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Some time ago Charles Johnson, in "Liberty, Equality, Solidarity: Toward a Dialectical Anarchism," argued for what he called "thick libertarianism." That is, libertarians should–AS libertarians–promote values of equality and justice beyond the bare bones nonaggression principle on which "thin libertarianism" is grounded. Equality and justice, he argued, should appeal to libertarians for the same reason that (assuming they were sane) they were originally attracted to libertarianism itself. Most people do not come to libertarianism as a result of deductive reasoning from the nonaggression principle. They are first attracted to libertarianism because it appeals to broader cultural values of equality and fair play, or an aversion to seeing people treated badly and pushed around, and then they gradually come to accept the more philosophical arguments for it afterward.

So while it's possible for a person to be libertarian in the sense of accepting the nonaggression principle, and without formal contradiction simultaneously favor such voluntary forms of authoritarianism as the patriarchal family, the hierarchical employment

relationship, and various other forms of cultural domination, Johnson argued that it would be just plain weird. Why would the sort of person with an affinity for that sort of thing draw the line at state authoritarianism, in particular?

Unfortunately, there seems to be a great deal of such authoritarian weirdness among professed libertarians.

A good example is Lew Rockwell's post of Jan. 28 at LewRockwell.com Blog, in which he appeals to the common understanding of most American workers–in contrast to "trade-union commie" dogma–that

> their boss is their benefactor, and that they owe him gratitude as well as hard work.

If the employment contract is–ahem–a CONTRACT between two equal parties for mutual benefit, why should be workers be any more "grateful" to the boss than vice versa? Can you imagine Rockwell's reaction if some "commie" commenting on a layoff story argued that the workers were the boss's benefactor, and that he owed them gratitude as well as good pay?

Rockwell's attitude reminds me of Paul Graham's quip that the contractual employment relation, in practice, contains a lot of recycled master-servant DNA. It's certainly odd that a libertarian, who professes to celebrate the supercession of status by contract, should such nostalgia for the baggage of the age of status. It's almost Burkean: squires in powdered wigs sipping mint juleps on the verandah, and grateful laborers in the field singing old English spirituals.

No less a free market libertarian than Herbert Spencer remarked on the cultural holdovers, in the modern wage employment relationship, from the old "regime of status."

> So long as the worker remains a wage-earner, the marks of status do not wholly disappear. For so many

nate the state as a constraint on the kinds of local authoritarianism they enjoy, and give them a free hand in playing with the powerless victims in their little killing jars without any outside interference. A "free society," for them, is a society in which the local petty authority figure is free to brutalize those under his power without hindrance. It's the freedom of the squire to enclose the land and rackrent his tenants, of the pointy-haired boss to make life hell for Dilbert. You know, the way things were in the good old days, when men were men and sheep were nervous, and people who didn't look and act like us kept in their place and didn't whine about their "rights." I vaguely recall that the Book of the Subgenius included a listing for someone who called himself an anarcho-monarchist, or something of the sort; his slogan was "Every backyard a kingdom, every child and dog a serf." I can imagine him fitting in well in certain paleolibertarian circles.

Never mind, as well, the vesting of traditional rights of common ownership over such things as public rights of way. In America, they generally date back to the time of first European settlement when townships were laid out, and in turn were frequently based on preexisting Indian trails. In Europe, such rights of way were common property from time out of mind, probably dating back to the neolithic era in some cases. Such common property rights, as argued by thinkers like Roderick Long and Carlton Hobbs, are entirely legitimate. There is no way that public rights of way can be individually appropriated, and the public deprived of access rights against its will, that can not be unequivocally condemned as robbery.

But again, never mind all that. What kind of libertarian, in his right mind, could ever find such a total lockdown society appealing? What kind of "libertarian" would want to live in the kind of "free market" utopia in which it is impossible to set foot on a road or sidewalk or public square, anywhere on God's green earth, without being scanned for biometric data or having someone demand "Ihre Papiere, bitte!" All too many, I fear.

In my worst moments, I suspect such libertarians are drawn to libertarianism precisely BECAUSE they are authoritarians.

Here in Northwest Arkansas, Benton County is famous for the kind of bluenose Stepford Wife Republican for whom "God" is spelled B-O-S-S and "Christian businessman" is one word. Bob Jones University alumni, who look like the Hitlerjugend equivalent of Eagle Scouts, are heavily represented in the local GOP organization–which should tell you everything you need to know about the cultural atmosphere. I can generally identify a Republibaptist (a term coined by local newspaper columnist John Brummett) on TV even with the sound turned off, because he's wearing a navy blue suit and power tie and looks like he's got a stick up his ass.

The Hoppeans seem to come from the same gene pool. They seem to favor the free market because they believe it will elimi-

> hours daily he makes over his faculties to a master…, and is for the time owned by him…. He is temporarily in the position of a slave, and his overlooker stands in the position of a slave-driver.

Only, unlike many libertarians of the contemporary right, Spencer thought this was a BAD thing.

Another, even more appalling example is a collection of quotes from Mises.Org Community forums, compiled by the market anarchist blog Polycentric Order ("Why I Dislike the Hoppeans and Libertarian Conservatives"):

> "Nonetheless we do favour individuals with authority, in the form of a natural elite."
>
> "If the parents wish to use force, then so be it. The child consents by continuing to live off his parents."
>
> "Libertarianism doesn't support equal negative rights, a child does not have the same rights as an adult."
>
> "This doesn't imply equal negative rights for adults. Some adults, such as primitives, are not capable of rational argumentation and cannot be brought peacefully into the division of labour. Moreover, they have no conception of property rights nor any enforcable claim."
>
> "These people (tribal or less developed cultures) simply aren't capable of rational argumentation, and therefore have no rights, whether this is biological or cultural makes no differences."
>
> "The fact is they often cannot be brought within the division of labour and without any concept of property rights it's impossible that they own anything. Moreover they have no legitimate claim to any of this territory and as such it's free to be homesteaded."

> "People incapable of moral choice must either abide by the decisions of those who are or they must be removed from free society."
>
> "Against people who have no law, the initiation of force is fully justified."
>
> "It was not wrong for the spanish to overthrow an empire that literally fed on its slaves in religious rituals and replace it with its much milder form of serfdom."
>
> "Childish rejection of a natural order and authority isn't the opposite to subservience. It's a bad trait that needs to be kept down until the youth have matured sufficiently."….
>
> "Seeing as towns would be owned by single entrepreneurs…"
>
> "Why wouldn't people sell their land to a single entrepreneur? The have no interest in owning land, only in being able to lease it from some owner."….
>
> "Opposition to the family and church sounds somewhat Marxist to me, any libertarian society will be founded upon those two institutions so in a sense yes, one does need to be a cultural conservative to be a libertarian."….
>
> "Feudalism is actually an entirely appropriate model for anarchist society, and my prediction is it's coming whether the anarchists like it or not."
>
> "A system of feudal holdings all competing with each other for human and fiscal capital stacks up pretty good against a system whereby the parasitic majority lives off the productive minority."

You get the impression that capes and cigarette holders, and maybe pictures of Franz-Ferdinand, are popular in such circles?

The irony is that the remarks on division of labor come, in all probability, from people who pride themselves on their "methodological individualism." And as I understand it, "division of labor" is just a fancy way of saying that people choose to trade with other people of their own free will when they find it beneficial, because they believe it saves effort to specialize in what they're best at. So how do these people manage to transform the "division of labor" into an entity over and above individual human beings, that individuals are forced to serve ("brought into") against their will–like Moloch?

The idea that Western colonizers are owed a debt of gratitude for bringing native peoples into the division of labor, and that land robbery is perfectly legitimate because the latter have no "legitimate" conception of property rights, is fairly common among the more vulgar Randroids.

Such views are fairly common in right-wing, paleolibertarian venues, as well. A good example is the argument, by Hans Hermann Hoppe and his followers, that immigration would be restricted in a free market anarchy by the universal appropriation of land. When every square foot of land, including the roads and sidewalks, is appropriated, there will be nowhere for anyone to stand without the permission of an owner. So it will be impossible to live or even exist anywhere without either being a property owner or having been invited by a property owner.

Never mind that it is impossible for land to be appropriated on a scale even approaching universality, given the present population density, on principles consistent with free market libertarianism. As Franz Oppenheimer pointed out, it is impossible for land to be universally appropriated, and for the landless to be excluded from vacant land, unless access to vacant land is preempted through political appropriation. Unless absentee titles are enforced to vacant and unimproved land, there will be vast tracts of unowned land open to homesteading in a free market society.