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Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn: Leftism Revisited Study Guide

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ERIK VON KUEHNELT-LEDDIHN: LEFTISM REVISITED

STUDY GUIDE, 2004

Steven Alan Samson

CHAPTER ONE: IDENTITY AND DIVERSITY

Outline

- A. TWO BASIC DRIVES: IDENTITY AND DIVERSITY [ONE AND THE MANY] (3-5)
 - 1. Identitarianism: Herd Instinct, Drive toward Conformity: *e.g.*, Nationalistic Gymnastic Organizations
 - a. Nostrism: Effacement of Self, Submergence of Ego, But a Clever Multiplication of Egoisms
 - b. Homosexuality as Narcissism
 - 2. Diversitarian Drives: Herd Instinct vs. Romantic Sentiment
 - a. Curiosity for the New
 - b. History Results from Man's Desire for Change [Sameness of the Ant State or Termite State]
 - c. Longing for Otherness: Incarnation of Christ
 - 3. Modern Times Are More Favorable to the Herd Instinct, Conformity
 - a. Identity Is a Cousin of Equality
 - b. Result: Identitarianism
- B. PROGRAMMATIC IDENTITARIANISM HAS FEAR AS ITS DRIVING MOTOR: INFERIORITY COMPLEX (5-8)
 - 1. Hatred: Helplessness before One Considered to Be Stronger
 - a. Slavish Hatred vs. Masterly Contempt
 - b. Cruelty Is the Inferior's Revenge
 - c. Spirit of Mass Movements
 - 2. Envy: Its Complex Psychological Roots
 - a. ["Zero-Sum" Feeling: "I Am Poor Because He Is Rich"]
 - 1) Assumption: All Good Things in This World Are Finite
 - b. Suspicion That Others Feel Superior
 - 3. Mobilization of Envy Has Been the Key to Political Success for 200 Years
 - a. Leftist Theme: Opposition to Privileges of Others and a Demand to Conform
 - b. Nonconformist Treated as a Traitor: Confusion of Unity with Uniformity
 - 4. Sameness Simplifies Matters
 - a. Two Obstacles: Nature and Man
 - b. Procrustean Bed
 - 5. Mystery of Personality
 - 6. Equality as a Poor Substitute for Human Identity

CHAPTER TWO: EQUALITY AND LIBERTY

Outline

- A. CHRISTIAN VIEW (9-10)
 - 1. We Are Not Equally Loved by God
 - 2. Grace Is Sufficient, Not Equal
 - a. Inequality of Saints and Sinners
 - 3. Equality Does Not Figure in Holy Scripture
 - 4. Too Many Religious Thinkers Try to Bridge the Gap between the Christian Faith and Current Political Notions
- B. ADVERBIAL EQUALITY: SEMANTIC TRICKERY (10-14)
 - 1. Why We *Should* Treat Each Other as Equals
 - a. Procedural Equality
 - b. Personal Uniqueness
 - 2. Equality before the Law
 - a. Differentiation: By Age
 - b. By Circumstance
 - c. By Gender
 - 3. Equality of Opportunity
 - a. Abolition of Arbitrary Discrimination
 - b. Insistence on Indiscriminate Wage Rates
 - c. One-Man-One-Vote Principle
 - d. Equality of Education: Collectivization of Children
 - 4. Equality of Treatment: F. A. von Hayek
 - a. Timocratic Principle
 - b. Consolations of Failure in an Unequal Society
 - c. Psychological Difficulty of Failure amidst Social Mobility
 - 5. Egalitarianism Depends on Force
 - 6. Mutual Hostility of Equality and Freedom
 - 7. Myth of Equality in the United States and Other Moths of National
 - a. Character
 - b. Programmatic Egalitarianism
 - c. Brutal Elitism in Professional Life
 - d. Competition in Business, Sports, and Politics

CHAPTER THREE: DEMOCRACY AND LIBERALISM

Outline

- A. DEMOCRACY (15-17)
 - 1. Democracy Is a Political Form, Not a Social Attitude
 - 2. Definitions
 - a. Democracy: *Demos* (People) and *Kratos* (Power)
 - b. Monarchy
 - c. Aristocracy
 - d. Republic: Multitude of Forms
 - 3. Question "Who Should Rule?" and Answer "Majority of Political Equal Citizens" Raises Subsidiary Questions
 - a. Direct vs. Representative Democracy
 - 1) Oligarchic School: Pareto, Mosca, Michels
 - 2) Conscience: Democratic [Delegate] vs. Republican [Trustee]
 - b. Majority Rule: Republic as *pars sanior* [People of Quality or Natural Aristocracy] vs. Democracy as Mob Rule

4. Politically Equal Citizens
 - a. Definition of Full Citizenship Is Always Arbitrary
 - 1) Factors: Gender, Age of Maturity, Age of Military Service
 5. Two Pillars of Democracy: Majority Rule and Political Equality
 - a. Proportional Representation
- B. LIBERALISM (17-22)
1. Freedom Has Nothing to Do with Democracy as Such
 - a. Majority Leniency toward Defeated Minority Is Tolerance
 - b. Ideologically Systematized Majority Tolerance Is Liberalism
 2. Illusion of Democratic Self-Government
 - a. Lottery Analogy
 - b. Forced Choice between Pre-established Candidates
 3. "Self-Government" Is an Understandable Dream
 - a. Democratism Is a "Paradisiacal" Movement
 - 1) Loss of Golden Age Seen as a Conspiracy
 - b. Hardship of Being Ruled by Another (Servitude) Can Only Be Dissolved in Love
 - 1) Paradox: How Can We Love Those We Hire and Fire Like Obnoxious Menials?
 - 2) Pejorative Meaning of Politics and Politician in Democracies
 4. Tolerance as the Essence of Liberalism
 - a. Its Virtue Entails Self-Control and an "Ascetic" Attitude
 - b. Its Limits: Revolutionary Anarchists, East Indian Thugs, People ' s Temple
 - c. Arbitrariness of Tolerance
 - d. Unprincipled People Only Have Indifference: e.g., Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., and Franklin Delano Roosevelt
 5. Readiness to Compromise Is the Quintessence of Parliamentary Life on a Democracy
 - a. What Is Meant Is *Liberal Democracy*
 6. Proper Understanding of Liberalism
 - a. Question: "How Should Rule Be Exercised?"
 - b. Answer: In Such a Way That Each Citizen Enjoys the Greatest Possible Amount of Personal Liberty"
 - c. Limit of Liberty Is the Common Good: Arbitrariness, Relativity
 7. Genuine Liberalism: Democracy as Well as Monarchy May Be Liberal
 - a. Examples of Liberal Monarchs
 - b. Examples of Democratic Illiberalism
 - c. Myth of Absolute Monarchs: Limitation by *Corps Intermédiaires* (Local *Parlements* in France, *Landtage* and *Stände* in Germany)
 - d. Monarchs Always Stood on Thin Ice
 - e. Totalitarian Tendencies Exist in Democracies That Are Not Present in Absolute Monarchies, Less So in Mixed Government
 8. Totalitarian Democracy
 - a. Isms That Menace Liberty Call Themselves Democratic
 - b. Genuine Liberalism Rarely Becomes a Mass Movement -- Conservatism Never
 - c. Tocqueville: Danger That Democracy May Evolve into Oppressive Totalitarianism

CHAPTER FOUR: RIGHT AND LEFT

Outline

- A. CLEARING THE SEMANTIC RUBBLE (23-25)
 - 1. Traditional Meanings of Right and Left
 - 2. Biblical Uses
 - 3. British Parliament
 - 4. French Parliament
 - 5. Germany: Nazis Seated on Extreme Right for Their Nationalism (a Byproduct of the French Revolution)
 - 6. Nationalism Is Identitarian
 - 7. Mislocation of the Nazis Has Hardened a Semantic Confusion That the Extremes Meet
- B. RIGHT VS. LEFT (25-27)
 - 1. Right Equates with Freedom: Need for *Lebensraum* (Living Space) for Personal Development
 - a. The Great Menace: Mass Collectivist Movements and the Mad Ambition of Oratorically or Literarily Gifted Intellectuals
 - 2. Right Is Identified with Personal Freedom and Respect for Tradition: Free, Organically Grown Forms of Life
 - a. Utopianism Is Reactionary, Not Progressive, and Seeks to Return to an Assumed Golden Age
 - 3. Left Is the Enemy of Diversity
 - a. Uniformity Is Stressed in All Leftist Utopias
 - b. "One" Is the Keynote
- C. APPLICATIONS OF THIS DICHOTOMY (27-3)
 - 1. Structure of the State
 - a. Leftists: Strong Centralization
 - b. Rightists: Federalism, Principle of Subsidiarity
 - c. French Provinces Broken into Dependent Departments
 - 2. Education
 - a. Leftist Is Always a Statist
 - 3. Religion
 - a. Leftist Wants Undivided Allegiance
 - 1) Atrophy of Religion by Driving It from the Marketplace
 - 2) Asphyxiation of the Church through State-Control
 - b. Leftism Is Basically Materialistic
 - c. Provident State: Extension of Government *and* Dependency
 - 4. Exceptions to the Rule: Leftist Inroads into the Right
 - a. Spain: Falangists vs. Carlists, Catalan Anarchists
 - b. Metternich Regime: Reaction to French Revolution
 - c. Maurrasism: Monarchism Blended with Nationalism
 - 5. Making Semantical Sense:
 - a. Right: Freedom, Personalism, Variety
 - b. Left: Slavery, Collectivism, Uniformity
 - c. American vs. European Liberalism
 - d. Confucius: If Words Lose Their Meaning, People Lose Their Liberty