

THE INSTITUTE FOR ANACYCLOSIS

EXCERPT FROM
DE MONARCHIA
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1312 A.D.

Note: This text asserts that the culmination of political organization is not liberal democracy, but rather universal peace under universal monarchy, or world empire. In arguments that may seem almost alien to modern man, Dante asserts that man is most free under monarchy, and recounts how the Romans were the first to achieve world domination. Due to the manifest corruptability of mankind and the inevitable perversion of all political regimes, The Institute does not share Dante's view that universal monarchy is the optimal political constitution, but world empire nevertheless does lie at the end of dual processes of sociopolitical revolution and geopolitical integration encompassed within The Institute's revised model of Anacyclosis. Reading this text from a tumultuous period that aspires to democracy and political liberty, but also witnesses ever-greater social stratification, political demagoguery, and economic patronage, and grows ever more skeptical of the authenticity and sustainability of democracy, Dante's words – which expressly critiques the “crooked policies” of democracies – bring to mind the maxim of the Roman jurist Pomponius: “Kingdoms were founded at the dictation of things themselves”. From this vantage, it may be sobering for democratic peoples – a peculiar oddity in most times and places – to contemplate that whatever they believed in, aspired to, or fought for was in vain; that the great experiment of democracy itself was only a phase, doomed to failure, only a milestone on the hard road to imperial monarchy.

Chapter IV: To attain this end humanity requires universal peace.

1. ... Whence it is manifest that universal peace is the best of those things which are ordained for our beatitude. ...
2. From these things which have been expounded we perceive through what better, nay, through what best means the human race may fulfill its proper office. Consequently we perceive the nearest way through which may be reached that universal peace toward which all our efforts are directed as their ultimate end, and which is to be assumed as the basic principle of subsequent reasoning. This principle was necessary, we have said, as a predetermined formula, into which, as into a most manifest truth, must be resolved all things needing to be proved.

Chapter V: When several things are ordained for one end, one must rule and the others obey.

1. ... And so let the first question be whether temporal Monarchy is necessary for the well-being of the world. The necessity of temporal Monarchy can be gainsaid with no force of reason or authority, and can be proved by the most powerful and patent arguments, of which the first is taken on the testimony of the Philosopher in the *Politics*. There this venerable authority asserts that when several things are ordained for one end, one of them must regulate or rule, and the others submit to regulation or rule. This, indeed, not only because of the author's glorious name, but because of inductive reasoning, demands credence.

2. If we consider the individual man, we shall see that this applies to him, for, when all his faculties are ordered for his happiness, the intellectual faculty itself is regulator and ruler of all others; in no way else can man attain to happiness. If we consider the household, whose end is to teach its members to live rightly, there is need for one called the *pater-familias*, or for some one holding his place, to direct and govern, according to the Philosopher when he says, “Every household is ruled by its eldest.” It is for him,

as Homer says, to guide and make laws for those dwelling with him. From this arises the proverbial curse, "May you have an equal in your house." If we consider the village, whose aim is adequate protection of persons and property, there is again needed for governing the rest either one chosen for them by another, or one risen to preëminence from among themselves by their consent; otherwise, they not only obtain no mutual support, but sometimes the whole community is destroyed by many striving for first place. Again, if we consider the city, whose end is to insure comfort and sufficiency in life, there is need for undivided rule in rightly directed governments, and in those wrongly directed as well; else the end of civil life is missed, and the city ceases to be what it was. Finally, if we consider the individual kingdom, whose end is that of the city with greater promise of tranquillity, there must be one king to direct and govern. If not, not only the inhabitants of the kingdom fail of their end, but the kingdom lapses into ruin, in agreement with that word of infallible truth, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation." If, then, this is true of these instances, and of all things ordained for a single end, it is true of the statement assumed above.

3. We are now agreed that the whole human race is ordered for one end, as already shown. It is meet, therefore, that the leader and lord be one, and that he be called Monarch, or Emperor. Thus it becomes obvious that for the well-being of the world there is needed a Monarchy, or Empire. ...

Chapter XII: Humanity is ordered for the best when most free.

1. If the principle of freedom is explained, it will be apparent that the human race is ordered for the best when it is most free. Observe, then, those words which are on the lips of many but in the minds of few, that the basic principle of our freedom is freedom of the will. ...

3. ... the race is most free under a Monarch. Wherefore let us know that the Philosopher holds in his book *concerning simple Being*, that whatever exists for its own sake and not for the sake of another is free. For whatever exists for the sake of another is conditioned by that other, as a road by its terminus. Only if a Monarch rules can the human race exist for its own sake; only if a Monarch rules can the crooked policies be straightened, namely democracies, oligarchies, and tyrannies which force mankind into slavery, as he sees who goes among them, and under which kings, aristocrats called the best men, and zealots of popular liberty play at politics. For since a Monarch loves men greatly, a point already touched upon, he desires all men to do good, which cannot be among players at crooked policies. Whence the Philosopher in his *Politics* says, "Under bad government the good man is a bad citizen; but under upright government 'good man' and 'good citizen' have the same meaning." Upright governments have liberty as their aim, that men may live for themselves; not citizens for the sake of the consuls, nor a people for a king, but conversely, consuls for the sake of the citizens, and a king for his people. As governments are not all established for the sake of laws, but laws for governments, so those living under the laws are not ordered for the sake of the legislator, but rather he for them, as the Philosopher maintains in what he has left us concerning the present matter. Wherefore it is also evident that although consul or king may be lord of others with respect to means of governing, they are servants with respect to the end of governing; and without doubt the Monarch must be held the chief servant of all. Now it becomes clear that a Monarch is conditioned in the making of laws by his previously determined end. Therefore the human race existing under a Monarch is best ordered, and from this it follows that a Monarchy is essential to the well-being of the world. ...

Chapter IX: The Romans were victorious over all contestants for Empire.

1. ... That among the rivals for world-Empire the Roman people came off victor will be clear if we consider the contestants and the prize or goal toward which they strove. This prize or goal was sovereign power over all mortals, or what we mean by Empire. This was attained by none save by the Roman

people, not only the first but the sole contestant to reach the goal contended for, as will be at once explained.

2. The first man to pant after the prize was Ninus, king of the Assyrians, who, as Orosius records, together with his consort Semiramis, through more than ninety years gave battle for world-supremacy, and subdued all Asia to himself; nevertheless, the western portion of the earth never became subject to him or his queen. Both of these Ovid commemorates in his fourth book in the story of Pyramus: "Semiramis girded the city with walls of burnt brick;" and below: "They are to meet at the tomb of Ninus, and hide beneath its shadow."

3. Vesoges, king of Egypt, was the second to strain after this prize, but though he harassed the South and North of Asia, as Orosius narrates, he never achieved the first part of the world. Nay, between umpires and goal, as it were, he was turned back from his rash undertaking by the Scythians.

4. Next Cyrus, king of the Persians, undertook the same thing, but after destroying Babylon and transferring Babylonian sovereignty to the Persians, before he had tested his strength in western regions, he laid down his life and ambition at once before Tomyris, queen of the Scythians.

5. Then after these Xerxes, son of Darius and king among the Persians, invaded the world with so vast and mighty a multitude of nations that he spanned with a bridge between Sestos and Abydos that passage of the sea separating Asia from Europe. This astonishing work Lucan extols thus in the second book of the *Pharsalia*: "Such roads, fame signs, did haughty Xerxes build across the seas." But at last miserably repulsed from his enterprise, he failed to reach his goal.

6. Beside these and in later times, Alexander, the Macedonian king, came nearest of all to the palm of Monarchy, through ambassadors forewarning the Romans to surrender. But, as Livy recounts, before their answer came, he fell as in the midst of a course in Egypt. Of his tomb there Lucan renders testimony in the eighth book, in an invective against Ptolemy, king of Egypt: "Thou last offspring of the Lagaeon line, swiftly to perish in thy degeneracy and yield the sceptre to thy incestuous sister, while for thee the Macedonian is guarded in the sacred cave." ...

8. But that Rome gained the palm of so magnificent a prize is confirmed by many witnessings. Our Poet says in his first book: "Verily, with the passing of the years shall one day come from hence the Romans, rulers sprung of the blood of Teucer called again to life, who shall hold the sea and land in undivided sovereignty." And Lucan in his first book: "The kingdom is apportioned by the sword, and the fortune of the mighty nation that is master over sea, over land, and over all the globe, suffers not two in command." And Boethius in his second book speaks thus of the Prince of the Romans: "Nay, he was ruler of the peoples whom the sun looks on from the time he rises in the east until he hides his rays beneath the waves, and those whom the chilling northern wain o'errules, and those whom the southern gale burns with its dry blasts, as it beats the burning sands."

And Luke, the scribe of Christ, who speaketh all things true, offers the same testimony in the part of his writings which says, "There went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed." From these words we can clearly see that the jurisdiction of the Romans embraced the whole world.

9. It is proved by all these facts that the Romans were victorious among the contestants for world-Empire; therefore they were victorious by divine decree; and consequently they gained the Empire by divine decree, that is, they gained it with Right. ...

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