

portant to emphasize (as Gottfried also does) their concern with the growth of proletarianization, the decrease of the personalist element in political relationships, manipulation of the working people by other social groups—ultimately with the problem of alienation, the great conceptual discovery of the Biedermeier Age.

The Bavarian Romantics may not be the favorite ancestors of a lot of contemporary conservatives. But we have to respect their intellectual daring in the face of formidable odds, their imaginative syntheses, and particularly their willingness to find a philosophical and cultural justification for the conservative position. Theirs was truly a conservatism of the heart, not of the pocket.

Gottfried's merits are by no means trivial. He applies in a personal and creative way the methodology of Eric Voegelin. He provides a historically concrete focus to some very important aspects of Romanticism. He reminds us forcefully of the exceptional wealth and variety of the heritage of humanist conservatism. Gottfried is undoubtedly one of the best intellectual historians now working in American academe and I for one intend to consider very carefully whatever he says.

Reviewed by VIRGIL NEMOIANU

Cavalier and Puritan Revisited

The Rise and Fall of the Plantation South, by Raimondo Luraghi, *New York and London: Franklin Watts (New Viewpoints), 1978. 191 pp. \$12.50.*

THE SOUTH PRESENTS a problem for American conservatives. This is true even though the problem was recognized and a brilliant solution adumbrated in the writings of Russell Kirk early in the modern conservative intellectual movement—a solution which has been ig-

nored. The South is, or should be, conservative. It is the least secular, the most traditional, the most resistant to modern ideologies of any of the major cultural formations that make up America. Yet one suspects that the South has often disappointed mainstream conservatives.

The expectations of conservatives have been, perhaps, somewhat colonialist. In this they have differed little from liberals. Both have felt free to take what they found useful in the South without any obligation to take the whole. Both have tended to find in the South what they wanted or needed at a particular moment—a convenient ally or scapegoat. At various times the mainstream right and left have joined to execrate the South as the center of all national evil. At other times each has based its strategy and hopes on the South. Each has had its Southern heroes and its Southern demons.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, as Raimondo Luraghi might formulate it, the North, seized by economic and ethnic transformations and egalitarian drives which necessitated a new view of the Constitution and the good society, carried its program by a crusade to put down the alleged innovations of the South. Men as diverse as John Brown and John Quincy Adams, Cornelius Vanderbilt and Charles Sumner, Henry David Thoreau and William T. Sherman were united on the necessity of wiping out the pernicious influence of the South—a drag on national upward imperatives. Yet, as soon as the war was won, there began a movement back toward the Southern view of the Constitution, and prescient thinkers began to mourn the national loss involved in the perishing of the aristocratic virtues of the Old South.

More recently, liberals and conservatives both ran against Wallace, while surreptitiously stealing planks from his platform. While there are numerous good reasons for President Carter's unpopularity, one can't help but suspect that he would have an easier time if he were not a Southerner. Neither left nor right trusts him. Liberals

find Kennedy more "compassionate," and conservatives found Ford more "competent," factually dubious propositions in both cases. Yet the liberals would have lost the election without Carter, that is, if left to themselves; nor could conservatives get along without their Southern strategy, not to mention Southern leadership in Congress. Could it be that these phenomena tell us more about the minds of the beholders than about the South?

Though it was not part of his purpose, Professor Luraghi of the University of Genoa, a leading European historian of America, provides us with a vantage point from which to solve the conundrum. He stands at that point where the Tory and the radical—he is a bit of both himself—meet to condemn the bourgeois. From that point the similarities of the middle class right and left are more striking than the differences, and the oft-noted paradoxes and peculiarities of the South are less bewildering.

According to the author, the Old South was part of a unique civilization, a civilization which he names "seigneurial" and strives to put into the context of Western history. The American Civil War was a struggle between that civilization, the dynamic of which was honor and ethics,—that is, the ideal of the gentleman,—and modern capitalist civilization derived from English Puritanism, the dynamics of which were rationalism, equality, and material productivity. Though the South's regime was destroyed, the cultural residues have not ceased to reverberate through American history.

To make his point, Luraghi takes us on a tour of forbidden territory. Long ago it was believed that our war was a contest between Cavalier and Puritan, that it in some sense or other recapitulated the issues of the English Civil War. Both sides subscribed to this notion. But in this century debunking scholars made the startling discovery that most Southerners were not descended from dukes and earls. Even though nobody had ever thought they

were, except for a few romancers whose works were read mainly by Northern matrons, "modern wisdom" had proved, we were told, the notion of Puritan and Cavalier to be romantic nonsense, simply another of the dangerous delusions by which Southerners evaded reality. The finding seemed conclusive, especially to those who are unable to conceive of any other mainspring of human behavior than greed. For seventy-five years the very idea of the Southern cavalier has been sufficient to draw guffaws from educated audiences and has survived only in furtive corners occupied by patriotic societies of little old ladies.

It is interesting that a European scholar, whose main interests have been economic, industrial, and military history, chooses to begin the twelve graceful essays in which he interprets the Old South with a study of the idea of the gentleman in the Italian Renaissance, followed by an examination of the English expression of that idea in the person of Sir Walter Raleigh. The lesson is that, if we understand the Cavalier-Puritan conflict in a manner a little less literal-minded than "modern wisdom" dictates, we may recapture the germ of truth in it. (Here, unfortunately, Luraghi stands to lose nine-tenths of the American intelligentsia, who are nothing if not literal-minded.)

It was not always the destiny of America to embody material and egalitarian values. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries America, in fact, gave a new lease on life to the obsolescent European ideal of the landed gentleman—an individual who played out his life and liberty according to a code of personal honor and social responsibility. This was the "Newe Worlde" of Raleigh, and of Shakespeare. During these centuries there flourished a civilization unique to the Americas—the seigneurial, plantation, or hacienda society, neither feudal nor capitalist. It could be found in French Canada and Louisiana, in parts of Spanish and Portuguese America, and in its most articulated form in the Southern part of British America. It was a society

whose economic bases, social organization, and vision of the good life differed from both feudal Europe and bourgeois Europe and America.

This description slights the sophistication of Luraghi's analysis. It is important to note that he is not spinning daydreams here. He might be just another sentimentalist, entrapped as many have been before by the romantic dream of the Old South, but these essays are the culmination of a lifetime of rigorous research in primary sources. He has previously written a two-volume history of the American war, celebrated in Europe, and a meticulous study of the industrialization of the South during the Civil War. He knows his subject as only a true scholar can, and is at some pains to draw out unfamiliar and telling illustrations from the history of the Old South. Note, too, that his findings are not incompatible with what Kirk had to say several decades ago about the South.

These findings show that the regime of the South was not egalitarian, that it was genuinely and responsibly paternalistic. Further, it achieved the highest maturity that can be expected of any society: it was able to produce a leadership class that was truly ethical and farseeing, with the ability to devote itself selflessly to the welfare of its people and to the realization of its highest impulses. The Confederate States of America thus was not an aberration or an error, but a deliberate gamble to forestall an extinction that was probable in any case but certain without the gamble. The supreme political act of the planter class was the offer by the Confederate government late in the war of emancipation in exchange for foreign help. It was perhaps the most selfless act ever performed by a ruling class, which literally proposed to disinherit itself for national survival.

This reviewer cannot help but recall here Joseph Schumpeter's warning that capitalism carries within it the seeds of its own destruction in its inability to produce leadership, that its political salvation can only come from non-capitalist strata. If it is true that the only alternative to an

ethical and foresighted leadership is coercion, then the cultural inheritance represented by the idea of the gentleman, best if not exclusively preserved in the South, may be all that stands between us and uniformitarianism of the right or left. It is worth pondering.

Reviewed by CLYDE WILSON

Abyss of Horror

Staline, Aperçu historique du bolchevisme, by Boris Souvarine, *Paris: Editions Champ Libre, 1977. 639 pp.*

THERE ARE ONE-BOOK authors and there are books which accompany their authors throughout their active, writing life. Boris Souvarine's *Staline*, written in the early thirties, is such a book. Rejected by prestigious publishers (Gallimard, Knopf) for *lèse-communisme*, nevertheless published but surrounded by the silence that left-liberals are so apt to weave around unpleasant truths, *Staline* survived for more than four decades as a kind of clandestine reference work, and was recently republished in France, this time to the acclaim of all, reviewers and public, right and left.

The best one can say about this great and big book is that we read it in 1980 without becoming aware that it was written almost half a century ago. Our judgment of Stalin and the Soviet system takes for granted *now* what hardly anybody knew *then*, and what Souvarine practically alone at the time dared to record and to explain. If the book did not age in fifty years, chances are it will remain compulsory reading for Kremlinologues and general historians. Souvarine's Stalin in 1930—that is, before the purges and the other infernal policies—is identical with the one we came to know in the late 1940's when news began