

The Family as the Basis for Political Existence

To speak of the family as the basis for political existence could be totally drained of intellectual interest even before I began this essay if we meant by the title nothing more than the obvious fact that political life is peopled by people, and people are born of parents, other people.

Theoretically, of course, political philosophers can conceive of a situation such as the one detailed in Plato's *Republic* in which the family is systematically destroyed and children are born from mates who do not even know one another. In George Orwell's *1984* the family is reduced to a breeding ground pululating with helots governed by a small elite of rulers sworn to celibacy, living a kind of secularist, monastic existence. *1984* is a novel but the late Heinrich Himmler in reality conceived of a similar program in which superior Nordic types would breed youngsters like themselves altogether without benefit of clergy and totally bereft of any familial institution, the children—as in Plato and Orwell—being educated by the State. Himmler tried out his experiment in a few houses set aside for nothing more than copulation between paradigmatically muscular and beautiful blonds who would never see one another again after conceiving future Nordic supermen. He began the experiment too late for it to have anything of a future, and it died in the *Götterdämmerung* of the Third Reich.

Even Marxism, which in theory has a very jaundiced view of the family, does not try to suppress it as an institution. The early free love and easy divorce espoused in Russia in the first flush of the Communist take-over

immediately after World War I produced a sexual anarchy that constrained Lenin and later Stalin to render divorce far more restrictive and difficult to obtain than in Western democracies, and which thus kept the family alive even if confined within a vise that turned children into spies on their own parents. The business still exists today in Red China. History teaches that even the most savage totalitarianisms in principle, those that claim all children for the service of the State, concede—if reluctantly—that the best way to ensure their own futures (no children, no future) is to permit to human nature the institution of the family. The alternative of the political brothel of Plato and Himmler does not seem to work.

That this last is a concession made by Marxist theoreticians and practitioners is an issue which is not foreign to the main thrust of my study. Modernity, be it Marxist or otherwise, has had to make some concessions with regard to the family if only for the very crass reason that the family seems—at least at this moment—to be the best breeding ground for populating the gnostic paradise of the future, howsoever we might conceptualize the Golden Age promised us by totalitarians. The family does seem to be in-

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dispensable practically, and until science can breed youngsters out of test tubes, that practical necessity will remain to either trouble or bolster all political regimes. The family is a basic, indeed *the* basic, human institution. Individuals do not spring into existence out of nothing: they come out of families.

Reginald in his Supplement to the unfinished fourth part of the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas cites Aristotle to the effect that man is more a conjugal animal than a political animal.¹ But, he goes on, given that political life is perfectly natural, it follows that domestic life is even more natural to man. Familial life, that romance of domesticity sung so highly by Chesterton in his *What's Wrong with the World*, accentuates the political nature of man.² The student of politics can better understand his own subject if he bends back and scrutinizes domestic life. In Aristotle's conception of the social hierarchy governing human life, the household emerges as more fundamental than the city, and even that intermediate state he called the village or township is itself largely composed of families bound together geographically and by common interests. (Aristotle's hierarchy today is blurred by the abolition of space through electronic technology and by the immense mobility of the modern managerial class with its subsequent suppression of roots. However, I must abstract from these considerations which I have treated elsewhere for the sake of the march of the argument of this paper.)³

The Family Prefigures the Polity

Aristotle, in Book VIII of the *Ethics*, deepens his understanding of the ontological relations between politics and family by listing notable analogies between familial and political friendship.⁴ Friendship is integral to both. The friendship between a father and his sons parallels the friendship between a king and his subjects. "A father is the cause of his son's existence (considered the greatest good in this life), rearing, and instruction—benefits that are attributed also to a man's ancestors."⁵ Aristotle here sounds almost like a Roman—a living continuity binds together present, past, and future, all

annealed by a *pietas*, a piety, towards a family extended in time. St. Thomas, in his *Commentary*, adds that "friendships of this type imply a kind of excellence in the ruler. For this reason parents are honoured; and so justice is not the same for both parties but must be proportioned to their worth."⁶ Aristotle then notes that whereas monarchy is reflected in the father-son relationship, aristocracy is reflected in the friendship between husband and wife. Aquinas comments that the roles of husband and wife are differentiated and engender virtues proper to each. "The husband being more worthy, is placed over the wife; however, the husband, does not direct the affairs belonging to the wife."⁷ If royal and aristocratic politics are reflected familiarly, as argued by Aristotle and Aquinas, so too is the form of government often called timocracy or good democracy. (These terms have, of course, a different meaning in Plato.) In the well-ordered family, brothers—due to their likeness in age and to the common education knitting them into unity—find often a kind of friendship rooted in equality and virtue, "the friendship of comrades" (Aristotle).⁸ This friendship, antedating all political constitutions in the *polis*, is comparable to it. Brothers are like comrades in arms. Those of you reading these pages who might have known battle will recall the comradeship making friends out of soldiers, certainly among the higher forms of friendship. Aristotle finds this friendship necessary for the well-being of democracies, and he sees it as prefigured in the friendship between brothers within a household governed by parents.

These parallels between the political life of the regime and the more intimate life of the family adumbrate the tripartite division of governments into monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. The family incarnates all of them spontaneously and naturally prior to the conscious artistry needed to craft political constitutions into reality. Full political life demands constitutions, themselves works of art that fashion into being the ways in which political orders govern themselves. But the family is *not* like that. Whatever there be of art in a family operates totally within a natural society anterior to art. I

once knew a man who wrote a constitution for the government of his family, one inspired by the American Constitution. Rarely in my life have I ever experienced such a sensation of irreality, comic absurdity. My spontaneous reaction was laughter. Families simply do not work this way and even more, they *are not* this way.

But every political society does structure itself according to constitutions which vary from society to society. And—once again—Aristotle: constitutions do not grow on trees like apples. But give us human beings and, Platonic and Himmlerian perversity aside, we are going to have families. The family is deeper than constitutionality but most constitutions seem to find in the family a prefiguring of themselves. Constitutions are representative. A family, on the contrary, although it might be represented in political life—I will return to the issue—is not in and of itself representative. The family simply is. It exists. It does not represent some prior and more profound society.

Every political society represents something. I appeal here to Eric Voegelin's *The New Science of Politics*.⁹ Voegelin noted that the concept of "representative government" was little more than fact so far as theory is concerned: i.e., democratic governments do exist. But this fact does not exhaust the meaning of representation. *Every* government or polity is representative of the society that it governs.¹⁰ The society in question either accepts this representation or it does not: in the latter case we encounter revolution or internal collapse. Both revolution and collapse give way to some new order, and hence, my thesis retains its validity.

We might suspect that the family—that without which there would seem to be no political orders at all—might well find itself represented in some formal constitutional structure. The family—I repeat the proposition for it is crucial to the argument—does not represent anything or anybody: it simply is. Could it, however, be represented *qua* family in political life? Permit me to suggest that the family can, indeed has been, represented politically in our Western history but that this representation has been blurred by a deficient articulation of the

forms of government in occidental philosophy. Often we do not see what is there to be seen because we approach reality through glasses cut by craftsmen who did not know their own trade. A refined theory of political representation is required to come to terms with this series of problems. Every regime or polity images forth the society that it represents. The political order is a mirror in which a social world can see itself but, being paradigmatic, it invites that same social world to be all the more itself. Both reflecting "back" and inviting "forward," a political regime is at once pulpit and picture. This is what we are as a people! This is what we wish to be! But we wish to intensify our own corporate existence. "I am what I am and that's all that I am." But even Popeye takes spinach in order to be more of what he is, "the sailor man."

Forms of Government

If "democracy" means the power of, and government by, a majority of individuals, then democracy is one among several ways in which mankind has organized its politics. But "democracy" can also mean the truth that every governmental form or regime represents the society that it leads. I am reminded of Sir John Fortescue's symbolism of the "king" as "erupting" (*erumpit*)¹¹ from society, the *corpus politicum*, as its *caput* or "head," its self-articulation, that without which a body is a corpse. From this angle, it would seem that *every* political society is "democratic" even though its governmental form might be very undemocratic indeed. Again, Plato: "The City is Man Writ Large," which is the other side of the coin, "Every society gets the government it merits."

But very few political orders represent societies that are monolithic in their social composition. Aristotle noted that there were few democracies or monarchies around in his own time, and no aristocracies at all—all this some five hundred years before the birth of Christ. Noting as well in the *Politics* the truth that compromise, not virtue, lies at the heart of most polities, Aristotle suggested that *most* existing regimes reflected an alliance between the many (hence the

poor) and the few (hence the rich), democracy and oligarchy. Only the rich or those backed by the rich can be elected but the election pertains to the many, to the *demos*. Much of Aristotle's politics is obsolete but on this point he targeted a perennial truth. The Stagirite was dead right: try to get elected today if you have no money or are backed by nobody with money! And if you have the money needed to mount massive television and print campaigns, to set up the costly machinery of party politics, it is still the majority of the great unwashed that will vote you into office. Wisdom has very little to do with it. Money wedded to votes is the *usual*, which is not to say the *normal*, road to political power. Aristotle, noting all this, lost interest in the classical tripartite division of governmental forms. Without exactly denying it, he bypassed it because it did not seem to describe the political reality he knew. Professor Alvaro d'Ors in Spain has accused Aristotle here of "*pereza intelectual*," and in the next few paragraphs I follow d'Ors fairly closely in his analysis.¹²

The old tripartite doctrine that Aristotle and Plato inherited contains an essential law, an inbuilt political tendency, even though that law was hidden by the historical vicissitudes of the times that saw the theory, if only imperfectly, come into existence. The arithmetical division of political forms into three was spoiled by Plato's introduction of the notion of legality versus illegality and Aristotle's introduction of a search for the common good as opposed to the egotism of the ruler. Hence the expansion of the original three into six: monarchy plus tyranny; aristocracy plus oligarchy; democracy plus mob rule. These moral considerations do not do justice to the original theory of the three. Plato and Aristotle failed to take into account the principle of representation and the origin of political power. D'Ors has argued:

Give me a society formed overwhelmingly of individuals, and I will give you a democratic and liberal republic. Give me a society formed in part by prominent families and in part by individuals, and I will give you an aristocratic republic. Give me a society formed principally by families, represented juridically, and I will give you a tra-

ditionalist, dynastic monarchy. The principle involved is in no way moral or ethical, nor is it based on a personal preference. The principle justifying the tripartite division of governmental forms follows the curve of how societies are in reference to the role of the family discovered therein. The family is everything. The family is something. The family is nothing.

In a few words: a political order—and, as argued, every political order is representational—can represent families or it can represent individuals or a working compromise between them. In a liberal democracy everybody normally comes out of a family, but the family as such has no political role whatsoever. Familial authority is not recognized in an Upper House, and the vote is not given the family *qua* family. *One man—One Vote! That is the cardinal dogma of liberal democracy.* When the basis of a society, hence, is composed principally of individuals, liberal individualistic democracy is perfectly representational and normal.

Legitimacy and Legality

The orchestrating principle in the theory is that of *legitimacy* united with the *origin* of political power. Legitimacy is deeper than legality, positive law, and legitimacy finds its paradigmatic structure within the familial community. Legality is posterior to legitimacy, and it either recognizes or fails to recognize familial legitimacy in the three fundamental political forms under discussion.¹³

A society divided into a majority of men whose families do not count socially or politically counterpointed by an aristocratic minority based on families marked by their historical names, sometimes titles, sometimes not, represents itself naturally in an aristocratic republic. That the republic might be crowned ceremonially is irrelevant. The model here for d'Ors is the Roman Republic with its patrician and plebian classes. A plebian could rise to political preeminence but when he did so it was not as the representative of a family. The business is easily illustrated by the American experience: a Kennedy is elected because he is a Kennedy, the scion of an illustrious family. A Dukakis

becomes governor of a state and a candidate for the presidency because of *what* he stands for, not because of *who* he is. Dynasties often emerge in liberal democracies because the formal structures of individualistic government have not yet eliminated familial and hence aristocratic pretensions. We live today in this country within an uneasy compromise. (Democracy seems to want happy and good family lives in its rulers but it is unwilling to represent the family politically.) To the example of Rome, we might add as well the experience of England in the past few centuries. A Churchill rises to prominence because he is a Marlborough. A Disraeli rises to power because he is himself. That both men were brilliant is beside the point for the thesis being argued. Senator Kennedy is not a particularly deep fellow and not even his friends would argue the contrary. But he represents an illustrious family: *that* is his ticket of admission to American political power.

A society in which every family is a dynasty unto itself represents itself naturally in a dynastic monarchy. Legality dominates democracy, legality balanced by legitimacy marks aristocracy, and legitimacy as anterior to and legitimated by legality seals monarchy. Monarchy thus is less government by one than government by a family. The dynastic-monarchical principle has always been under attack historically from two different sources. Aristocracies resent royal power because one family is placed above the powerful and the rich and hence might well impose its will on their privileges. Thus aristocracy won in England but lost in Spain and France. But the dynastic principle is attacked by democratic individualism in another way. A sign of democracy is its permanent attack on the differences between legitimate and illegitimate children, its attempt to equalize them both *legally*. Democracy, when faithful to its essence, cannot recognize anything political which is not grounded in legality. Democracy does not defend illegitimate children out of any tender charity towards these unfortunate youngsters but out of a deep resentment for the family as an institution incapable of being really at home in a society that recognizes

legally the existence of nothing more than the isolated individual. Where the family lacks political representation, monarchy is an unnatural form of government, the superimposition of a crowned mummy upon a body foreign to its essence. But where fathers are kings in their own families, one of their own—a dynastic king—is father of all the fathers.



Filmer argued that same thesis from Scripture but he overstated his case.¹⁴ Monarchy is a natural form of government but it is certainly not the only one. Aquinas, for example, preferred monarchy but he argued for the validity of both democracy and aristocracy. That there are very few traditionalist monarchies in existence, if any at all, is due to the decline in the social and political role of the family, a decline sometimes resisted and even reversed thanks to the aristocratic principle but that principle, as suggested, tends to be hostile to monarchy. Aristocracy, with its network of blood relationships and its oligarchical financial base, resembles a broadly extended country club, and it has usually been uncomfortable with royalist pretensions.

The concept of Republic is not the contradictory of Monarchy. There have been transitional republics, crowned republics, and transitional monarchies. The enemy of legitimate monarchy is illegitimate monarchy, usurpation in the strict sense of the term.¹⁵

The moral considerations advanced by Aristotle to distinguish tyranny from monarchy do not truly reach the heart of the problem. A tyrant, *de facto*, might govern well and a "good" dynastic king poorly. The formal difference between the two of them must be sought elsewhere, *in the origin of their power* linked to its representative role.

The legitimate king inherits from his father as does the legitimate son from his. When events go badly for the legitimate king—as well as for the legitimate father of any decent family—his own gather all the more around him, rally to him in his misfortune. Louis XIV had his back to the wall when the armies of the continental alliance threatened to push deeply into France unless he withdrew his grandson's claim to the Spanish throne. The French King called a Council of the Blood Royal to advise him on his duty. When the guns were roaring and Marlborough was at his gates, Louis forgot his absolutist pretensions and remembered that his power was founded not in himself but in his family. After the Austrian defeat at Austerlitz the Austrian Emperor, Francis II, was cheered in Vienna by the populace but that very Emperor wondered whether the same reception would be accorded Napoleon in Paris had he lost such a crucial battle. The tyrant must go on from victory to victory—or die. We might evidence here as proof the late Adolf Hitler.

Factually, of course, every dynasty at its origin was imposed by violence but its legitimation does not depend on its founder but upon his descendents who inherit. I cite once again Professor d'Ors:

The virtue of a king does not reside in his being one; unity can be achieved in other ways as well; that virtue reposes upon the king's being legitimate, in being the supreme incarnation, living and enduring, of all loyalty and every legitimacy.¹⁶

It follows that the classical tripartite distinction, although badly articulated by the Greeks, contained within itself principles of enduring truth for political philosophy. They are even insinuated in the very Greek words used to designate the three governmental forms. *Cracia* as in "democracy" or in the "autocracy" of the tyrant, or even in *aristocracy* simply means the fact of political power; *arquia* as in *monarchy* is essentially the origin of power, that is, familial legitimacy. Thus, in monarchy the power of the royal family; also in *oligarchy* the power of families of noble or preeminent origin.

Possibly it might be wise to note here that

familial legitimacy must not be identified with the sheer fact of blood succession. In the old Turkish Empire a new Sultan usually had all his brothers killed, often by strangulation. Born of a woman who belonged to a harem, the Ottoman Emperor had little in common with the Christian dynastic king whose power was thought to be housed in the very institution of the legitimate dynasty *qua* family. A Christian who murders his brothers is guilty of an abominable crime and yet the deed was common in the Islamic world and, much earlier, in the Roman Empire where succession to the purple by the son of the emperor was always precarious and never settled by a fixed principle of legitimacy. Claudius spent half his life ducking assassination from his own family. He died, finally, assassinated.

Family Legitimacy in America

Quite naturally we are concerned in a special sense with the role of the family in the United States. Political tendencies in reality rarely exist with the abstract purity proper to science or theory. These tendencies, each with its own law of growth, usually mingle and are often muted by their antithetical opposites. This Federal Union began two hundred years ago as a basically aristocratic republic with severe qualifications—economic and otherwise—placed on the right to vote or to enjoy the power of the magistrate. At its origin an aristocratic republic with, however, large doses of democracy, today—thanks to what Adlai Stevenson called "the catalyst of history," the watershed being the Civil War—the United States is basically a democratic republic with a quasi-monarchical executive and large doses of aristocracy which operate now outside the Constitution. It is important to note that aristocratic or oligarchical dynasties arise constantly in our time. Some of these dynasties last only a couple of generations. As the family wealth is dissipated when the clan scatters and converts itself into mere individuals, the dynasty dies. Others endure such as the Kennedys (The recent miniseries on the "Kennedys of Mass." is a splendid confirmation of my thesis.). Familial legiti-

macy grows out of oligarchical wealth in our country. We might think of the Cabots, the Lodges, the old Virginia Dynasties, the Fish. (For as long as I can remember there has been a Hamilton Fish in Congress, and I can recall Franklin Roosevelt's once famous quip, directed against his aristocratic Republican opponents, "Martin, Barton, and —Fish.") No longer legally represented in the affairs of state, *these men are elected to political power because of their last names*, familial legitimacy mocking democratic individualism. They balance the democratic individualism which today is sweeping the entire Western world, and apparently, the countries behind the Iron Curtain.

Aristotle's observation in his own time that most regimes are blends of oligarchy and democracy could not find a more vivid verification than in the United States of today.

Although a popular dynastic monarchy reposing upon a society formed principally of families that are both protected and represented politically would seem to be the most natural expression of familial politics, the family by no means shrivels into insignificance in aristocratic republics. In aristocratic England after the Protestant Settlement of 1688, which effectively destroyed royal power, the importance of the family in a large minority of titled and untitled oligarchs was, if anything, accentuated. The door was always open to the commoner who, if rich or bright, could buy into the House of Lords. If distinguished, he was welcomed thanks to his merits. Nowhere were family relationships and ties more important for the filling of governmental and military posts and the execution of the business of state. Rich commoners marrying impoverished noblemen was a widespread practice, satirized by men of letters but eagerly sought after by both parties to the matrimony. Hilaire Belloc in his remarkable little book, *The Nature of Contemporary England*,¹⁷ written sometime before the egalitarianism that swept Great Britain after World War II, noted that a mark of the success of the English aristocratic government was the truth that poor and rich men imitated the manners and the clothes of their "betters." Everyone wanted to be a "gent" and Charlie

Chaplin early in the century exploited this with great success: the comic little Cockney with bowler hat and walking stick, a cartoon of the lower-class Englishman's attempt to mimic the aristocrat.

In the old Roman Republic, as indicated, the distinction between patrician and plebian was based on venerable ancestry in the one and the lack thereof in the latter, but the plebian could rise to power and eventually, in some cases, his family could be graced with the toga of the Senate.

But where the family lacks political representation, even if it be nothing more than an added vote given the head of a household, the family is resented by the regime that becomes increasingly individualistic.¹⁸

The Family Endangered

Liberal democracy can only give lip service to the family. That it does so at all is a mark that the family is a society deeper than all positive law. The attack on the family is easily noted by any reflective student of politics, and this altogether apart from his personal preferences. The causes are not exclusively political. Some reflect a decline in traditional Christian morality. Some reflect technological changes. Altogether they bring about the family under siege. Anybody can string his own rosary of individualistic beads buttressing my thesis: legal abortion; easy divorce; the widespread phenomenon of couples living outside wedlock and the social acceptance of this situation; the disappearance of a sense of shame in men and women who engage openly in adultery and fornication; the move to legalize sodomy; Gay Liberation; feminism and its flattening out the differences between men and women (differences upon which Aristotle and Aquinas based the intimate friendship which ought to exist between husband and wife); widespread violence in our schools; the disappearance of the family council and good conversation around the dinner table due to the invasion of television; the abolition, dictated by economics, of the family farm and the "Mom and Pop" corner grocery store, shop, or tavern; heavy confiscatory taxation on inheritances which in England, during

the Labour Government, insisted on the ripping of roofs off old houses when the taxes could not be paid; heavy urbanization which makes children an economic liability rather than an asset; the fear fathers have of offending their own children; the reality of young people who do not know the names of their own grandparents—and who could not care less! All these factors, many of which are rooted in quite distinct causes, mix together in the individualistic and liberal democracies marking the West today. Some of these cultural changes can—I presume—be defended but all of them together run against the grain of family life as we have known it for millennia. All of them render it virtually impossible for the family to play a political role in society. Democratic individualism, when faithful to its own essence, must marginate the family and even mock its claims. When mankind is reduced to an aggregate of individuals, an amorphous mass with neither family traditions nor corporate memories, just about everything in my rosary of woes falls into place.

My role in this essay has not been that of a Jeremiah. I am not a moralist: the role makes me uneasy. I write here as a political philosopher who attempts to discover laws, living tendencies, a *nomos*, in political existence. The older Christian exaltation of the family, going back to the Holy Family and enshrined in all the poetry of Christmas, can never be at home in a political order that recognizes legally only isolated individuals. The question today is not can the family be at home in the modern world? The question rather is, can the family be at all?

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1. St. Thomas Aquinas, *S.T., Supplementum*, Q. 41, a. 1.
2. Gilbert Keith Chesterton, *What's Wrong with the World* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956).
3. Frederick D. Wilhelmsen, and Jane Bret, *The War in Man* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1970).
4. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. VIII, 1160b-1161.
5. *Ibid.*, 1161a, 15-16.
6. St. Thomas Aquinas, loc. cit.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Aristotle, loc. cit., 1161b, 25-26.

9. Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952).

10. I have argued the thesis in an epistemological context that representation can be understood either substantively or verbally (*Man's Knowledge of Reality*, Albany, N.Y.: Preserving Christian Publications, 1988, 81-85). Substantive representation—what I called “ambassadorial representation”—is a representative who takes the place of the represented: it bespeaks an absence. Verbal or “existential” representation is a representing of that which initially exists in itself: this bespeaks a presence. Political representation is a blending of both: the regime acts for its citizenry and it represents, renders present politically to the world, the society that it represents.

11. Sir John Fortescue, *De Laudibus Legum Anglie*, ed. and trans. with introduction and notes by S. B. Chrimes (London: Cambridge, 1949), 69 and passim.

12. Alvaro D'Ors, *Forma de Gobierno y Legitimidad Familiar*, “O Crece o Muere” (Madrid: Rialp, 1960); cf. my study, “The Political Philosophy of Alvaro d'Ors,” *The Political Science Reviewer* XX (Spring 1991).

13. For a Spanish opinion contrary to that of d'Ors on the nature of political legitimacy, cf. Manuel Fraga Iribarne, *La Monarquía y el País* (Barcelona: Colección Panorama, 1977), 31-35. Fraga understands legitimacy in terms of function, not origin. He does grasp, however, the strength of d'Ors' analysis but he will not follow it through to its conclusions because he considers the thesis to be inapplicable today. A consideration of Fraga's thesis would require a study in itself.

14. Sir Thomas Filmer, *Patriarcha and Other Political Works* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1949).

15. D'Ors, loc. cit., 36.

16. D'Ors, *Ibid.*, 41.

17. Hilaire Belloc, *The Nature of Contemporary England* (London and New York: Constable and Co., 1937).

18. Familial representation through the hereditary peers in the British House of Lords is restricted to the higher nobility, hence it is thoroughly aristocratic, but this situation mingles with membership by peers nominated for life and whose role in the Lords is not based on familial succession. The last “popular” or widespread political representation of the family in modern Europe was to be found in the regime of General Francisco Franco in Spain where heads of families were represented as such in the Cortes by their own elected “Procurators” or *procuradores*. Whether this political representation was effective or only ceremonial is a question from which I abstract. Indeed, to my knowledge the issue has never been studied thoroughly by political scientists. An interesting moral issue in regimes with a heavy familial politics is the imputation of guilt. In the Roman Republic shame tended to be more familial, corporate, than individual, as Professor Melvin Bradford has pointed out to me. Thus Lucius Junius Brutus killed three of his sons for cowardice in battle. They had disgraced the family. Their punishment was meted out not by the magistrates of the regime but by the patrician head of the family. Resonances of this attitude can be found in the Scottish and Irish clan systems where individuals identified themselves by their clan name, by the blood that gave them birth.