or, in retrospect, justify such action. Through the act or process of segregation the pre-world's constituent elements lose their equivalence and are divided into what is relevant and irrelevant, superordinate and subordinate, in relation to which whatever is relevant and irrelevant is taken as the basis of a world-theoretical blueprint.” (p. 12)

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“The coming into being of a world image through the de-cision therefore is something other than the choice between already existing and competing world images, because that choice already presupposes the world image, at whose centre this competition is found. When the subject confuses the world-theoretical de-cision and the choice between alternatives, then it succumbs to an optical illusion, and indeed this is because it wants to, and also must, preserve in its own eyes its own sovereign self-assurance and self-control, that is, its own identity as ponderable magnitude and decisive guiding principle of orientation.” (pp.24-25).

Hence, there is clearly a difference between a choice (made against a backdrop or within an already made historical-collective de-cision) we as individuals make on a daily basis, and, the formation of a world image through a de-cision which effects or “encapsulates” (a) whole group(s) of people(s).

<sup>xxiii</sup> See endnotes xvii, xix-xxii above.

<sup>xxiv</sup> For how “Pop [[Went]] the Weasel!” see: <https://www.panagiotiskondylis.com/carl-schmitts-political-theology.php> .

<sup>xxv</sup> Personally, I follow and agree with what P.K. said a number of times over – for him, the greats (in whose tradition he, P.K., stands), include, inter alia, Thucydides, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Spinoza, (Montaigne, Montesquieu, Kant, La Mettrie, de Sade, (Nietzsche)), Clausewitz, Marx, and probably at the very top – next to Thucydides (and Aristotle, Machiavelli, Marx), **Max Weber**, and notwithstanding that all of the thinkers

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mentioned by Prof. Gerhardt (even the weasel going “Pop!”) are at least of some value, if not always significant value (though some are, like Kant, Nietzsche, Dilthey, Cassirer et al.).

<sup>xxvi</sup> Not sure about that.

<sup>xxvii</sup> P.K., of course, was an Enlightener “without a mission” for 99% of his work.

<sup>xxviii</sup> I am not sure about this, AT ALL!!!

<sup>xxix</sup> The word “truth” appears 68 times, and “true” 52 times, in my translation of *Power and Decision* (including three times as “objective truth” and four times as “objectively true”) at [www.panagiotiskondylis.com](http://www.panagiotiskondylis.com).

<sup>xxx</sup> This is exactly the problem the good Professor has. Non-normative value-freedom as understood by P.K. has nothing to do with ethics, political enlightenment or justice, but simply with description and explanation (logically consistently, empirically verified), to the extent possible ... (– one could also say that it *is* concerned with honesty and polemical enlightenment too –) ... and the “value” of doing science or engaging in scientific observation, whilst being an observer of human affairs, is *stricto sensu* a kind of ascetic stance, and ultimately, non-normative value-nihilist, which boils down to not telling anyone, qua a scientist, to do anything whatsoever, so that they can actually do **WHATEVER THE FUCK** they want to (and can) do (as far as strict science is concerned). In other words, the good Professor is confusing the reality of all dominant ideologies (and variations thereof) in all societies necessarily in terms of social-political functioning, social disciplining, social order and social cohesion, basing themselves on rationalising and justifying their – scientifically seen – ideological or “pure bullshit” basic premises (e.g. Tribe, God, Hierarchy, Class, Man, Nature, Reason, History, Equality, Human Rights, Dignity, (Anti-)Racism, (Anti-)Sexism, Toxic Masculinity/Toxic Femininity-Feminism, Homophobia/Heterophobia (Faggotism), Islamophobia/Christophobia, The Chosenness or Specialness of ???s (i.e. known to not a few people as Satanists and Mammonists, Evil-Devils, The Representatives of Satan) [= lack of self-restraint on my part – I almost made it to the end without mentioning Satan or ??????!], etc., etc., etc.), with the scientific description of reality being ideational, but outside and free of normative ideology, whilst such strict scientific observation recognises that life qua life ultimately has no objective meaning *per se* (even though in human societies life is always given dominant ideological pointers as to its “objective meaning”).

<sup>xxxi</sup> This can only possibly be partly true. P.K. never considered “individuality” as opposed e.g. to “group belonging” as any kind of issue which would define his thought. It was never the point in that respect. The point was non-normative, value-free observation of human affairs, which obviously include individual humans in and or related to groups of humans.