

THE FOUNDATIONALIST MANIFESTO: THE POLITICS OF FUTURE PAST

June 17, 2021

I am here to give you back your future. Like Yeats's golden bird, I will tell you of what is past, and passing, and to come. Here I offer an exposition of my, and what should be our, political program, both philosophy and movement, Foundationalism.

What is Foundationalism? Foundationalism is a reflection of reality, and through recognizing reality, it aims to maximize the chances of both individual and collective flourishing. It is a way forward, not a way back.

The twelve pillars of Foundationalism, outlined here, are organic to mankind, rather than an artificial means to create a new man or a new type of society—although Foundationalism, when executed, will indeed be a very different type of society from how we live now. And, in truth, Foundationalism is two things: the renewal of society, or the rebuilding anew of a crumbled society, combined with the long-term maintenance of that society.

Foundationalism does not guarantee happiness. The *apocatastasis*, the universal reconciliation, is not its concern. It is not an ideology—it does not offer all the answers. What it offers is a positive vision for a maximized future. The goal is to all muddle through together, to achieve as much human flourishing as reasonably possible, buffering the miseries inherent to human life. Foundationalism offers all members of society a chance for meaning, for transcendence, not through utopian ideology, but through rebasing ourselves in the real.

Foundationalism is grounded in what is universally known to be true, or what was once universally known to be true; it does not invent new truths. Thus, it contains a strong bias toward traditional Western knowledge and modes of thought, without calcification of application. The asteroid miner who knows his Aristotle and his Aquinas, and extracts metals to build great works with a picture of Henry the Navigator in his rocket ship—he is a Foundationalist.

The aim of offering an interlocking, coherent program is to inspire men of destiny, to help those of like mind recognize one another, and to allow us to see when our leaders are on the right path. If enough of us make Foundationalism the touchstone of our political action, we

will maximize all of our chances for civilizational success. Still, history goes up and down. Good people in charge are followed by bad, and everything is a mix of light and dark. All we can hope for is to have a political system that is based in reality and that encourages virtue among the great and the small, which allows for human flourishing at all levels. Foundationalism is that system.

Foundationalism is the politics of future past; it is a new thing, for a new time, informed by the wisdom of the past. Foundationalism is not restorationism. There is no return; the way is shut. What is instead needed is a new thing, just as the Enlightenment was a new thing, and as the flourishing of Western medieval thought was a new thing. Erase the errors and begin again; Foundationalism ushers in the new dawn.

Why We Need A Drastic Change

I have written extensively elsewhere on what is wrong with the modern world. I will not repeat myself here (although I will in my future book-length exposition of Foundationalism, so that it will be complete in itself), except to say the path we are on leads to a dead end. There is no shame in admitting this sad fact; the only shame is the foolishness of pretending that history is still moving in a direction it is not.

The source of our society's problems is singular—autonomic liberalism, the philosophy of the Enlightenment, which offers a supremely seductive vision. The dream is false; look around, ye mighty. Yet Western man has tied himself to this millstone, even as it pulls him down to the depths. The dream must end, for it is poison and man cannot flourish until it is broken.

Thus, the iron core of Foundationalism is that it opposes autonomic liberalism, and plans to destroy it as Foundationalism's first act. Only when the Enlightenment, political philosophy based on false claims of wholesale human emancipation from all unchosen bonds, is both gone and wholly discredited is a new thing possible, for if not, the serpent will whisper his sweet lies in men's ears forever, keeping them fixed in the dream become nightmare.

Why a wholesale destruction and replacement, rather than incremental corrections, what we are told is the prim and proper conservative solution to problems? Because Foundationalism does not aim to

conserve. It is a wholesale rebellion against the powers of the modern world, which realizes that those powers must be shattered, the world must be broken, to clear the way for new growth.

But as I say the demonstration of why this is essential has already been made, and I will not repeat it here. Today therefore answers the what of Foundationalism, not the why—other than to say Foundationalism is a means for mankind to return to the path of flourishing. And that is all the justification we need.

The Twelve Pillars

Foundationalism is a woven thing, weft and warp. It has twelve pillars, key principles on which it is to be built, each one flexible and supporting the others. I discuss each in turn. Because I have written extensively on each of these topics elsewhere, here I offer the summary principles and rationales, and then direct the reader to lengthier earlier writings, that include more extensive treatments of the theme. (Most of these are book reviews, or more accurately, vehicles for my thought masquerading as book reviews.) Thus, I am not repeating here everything I have said before, in the interests of keeping this manifesto of manageable length. However, again, the book-length version of the Foundationalist Manifesto, *The Politics of Future Past*, will stand completely alone, for those who like that sort of thing.

Nor should the twelve pillars be thought of as necessarily complete. They are guideposts and supports, not the structure of a temple for worship. Times change and new challenges arise; those challenges can be met with the underlying principles of Foundationalism, most of all that reality is.

The First Pillar: Space

For a program designed to build on the lessons of history, Space may seem like an esoteric starting point. But it is not, for in a very real sense Space is the crux of all things for the future of Man, and contains within itself all the seeds of our future flourishing. Insisting on Space as critical to human flourishing reflects an underlying reality about what man needs. Space offers a place for humans, as humans, to achieve and

excel, to execute the works of man under the eyes of God. This vision informs Foundationalism, of the quest for Space both as an independent good, and as the engine and fortifier of other, more explicitly political elements of the program.

By conquering Space, I do not mean any very specific accomplishments, which must be determined by circumstances. I mean the rebirth of a mental attitude that views great deeds achieved through daring and a love of excellence, exemplified by modern achievements in Space, as it was exemplified in exploration and conquest during the creation of today's world by the Christian West, and only by the West, over the past eight hundred years. Ideally, that would include human beings permanently expanding into Space, because that is the most inspirational and the greatest work. But it could also mean any number of other achievements, from greatly expanded robotic probes done for purely scientific purposes, to asteroid mining for economic gain.

Space, like any unifying goal, also has important cultural benefits. Thus, for example, a new optimism driven by Space will encourage people to have more children, and to honor those who do, reversing the most critical technical problem we face today, underpopulation. The quest for Space also will encourage the talented young to direct their talents to productive endeavors, where they will receive honor and prestige, and away from destructive or parasitical activities. Furthermore, it will unify, to some degree, our heterogeneous society—there is neither Jew nor Greek in working together for grand goals. Simply put, Space will help to renew our world.

Necessarily, scientific, industrial, and technological achievement unparalleled in human history will be both a requirement and result of conquering Space. But actions tending to transhumanism or any that denies human dignity, or the laws of God or of nature, will be directly and indirectly suppressed, and pseudo-sciences, including most of what currently passes for so-called social science, will be held in contempt.

FURTHER READING

On Space

Dr. Space (Bob Ward)

Red Rising (Pierce Brown)

Neuromancer (William Gibson)

Leviathan Wakes (James S. A. Corey)

The Second Pillar: A Mixed Government of Limited Ends and Unlimited Means

The aim of the Foundationalist government is to allow human flourishing—to implement, in the words of C. S. Lewis, “the ordinary happiness of human life.” No form of government is perfect, even in the moment, much less over decades or centuries. And no precise structure of government is always better than every other; what is best depends on the times and circumstances, so the structure of Foundationalist government will inevitably change over time. What the exact structure will be is not ours to say, but of those who rule at that moment.

But for certain Foundationalism will be a mixed government, long known as the only feasible type of stable government. The new government will be a protector of the collective of society in its spiritual aspect; it will represent the nation as it should be, not reflect the general will. It could be Augustan—a limited dictatorship (and almost certainly will be to begin). It could be aristocratic, like Venice in its prime. It will not be democratic, because that system is unnatural and destructive at scale—the People will not directly command any decision, although some limited franchise and some analog to the Roman tribunes of the people is likely to make sense. All elements of society will be represented, but not necessarily participate, and not all elements of society will rule.

Under Foundationalism, there will be execution of the laws, as there must be, but bureaucracy will be sharply limited and will be strictly confined to executive action, having no rulemaking ability. Foundationalism will govern, not administer. General laws will address public interest, not private interests. The impact of the central government on daily life will be massively reduced, since Foundationalism does not believe in the arrow of history or technocratic rule, and does not believe that the central government should dictate local practice. Nonetheless, Foundationalism will directly encourage virtue and discourage vice, and forbid certain especially pernicious negative behaviors and reward, or make a condition of national advancement, certain positive behaviors.

The Foundationalist government can have limited ends—that is, a light touch and light footprint—because it is reality-based. Viewing

man as an autonomous individual rejects in principle organic social bonds, and this inevitably leads to tyranny as the only way to manage a multitude of autonomous individuals. By recognizing that man is by nature a social being and can only function well in an actual society of shared customs and beliefs, direct management of society is far less necessary, and thus far less intrusive.

None of this implies that Foundationalism will be a libertarian or minimalist government. In pursuit of its limited ends, it will have unlimited means. The modern administrative state has erased the crucial distinction in the minds of people between an intrusive government and a strong government. Modernists fail to understand that sovereigns were, before the modern era, constrained in a web of custom, which was law. In order for Foundationalism to succeed, this pre-modern understanding of sovereignty is essential. But, properly viewed, the state is not constrained externally; it contains within itself, as an organic outgrowth of a virtuous society, its own constraints.

FURTHER READING

- On Power* (Bertrand de Jouvenel)
- John Chrysostom on the Roman Empire* (Constantine Bozinis)
- Conservatism* (Yoram Hazony)
- The Concept of the Political* (Carl Schmitt)
- On the Marble Cliffs* (Ernst Jünger)
- Fitzpatrick's War* (Theodore Judson)
- The Forest Passage* (Ernst Jünger)
- Charlemagne* (Johannes Fried)
- Augustus* (Adrian Goldsworthy)
- Eumeswil* (Ernst Jünger)
- Napoleon* (Andrew Roberts)
- The Revolt of the Masses* (José Ortega y Gasset)
- Before Church and State* (Andrew Willard Jones)
- Against Democracy* (Jason Brennan)
- The Demon in Democracy* (Ryszard Legutko)
- Life at the Bottom* (Theodore Dalrymple)
- A History of Venice* (John Julius Norwich)
- Unmasking the Administrative State* (John Marini)

Discourses on Livy (Niccolò Machiavelli)

The Third Pillar: Virtue Politics

The politics of Foundationalism will be the politics of virtue. This means that Foundationalism entirely rejects the Enlightenment. Moral systems based on supposed emancipation, the search for equality, emotivism, and similar grounds will vanish. All mention and memory of John Rawls will be erased.

Foundationalism recognizes, most of all, that the form of government is irrelevant if there is a complete lack of societal virtue, and that while society can tolerate an inevitable lack of virtue among some people and some classes, it cannot tolerate a lack of strong virtue among the ruling class. Without the *mos maiorum*, the focus on tradition, the web of virtue, that supports good government, the project will fail.

The incoherence of the modern philosophers will be replaced with the older and proven teleological conception of man, as filtered through Christianity. The government will seek to encourage virtue in the populace, but the populace, and in particular the ruling class, is the necessary repository and driver of virtue, if virtue is to permeate a society. The aim will be for society to seek the good, which is already known, though its application to new circumstances and happenings may require discernment.

Virtue will be strengthened with rigorous application of social stigma and taboo, tied in part to religion, but not wholly dependent on religion. No laws will protect any person from the effects of desirable stigmas and taboos; quite the contrary. Emigration will be encouraged by any person who finds this unpleasant. Conversely, honors will be awarded the deserving—those who accomplish and those who hew to the virtues demanded by the Foundationalist society.

Yet Foundationalism will not seek to attain perfect virtue among the populace. The Foundationalist government grasps that, humans being who they are, some limited amount of vice is inevitable, especially among the lower orders of society. The intent will be to dampen and limit vice, through approbation of virtue and stigma of vice, coupled with legal penalties for vice where appropriate. Culture and law will work hand in hand to maximize, not perfect, virtue.

FURTHER READING

- The Habsburg Way* (Eduard Habsburg)
On the Marble Cliffs (Ernst Jünger)
Freedom (Sebastian Junger)
The Machiavellians (James Burnham)
Fitzpatrick's War (Theodore Judson)
The World Beyond Your Head (Matthew B. Crawford)
Fentanyl, Inc. (Ben Westhoff)
After Virtue (Alasdair MacIntyre)
Why Liberalism Failed (Patrick Deneen)
Eumeswil (Ernst Jünger)
The Shadow of Vesuvius (Daisy Dunn)
The Revolt of the Masses (José Ortega y Gasset)
Empty Planet (Darrell Bricker and John Ibbitson)
Liberty, Equality, Fraternity (James Fitzjames Stephen)
The Forest Passage (Ernst Jünger)
Stubborn Attachments (Tyler Cowen)
Before Church and State (Andrew Willard Jones)

The Fourth Pillar: Sex Role Realism

The family, man, woman, and children, is the bedrock of all human societies. Restoring a realistic understanding of the role of men and women in society is necessary for any society to flourish. The crucial fact about men and women in society is that they are, and must be, partners. That women cannot do everything that men can do, and men cannot do everything women can do, and that even when each can do what the other can do, usually cannot do it as well, does not make one sex subordinate. But without recognizing and honoring this basic fact of different competencies, no society can operate for long.

Foundationalism is explicitly anti-feminist. It regards the feminine as one of the two essentials of humanity. It regards feminism as destructive distortion. A return to traditional sex roles (which were not at all the fictional oppression we are told they were) is both desirable and necessary. The crucial truth is that men drive a society forward, while women bind a society together. So it will always be in any successful

society, and any society that attempts to contradict truth will only find its own destruction. Pretending that men and women are interchangeable destroys not only the family but achievement.

Men seek glory, power, and dominance; this is why almost everything great in human history has been achieved by men. What women do is, in some ways, more important, but it will never be as visible. Women do not, unless given advantages, advance in a hierarchy through competition, because the vast majority of women lack the drives necessary. In Western countries, the usual structure for well over a thousand years, until the Left project made the organic relationship a target, has been a partnership between men and women, where each is supreme in one sphere of family life, contained in a larger family web, but consults the other. Women indeed hold up half the sky—but their role, in its nature, is inward-facing, and men's is outward-facing. In the West, there has never been any equivalent of the "eastern" approach, typified by purdah, the separation and seclusion of women (driven by defective religious or cultural imperatives that are the mirror image of feminism). Nor under Foundationalism will there be—but there will be very different roles for men and women.

Neither men nor women will be allowed to freely choose the path they want. Foundationalism does not seek to implement fantasies of autonomy. Social and legal compulsion will require each to make choices that benefit family and society. Women will not be permitted to choose career over family without significant penalties and disadvantages that hamper progress along such a path. Men will not be permitted to choose not to have a family, or to fail to provide and protect their family, without significant penalties. In other words, society will reflect the natural division of the sexes, regardless of whether some people in society would prefer to make some other choice, whether because of their outrider nature, excessive focus on self, or because of ideology.

No-fault divorce will be banned. Adultery will be socially punished and result in legal debilities. Modern technology that erodes healthy relationships between men and women, from Tinder to online pornography, will be rigorously suppressed.

The goal, across all of society, is to return to a natural partnership between men and women. This is very much not a siloed partnership, where the man and woman each operate completely separately in pursuit of a unified goal. Instead, there is necessarily overlap—a woman advises

her husband in his role outside the home, and the husband assists his wife in her roles inside the home, in particular with children, especially with boys as they come of age, but also simple relief of the drudgery that characterizes much household work. But human nature dictates that those spheres and roles be different.

FURTHER READING

- Tom Wedderburn's Life* (Theodore Judson)
Stoner (John Williams)
A Medieval Life (Judith M. Bennett)
Domestic Extremist (Peachy Keenan)
Feminism Against Progress (Mary Harrington)
The Children of Men (P. D. James)
Young Men and Fire (Norman Maclean)
Anabasis (Xenophon)
On Manual Work for Men
The Recovery of Family Life (Scott Yenor)
The Feminine Mystique (Betty Friedan)
Starship Troopers (Robert Heinlein)
The Saboteur (Paul Kix)
On Battlefield V
Why We Drive (Matthew B. Crawford)
The Apple and the Arrow (Mary and Conrad Buff)

The Fifth Pillar: The Subordination of Economics to Politics

Foundationalism honors private property as the basis of a free society, and assumes that most free exchanges are to be unfettered by any government intrusion. Foundationalism is not Distributism, but it knows that concentrations of economic power are inherently corrosive and to be prevented by, and if necessary shattered by, direct government action. In no circumstance will a conflict between virtue and the free market be resolved in favor of the latter. In all instances, political choice will dictate the limits of economic choice.

The specifics of our economic system are not a major concern of Foundationalism. Certainly, any economic action based on unreality or

on ideology will be rejected, and the fake “work” that currently makes up much of our economy will be eliminated, but whether we need a gold standard, what is to be the fractional banking ratio, and under what circumstances government may be useful to jog economic activity are strictly practical concerns, to be addressed as necessary, not as a matter of abstract principle. Central planning will be regarded with great suspicion, however, as tending not only to not be effective, but, much more important, to grow government and to cause it to interfere in matters not of its concern.

Consumerism will be strongly discouraged, including by the imposition of stiff tariffs on foreign goods contributing to consumerism. Work will be directed to production of goods and services with positive value. Rent-seeking through manipulation of government or corporate structures will be rigorously discouraged through disincentives, including criminal penalties. Existing fortunes gained through rent-seeking, or of anyone who has materially supported destructive or evil causes, will be wholly confiscated by the state.

The Foundationalist state is aware that the achievements that flow from a successful state, especially one with unparalleled scientific achievement, lead to wealth, and that wealth, both itself and when greater wealth appears achievable, frequently undermines virtue. There is no solution for this but a combination of social strictures and the offering of a frontier, so that wealth is directed outward to achievement as much as possible.

Work antithetical to societal flourishing will be forbidden or strongly discouraged. Work in areas of limited value, which currently absorbs a grossly excessive portion of our intellectual energy, including law and financial engineering, will also be sharply curbed. We cannot achieve if our brightest minds waste their talents.

FURTHER READING

The Age of Extraction (Tim Wu)

Against Gross Domestic Product

The Eggs Benedict Option (Raw Egg Nationalist)

Glass House (Brian Alexander)

The Curse of Bigness (Tim Wu)

A Humane Economy (Wilhelm Röpke)
The Revolt of the Masses (José Ortega y Gasset)
The Once and Future Worker (Oren Cass)
Shop Class as Soulcraft (Matthew B. Crawford)
Hired (James Bloodworth)
The Unintended Reformation (Brad S. Gregory)
The Great Leveler (Walter Scheidel)
The Value of Everything (Mariana Mazzucato)
The Great Transformation (Karl Polanyi)
The Betrayal of American Prosperity (Clyde Prestowitz)

The Sixth Pillar: Intermediary Institutions

Given the limited role of government in the Foundationalist state, the implementation of virtue, as well as education in virtue, must occur on the local level, and primarily through rebuilt intermediary institutions, which, beyond virtue, also strengthen the social web. Schools, churches, clubs, unions, and myriad other groups will be directly encouraged, strengthened, and rewarded. Foundationalism will, of necessity, be a high-trust, not a low-trust, society. Differences among people will not, of themselves, be encouraged, rewarded, or valued.

FURTHER READING

Craeft (Alexander Langlands)
The Righteous Mind (Jonathan Haidt)
The World Beyond Your Head (Matthew B. Crawford)
 On Communitarianism
The Fractured Republic (Yuval Levin)
Dignity (Chris Arnade)
The Moral Basis of a Backward Society (Edward C. Banfield)
Age of Fracture (Daniel Rodgers)
Life at the Bottom (Theodore Dalrymple)
Bowling Alone (Robert Putnam)

The Seventh Pillar: Subsidiarity

Local interests will be looked after by local people; there will be no national laws on the environment, on discrimination, on guns, on education, or on any other of the vast majority of topics federal legislation, and therefore the administrative state, now covers.

All charitable aid will be taken out of the hands of governments, and given to private organizations, who will be tasked with using that aid to reward virtue and punish vice. Yes, this will result in severe restrictions on autonomy for the recipients. That's a feature, not a bug. But it will also result in the ability for most of the poor to regain their dignity, especially if coupled with other political changes. Government action with respect to the poor will be restricted to assisting the poor to lift themselves out of poverty.

Very large and expensive projects that require national coordination will, however, be executed by the central government; these include substantial investments in grand public works, including both earthbound and in Space. The latter will be implemented both as an economic matter to obtain, potentially, desirable resources and as a social matter, to increase the prestige and glory of the nation, which is a public interest that binds the people together.

FURTHER READING

Kings in the North (Alexander Rose)

Fitzpatrick's War (Theodore Judson)

Retrotopia (John Michael Greer)

Life at the Bottom (Theodore Dalrymple)

Before Church and State (Andrew Willard Jones)

On Communitarianism

The Eighth Pillar: Hierarchy and Order

Foundationalism recognizes that in all areas of life, hierarchies are both natural and desirable. In no instance will a hierarchy be seen as undesirable oppression. Foundationalism is a movement with an elite, but not for the elites.

The Foundationalist society will be one of order, but not because it is a police state. Quite the contrary; order will result from a combination of the political structures and the reborn virtue of the populace. If enforcement must be widespread, the society, or at least a part of the society, is failing.

Crimes will be limited to crimes that are *malum in se*. No *malum prohibitum* crime will exist, although civil penalties, fines and debilities, will be implemented for violation of what few regulations exist. Capital punishment will be imposed for major crimes and will be swiftly implemented. For non-capital crimes, corporal punishment will be the default, rather than imprisonment. The state will flog pornographers; and it will execute corrupters of children, as well as abortionists and other murderers.

FURTHER READING

The Martian General's Daughter (Theodore Judson)

On Private Justice

12 Rules for Life (Jordan Peterson)

The Revolt of the Masses (José Ortega y Gasset)

The Righteous Mind (Jonathan Haidt)

Going Clear (Lawrence Wright)

The Ninth Pillar: Christian Religion

Foundationalism does not offer an ideology; transcendence is not offered through the state. But every sound society must have an impeller to virtue and to achievement, and a mechanism for transcendence. Religion, though itself an ideology of sorts, can be one of those impellers. Achieving virtue in the people, both the ruling classes and the masses, though especially the former, along with driving accomplishments that will echo down the ages of Man, are among the ends of Foundationalism, and right religion is a key component of both. Only one religion, Christianity, has ever been associated with success in both areas—and it is true, which is a bonus. Therefore, Christianity will be the officially-favored religion of the Foundationalist state, replacing the great heresy of Modernism, our currently officially-favored religion.

The state's overarching goal in favoring Christianity will be to seek the common good and a realistic amount of virtue and flourishing. The society's standards of virtue will not emerge from a purely confessional basis, but most of those standards will be derived from Christianity. Christianity will be explicitly preferred, in part, because on average Christian belief leads to the best outcomes for the state and society. For example, teachers in any state-supported lower school or high school will be required to be practicing Christians (just as now they are effectively required to be practitioners of globohomo), and Christians will, all else being equal, receive state preferment, as well as, no doubt, preferment in the private sphere, from jobs to social status. Personal advancement in the state and society would thus certainly benefit from conversion to Christianity. It might be objected that the result will often be Christians in name only, but that's fine—the goal is to weld together a society, and most of all a ruling class, and while there will always be variability of belief, over time a strongly dominant religion will do the welding, and that welding will lead to an increase in devout belief, in a virtuous circle.

But the Foundationalist state is not a policer of the practice of belief. Rather, it will encourage and incentivize moral behavior, with punishments when necessary, not of disbelief, but of actions that corrupt virtue. Thus, it will forbid most divorce, not because it is a sin, but because it destroys society. It will frown on adultery and homosexual acts, and disincentivize both, but not criminalize either. It will punish graft, theft, and sharp practice; the unfettered free market will no longer be thought of as some special good or moral in itself. Gambling will be mostly illegal; there will be no lotteries. And so forth, in organic development that will depend on what can be accomplished at any given point while maintaining a proper balance of cost and benefits.

At the same time, freedom of religious exercise for all will be allowed to the extent not actually in contradiction with virtue. Thus, any non-pernicious religion, any religion that is not a proxy or bridgehead of external enemies of state or society, will be permitted freedom of worship, without any attempt to make worship difficult (such as Islam has always imposed on Christianity in the lands it has temporarily conquered). Paganism and polytheism will be allowed, and even preferred to the extent that virtue is their focus. Naturally, wholly pernicious belief

systems, such as Satanism, will be directly suppressed. Open atheism will be strongly discouraged and socially anathema.

FURTHER READING

Christian Orthodox Political Philosophy (Pavlos Kyprianou)

The Age of Paradise (John Strickland)

For the Freedom of Zion (Guy McLean Rogers)

Before Church and State (Andrew Willard Jones)

Going Clear (Lawrence Wright)

Kingdoms of Faith (Brian Catlos)

Frederick the Second (Ernst Kantorowicz)

From Fire, by Water (Sohrab Ahmari)

The 21 (Martin Mosebach)

The Tenth Pillar: High Culture

A superior society cannot exist without an excellent high culture. High culture strengthens the moral fiber of the ruling class; it also has a crucial political role in binding all levels of society together. The goal of art under Foundationalism will be a form of emotional resonance, where all sectors and levels of society feel they have something in common that ties them together and which impels to virtue. In Foundationalism, art will not be a set of rigid beliefs, an aesthetic canon for the elite, as is the “art” of Modernism; it will instead, like governance, be an organic new thing based on the wisdom of the past, intertwined with all the people, high and low.

True, an excessive attachment to high culture can lead to exaltation of luxury and thence to decadence, but that is a management problem. No society can long exist, much less be a strong society, without a unifying component of the spiritual, in a broader sense than simply religious, that offers the society a heroic narrative. High art of all types (in particular architecture, something to be seen and honored by all), provides that unifying component.

The upper orders will be expected to exuberantly patronize high art, keeping in mind Aristotle’s thoughts on magnanimity. Artists will work in cooperation with the pillars of society, state and private, rather

than being destructive agents of the Left as they mostly have been for the past century.

High architecture in particular, that of grand buildings, is a bridge between God and man, and a sinew binding state and people, the ruling class and the masses. Low architecture, that of daily living and daily use, is key to satisfaction in the life of a populace. Thus, a coherent and uplifting architecture, high and low, is, and has always been, necessary for any successful society. It is frozen music. Design great architecture and you build a key component in binding a society together, through its role in offering a common art and through that, a common culture.

Art and architecture will be classical, in that classical traditions can express any meaning desired, in a variety of languages, and offer beauty and continuity, along with enough originality to prevent seeming calcified. Foundationalism has no need to create anything that is new, though some organically developing novelty is to be expected.

FURTHER READING

The New Philistines (Sohrab Ahmari)

Making Dystopia (James Stevens Curl)

Three New Deals (Wolfgang Schivelbusch)

The Fiery Angel (Michael Walsh)

The Eleventh Pillar: Techno-Optimism

Foundationalism does not idolize agrarianism. The rural life and culture has its place, and nature and its forms influence good architecture, but high culture, and the drive to create a successful society, always revolves around cities, and therefore technology. Foundationalism strives to offer a goal for, and outlet for, and inspiration for, human aspiration, and rural life cannot build spaceports (aside from today not occupying the daily life of any significant percentage of the population). Technological striving will be demanded and therefore honored.

At the same time, Foundationalism rejects the delusional belief in technology as *deus ex machina*. The Singularity will never arrive; nor will strong artificial intelligence. Such ideas are distractions, eschatological fantasies, that harm human flourishing.

A possible objection is that technology is inherently anti-human, tending to atomize society and family, destroying the unchosen bonds and intermediary institutions that bind any competent society. This is accurate up to a point, but the answer is not to pretend that we can all live in the Shire, or achieve a stable post-technological society. The answer is to make man the master of technology, not technology the master of man, and to deprecate technology that delivers autonomic individualism. We choose atomization; it is not forced on us. When technology appeals to the worse angels of our nature, societal strictures are the solution, not pretending we can return the genie to the bottle.

FURTHER READING

The True and Only Heaven (Christopher Lasch)
Against the Machine (Paul Kingsnorth)
The Revolt of the Public (Martin Gurri)
The Glass Bees (Ernst Jünger)
The Wizard and the Prophet (Charles C. Mann)
Human, Forever (James Poulos)
Industrial Society and Its Future (Theodore Kaczynski)
Dark Age America (John Michael Greer)
Empires of the Sky (Alexander Rose)
The War on Normal People (Andrew Yang)
Apocalypse Never (Michael Shellenberger)
Neuromancer (William Gibson)
American Genesis (Thomas P. Hughes)
Craeft (Alexander Langlands)
Retrotopia (John Michael Greer)
Enlightenment Now (Steven Pinker)

The Twelfth Pillar: Nationalism, Not Globalism

Foundationalism is a system for the West; it is unlikely to work as well for any other society, although certainly elements of it could benefit all civilizations. Its specific focus is America, or the lands where America now is, give or take. Within that area, Foundationalism will be the spine of the nation, and that nation will stand apart from other nations, with

no interests in other nations beyond trade in useful articles and a decent mutual respect for each other's interests, combined with willingness to defend those interests if threatened. Immigration will only be permitted in extremely limited amounts, and only of culturally-compatible individuals with specific worthwhile skills. All illegal immigrants and legal immigrants of the past several decades not culturally compatible will be deported to their countries of origin.

In foreign policy the only relevant criterion will be the ends of the nation (although since Foundationalism will explicitly prefer Christianity, the interests of Christians as Christians outside the country, and to some extent also of Jews if also in the benefit of Christians, will be considered an interest of the nation). The Foundationalist state will implement an aggressive industrial policy tailored to benefit the populace, meaning workers, not a parasitic elite. In short, globalism in its current meaning will be despised and treated with contempt. Dual citizenship will not be permitted. Any citizen who views himself as a global citizen, not a citizen of the nation, will be made to leave while his assets stay behind.

FURTHER READING

The Camp of the Saints (Jean Raspail)

Return of the Strong Gods (R. R. Reno)

The Revolt of the Masses (José Ortega y Gasset)

The Path

How is Foundationalism to be accomplished? Not easily, and not without the world first being broken and then remade. The first requirement is smashing and irretrievably discrediting our current system, that is, the cultural and political dominance of the Left, the poison of the modern age. This, when done, will destroy forever the philosophical dominance of autonomic individualism. When that is successfully accomplished, the ground will be cleared for Foundationalism. If that is not successfully accomplished, there is no point in talking about a worthwhile future for human flourishing. The future will instead be a sickly random walk into the distant future, and perhaps be no future at all, if man extinguishes himself.

Achieving Foundationalism will inevitably occur, in part, by first passing through chaos and violence. Through the chaos, there will be steps forward and steps backward, but if our leaders are bold men informed by Foundationalism, more steps will be made forward than backward. If Foundationalism is truly a system based in reality, it will succeed in its goals.

Success breeds success, resulting in that public opinion will, to the extent not already turned to Foundationalism, decisively turn in that direction. While Foundationalism does not take its direction from public opinion, it realizes that a society must, to a large extent, reflect public opinion, and that in a modern technological society, opinion will always be widely and quickly formed. The system, therefore, while led from above, must also grow organically from below, and become a living thing, strong and flexible, able to face the future with confidence, audacity, and determination. This is the way.