

An Organic Society: The Political Philosophy of Progress

Sebastian Steele

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Introduction

The Aim of This Document

The obvious question raised by the name Progress is, “What do you want to progress towards?” If we are going to bring about significant change for the better, what do we mean by “better”?

Progress believes that we are entering a time of intense change, when society will be questioning its underlying assumptions, values, and its very way of understanding the world. Contra Rawls, we affirm that there is no public order that is morally, anthropologically, and metaphysically neutral, and we contend that the very essence of politics lies in the competition of such values - answering what is “better”?

In order to do so, we must escape from the politics of subjective “vibes,” from the conceit of “my truth,” and from the epistemic retreat of standpoint epistemology - all of which dissolve the very possibility of rational discourse - and reassert the importance of ideas in justifying our moral stances.

An example which may serve to illustrate the importance of such an epistemic language is the current debate around assisted dying - literally a matter of life and death. Despite their advocacy, neither support nor opposition can actually articulate the underlying reasons for their positions. By digging deeper, one might learn:

The liberal (drawing on John Stuart Mill and others) might think:

1. Liberalism: “There is no authority higher than man and his own liberty.”
2. Utilitarianism: “The highest moral good is in maximising the total happiness across all of humanity.”
3. “Assisted dying reduces suffering, and is licit since every human is ultimately their own master. Therefore it should be legal and regarded favourably.”

The conservative (drawing on Christianity and classical philosophy) might think:

1. “Human life is sacred as we are made in the image of God. The highest moral good is in advancing virtue, not freedom.”
2. “Man is bound by an objective moral order, which includes rights and responsibilities. He does not have the right to take another’s life, nor his own.”
3. “Assisted dying is a heinous moral crime and must be made illegal.”

How can we answer whether assisted dying should be legal or illegal, or whether it progress to give the most vulnerable in society the option to have their lives ended? We can only answer these questions if we use philosophy to judge which positions are better supported.

The purpose of this document, therefore, is to establish the moral and philosophical foundation of the party. It is the bedrock from which we will derive our policy direction - what we will do with power - and the common language with which we will debate and adjudicate moral questions. Progress does not require every member to agree on every claim made here; but our policy positions will be justified using this framework, and our debates will be conducted in its language.

We emphasise that divergence on even one of the many claims in this document will eventually lead to significant differences in policy and societal outcomes. As T.S. Eliot argued¹, culture is the incarnation of religion - or, perhaps more precisely, of metaphysics. The philosophical assumptions a society holds, whether consciously or not, will ultimately determine its culture, its politics, and the character of its people. This is especially true for the most foundational claims, and it is for this reason that we begin the document from the very bedrock of Western philosophy and attempt to lay out the entire “stack” of thinking such that every one of its claims

¹Eliot, T.S., *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, Faber and Faber, 1948. Eliot argues that culture is not a separable product of conscious planning but the incarnation of a people’s deepest philosophical and religious commitments, transmitted primarily through the family and the organic structures of class, locality, and congregation.

can be debated. It is our hope that this document will provide a springboard to the vibrant democratic debates of our time, and provide the basis for designing policy.

Our position may be summarised thus: Our definition of progress is to further the pursuit of truth, beauty and goodness. We believe that reasserting the Western philosophical tradition as far as possible, whilst maintaining a diplomatic agnosticism, is the best means with which to do so. We argue that the realist philosophy presented below constitutes a highly opportune synthesis of modern and traditional thinking which aligns closely with the “common sense” and sense of fairness of most people in Britain, and rejects the damaging yet pervasive aspects of Kantianism and Liberalism.

Caveats

- We emphasise that general ignorance of philosophy and theology are profound crises which are leading to moral regress and an inability to debate moral positions. This document is, among other things, a response to that crisis.
- These topics have been debated for thousands of years. There is naturally room for some disagreement, but our aim is to offer a political philosophy which may benefit even those who are opposed to it.
- Progress’ primary focus is not on ideological purity, but on practical wisdom and reasonableness.

Sebastian Steele, 2nd April 2026

Classical Philosophy & Metaphysics

Note: The claims below follow a logical-deductive order, not a “priority order.”

The Nature of Human Knowledge

Realist Epistemology

1. **Realism.** We affirm a mind-independent reality².
2. **Metaphysical Realism.** We affirm metaphysical realism, where metaphysical truths (noumena or essences) can be reliably inferred from experience. We reject the limitation of knowledge to phenomena, whether in the nominalist tradition (e.g., Tempier) or Kant’s transcendental idealism³, and the collapse of intellect into sensation, as per Hume⁴. We need not commit specifically to direct (e.g. Aquinas) vs critical (e.g. Bhaskar) realism, but in either case we emphasise the necessity of repeated empirical study to reliably infer the essence of an object.
 - a. Consequences of rejection: Without this realism, reliable empirical claims cannot be made at all (“scepticism”), and morality cannot be said to have an objective, mind-independent foundation, reducing it to intersubjective consensus or convention which is unable to definitively resolve competing rational claims. (See 18. Moral Good). This can be readily seen in today’s discourse, which takes the Kant-derived view that there can be no fact-of-the-matter about moral claims. We take the view that many scientifically-minded people, if they read Kant or Hume, would actually reject their underlying assumptions (see footnote 3) - indeed, it is hard to justify the validity of science at all if one accepts their radical scepticism.
3. **Universals.** In line with this metaphysical realism, we affirm the existence of universals (such as trianguleness, redness, humanness, ...) which are not reducible to any particular triangle, red thing or human. We reject the nominalism of Ockham or Abelard⁵, and the con-

²Justification for this will be expanded upon at a later date; for now we will just use it as our starting point knowing that it can be reasonably supported by adding a few prior points.

³A summary of our position on Kant is as follows: 1. Kant’s transcendental idealism denies knowledge of noumena (things-in-themselves), limiting us to phenomena (appearances) structured by the mind’s a priori forms (space, time) and categories (e.g., causality, substance). The true essences of things remain unknowable (Critique of Pure Reason, A255/B310). 2. Causality is an innate category of the understanding, necessary for coherent experience, not derived from reality (“The concept of cause... is a pure concept of the understanding,” A80/B106). We perceive phenomena as causal, regardless of noumenal properties. 3. Empirical regularities (e.g., scientific laws) reflect phenomenal patterns, not noumenal essences. Even if noumena were acausal, phenomena would appear causal due to cognitive structuring, disconnecting empirical knowledge from reality’s intrinsic nature (A146/B185). 4. This disconnect fuels skepticism: empirical predictions are reliable only within phenomena, but their success cannot confirm noumenal causation, resembling Hume’s view of causation as habitual association rather than grounded truth (A216/B263). 5. Kant attempts to avoid solipsism by deducing shared rationality as a condition for intersubjective experience (e.g., a common phenomenal world, A106). However, the phenomenal appearance of intersubjective experience and of others’ rationality reveal nothing about their noumenal essence, limiting claims about their true nature. 6. Kant’s morality, via the Categorical Imperative (“act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law,” Groundwork, 4:421), is presented as binding and objective within practical reason, but is only one rational conclusion among many, open to disagreement even within a single mind. Lacking grounding in noumenal essences, he reduces morality to intersubjective consensus, not objective truth (Critique of Practical Reason, 5:31). In summary, Kant’s transcendental idealism invites a radical scepticism into both empiricism and morality. It renders any predictions concerning the mind-independent world into merely phenomenal patterns, not noumenal realities, undermining claims about true causation. It makes objective, mind-independent moral truths impossible to know, reducing morality to intersubjective debate with no ability to establish truths at all.

⁴We agree with Rationalists that there are necessary metaphysical truths that we can know with certainty, but we do not take them to be innate; We agree with Empiricists that all of our concepts must be grounded in experience, but do not accept the early modern’s notion of “experience” or his tendency to collapse intellect into sensation, as Hume does when characterising “ideas” as faint copies of “impressions.” “There is nothing in the intellect which was not first in the senses” is a famous Scholastic maxim.

⁵Nominalism faces the problem of vicious regress (Russell 1988, Chapter 9). The universal “redness” cannot only be explained away as a general term that we apply to different things that resemble each other, because resemblance itself is a universal - there is something inherent in red things which instantiates the universal of “resemblance”.

ceptualism of Locke⁶. We need not, however, emphasise a Platonic, Aristotelian/immanent, or other flavour of universal for the purposes of this document.

- a. Consequences of rejection: All sciences (including mathematics and logic) presuppose mind-independent realism of universals, where particular/individual things share common essences. Without this, there are no species (e.g. “atoms”) and no claim can be made about their regularities, despite the apparent success of science in doing just that. Likewise, ‘two and two making four could not be true universally’, nor could ‘modus ponens be a valid form of inference universally’⁷.
4. **Anti-Relativism.** In affirming access to knowledge of universals, we reject the reduction of philosophy to mere “language games” and cultural constructions, as per Derrida or Lyotard. We therefore reject any resulting epistemic or moral relativism. We especially reject the post-modernism of Derrida which sees all meaning as contingent on language and therefore shaped purely by power dynamics and cultural narratives.
 5. **Principle of Sufficient Reason.** We affirm the Principle of Sufficient Reason (PSR)⁸, which states that everything that exists or occurs must have a theoretically explainable reason for its existence or occurrence. This is a first principle of rational enquiry, as denying it inevitably leads to a radical scepticism where nothing can be understood at all.
 6. **Anti-Scientism.** We reject “scientism”, being the claim that “the methods of empirical science are the only reliable ways to secure knowledge of anything.” Scientism is self-refuting: that empirical science is even a rational form of inquiry (let alone the only rational form of inquiry) cannot be established scientifically⁹. We maintain the importance of other sciences

⁶Locke’s conceptualism holds that universals are mental constructs (“abstract ideas”) formed by the mind selectively attending to resemblances among particulars (*Essay Concerning Human Understanding* III.3.7-9). We reject this on several grounds. 1. Conceptualism is not a stable position. If asked *why* the mind forms the concept “redness” and applies it to these particular things, the conceptualist must either say “because they genuinely share a common feature” (which concedes realism) or “for no reason grounded in the things themselves” (which is nominalism). The attempt to hold a middle ground - that concepts are non-arbitrary yet have no basis in reality - collapses under scrutiny. 2. As with nominalism, the resemblance which supposedly prompts the abstraction is itself a universal that must be explained, generating a vicious regress. 3. Locke’s account makes the universality of scientific, mathematical, and logical truths depend on contingent psychological operations: the Pythagorean theorem would not hold in a world without minds, yet it manifestly would. Scientific laws presuppose real universals - common natures shared by all instances. If universals were merely mental concepts, science would describe our psychology, not reality. 4. Conceptualism severs the link between our concepts and the intrinsic natures of things, leaving us unable to explain why our abstractions reliably track reality - a problem Locke himself struggled with in his distinction between “real” and “nominal” essences. The Thomistic alternative - moderate realism - holds that the intellect, in abstracting a universal concept, is *tracking* a real common nature that exists in individual things in a particularised way (Aquinas, *ST I*, Q.85, AA.1-2). The concept is not invented but discovered; abstraction is reception, not projection. (See Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics*, 2014, ch. 1; *Immortal Souls*, 2024, Part I ch. 3; Oderberg, *Real Essentialism*, 2007, chs. 1-3.)

⁷Feser, Edward, *Scholastic Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*, Editiones Scholasticae, 2014, p. 224.

⁸Parmenides held that nothing comes from nothing; Aristotle grounded explanation in his four causes (*Metaphysics* II.2, 994a1). Leibniz gave the principle its modern formulation: “no fact can be real or actual, and no proposition true, without there being a sufficient reason for its being so and not otherwise” (*Monadology*, §32). The case for PSR may be put as follows: 1. Any argument against PSR must itself offer reasons for its conclusion, thereby presupposing the very principle it seeks to deny. Denying PSR is therefore self-defeating. 2. All of science presupposes PSR: every scientific explanation assumes there is a reason for the phenomena under investigation. If things could exist or occur with no reason whatsoever, no observation could ever be taken as evidence for anything. 3. If PSR is denied even locally - i.e. if some things can exist or occur without reason - then we can never know whether any given phenomenon has a reason or not, and the entire enterprise of rational enquiry is undermined. We cannot selectively apply PSR only where convenient; either everything in principle has an explanation, or nothing can be reliably explained. (See Pruss, *The Principle of Sufficient Reason: A Reassessment*, Cambridge 2006; Feser, *Five Proofs of the Existence of God*, 2017, ch. 3.)

⁹Feser, Edward, *Scholastic Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*, Editiones Scholasticae, 2014, ch. 1: 1. Scientism is self-defeating, and can avoid being self-defeating only at the cost of becoming trivial and uninteresting. The claim that “the methods of science are the only reliable ways to secure knowledge of anything” is not itself a scientific claim. That science is even a rational form of inquiry (let alone the *only* rational form of inquiry) cannot be established scientifically.

Scientific inquiry rests on certain assumptions: 1. There is an objective world external to the minds of scientists; 2. The world is governed by regularities of the sort that might be captured in scientific laws; 3. The human intellect and perceptual apparatus can uncover and accurately describe these regularities. Science cannot justify these without circular reasoning.

A secondary claim is: “If philosophy can explore these topics, then it must really be a part of science, since all rational inquiry is scientific inquiry.” This claim makes scientism trivial, by expanding the scope endlessly, and including in its scope arguments which *refute* scientism.

2. The scientific method cannot even in principle provide us with a complete description of reality, or even *physical* reality. Science works in reductionist abstractions and models, and focusses on those things which are amenable to mathematical modelling. It does not consider qualitative reality, which leads to the Mind-Body Problem. It also does not tell us anything

(qua rigorous bodies of knowledge) such as mathematics, philosophy, metaphysics, and history.

The Nature of the Universe

Ontology, Empiricism & Philosophy of Science

7. **Hylomorphism.** We need not commit strongly to a particular ontology, but do draw inspiration from the Aristotelian hylomorphism of matter-form composites, substances, accidents and universals. In affirming at least the realism of universals, we reject materialism, and particularly the mechanical-reductionist philosophy that peaked in the 20th century. By “realism of universals” we mean that the forms or natures of things are real features of the world, not mere mental constructs, notwithstanding that they are apprehended by the intellect through abstraction from particular material things. Consider, for instance, that justice is a real universal whose properties may be reasoned about, yet which cannot be instantiated in its totality by any specific material thing; it is not merely a word, nor merely a pattern of neural activity, but a genuine feature of reality which the intellect is capable of grasping.
8. **Causation.** We affirm real causation: that things act on one another in virtue of real causal powers inherent in their natures. We reject Hume’s causal scepticism, which reduces causation to mere observed regularities - “one thing follows another” - with no necessary connection between them¹⁰. We likewise reject occasionalism, which attributes all causation to divine will. The regularity view tells us *that* patterns hold but cannot explain *why*; the causal powers ontology resolves this. A reductionist may object that fire heats not because of any “power” but because its constituent particles behave in such-and-such a way. But this merely relocates the question: whatever one takes to be the fundamental constituents of reality - particles, fields, strings - those constituents must themselves possess real dispositions and capacities, or nothing would happen at all. At some foundational level, “things have the power to do what they do” is an irreducible fact. Regularities in nature exist *because* things have real powers grounded in their essences, and “laws of nature” are descriptions of what happens when these powers are exercised in the relevant conditions¹¹. It is these regularities that provide the basis for empiricism and the scientific method. We need not commit to the full Aristotelian “four causes” nor to any form of teleology in nature for our purposes.
 - a. **5. PSR** implies a chain of explanations that cannot regress infinitely - if it did, the existence of that chain of contingencies would itself not have a reason. The traditional view

about the intrinsic nature of that which has the structure it finds; there must be something which has the laws of nature and has the mathematical relationships.

3. The “laws of nature” in terms of which science explains phenomena cannot in principle provide us with a complete explanation of reality. Any appeal to laws of nature raises questions about:
 4. What a law of nature is in the first place
 5. How they have any efficacy
 6. Where it comes from Any view which presupposes these laws cannot explain these “meta-law” (i.e. metaphysical) questions. Further, since the ultimate laws of nature presuppose the existence of the physical universe, they cannot intelligibly be appealed to as a way of explaining the existence of the universe (contra Lawrence Krauss).
 7. The argument from the predictive and technological successes of modern physics and the other sciences has no force. Alex Rosenburg, for example, fundamentally argues:
 - a. The predictive power and technological applications of science are unparalleled by those of any other purported source of knowledge.
 - b. Therefore what science reveals to us is probably all that is real. This is not a valid deduction.

¹⁰David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739-40) and *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748).

¹¹The “mathematical realism” of Galileo and the mechanical philosophers treated laws of nature as brute mathematical regularities without asking what grounds their necessity or why they should hold at all. The causal powers ontology resolves this: regularities hold because things possess real dispositions grounded in their natures, and “laws” are our descriptions of what happens when these powers are exercised under relevant conditions. See Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics*, 2014, ch. 3.

(held by Rationalists like Leibniz, but echoing Aristotle), therefore posits one first cause of the universe, with that first cause having properties such as necessary existence (“being existence itself”, or *ipsum esse subsistens* per Aquinas), simplicity, pure actuality, and so on. This conclusion arguably becomes unavoidable as long as one accepts the fundamental intelligibility of the universe (via realism and causation). Pulling on this thread would go beyond the purposes of the present document, so it is left to the interested reader to pursue.

Philosophical Anthropology

Human Nature

9. **Human Nature.** We observe that human beings are rational, social, and embodied beings with observable needs (e.g., survival, reproduction, cooperation, knowledge) and capacities (e.g., reason, communication, empathy). We affirm that there is an innate human nature (contra “blank slateism”), which includes a social nature, that cannot be ignored. Humans are affected by “nurture” but are not endlessly mutable; every human is unique. We take these as empirical facts, not teleological claims¹².
10. **Immaterial Intellect.** We affirm the existence of the immaterial intellect¹³, dependent in a hylomorphic sense on the physical brain’s processes, but not either purely emergent from, or supervening upon, those physical processes. We reject any epiphenomenal account (e.g. Descartes).
 - a. Consequences of rejection: Without this position, maintaining **11. Free Will** becomes impossible, which has critical consequences for individual agency and moral philosophy.
11. **Free Will.** We affirm the existence of truly free will¹⁴ as a causal power of the immaterial intellect. This is the source of natural liberty (being the ability to decide a course of action using the rational intellect), and therefore moral agency and responsibility.
12. **Human Imperfection.** We observe that inherent human imperfections (e.g., cognitive biases, moral failings) constrain rational and moral agency, even in the presence of good

¹²Contra Cajetan’s doctrine of “pure nature” (*natura pura*), which posits a self-sufficient human nature intelligible without reference to any end beyond itself. On this view, human beings could in principle be fully autonomous, requiring no broader rational, social, or transcendent orientation. We reject this: human nature is inherently social and ordered to ends which include but are not exhausted by individual autonomy. See the broader debate in Henri de Lubac, *Surnaturel*, 1946; and Feser, *Aquinas*, 2009, ch. 5.

¹³The case for the immateriality of the intellect rests on three converging arguments. 1. Intentionality: thought is directed toward specific, determinate contents, but no physical symbol or representation has determinate meaning intrinsically - it must be interpreted, and interpretation requires a mind, generating a regress. 2. The universality argument: the intellect grasps universal concepts (e.g. “triangularity” as such), but a material brain state, being a particular physical configuration, cannot instantiate a universal *as universal*; therefore intellectual activity cannot be identified with any material brain state. 3. The determinacy argument (from Ross and Kripke): all formal thinking has determinate semantic content (when you add 2+2, you are determinately performing addition), but no physical process has determinate semantic content (any finite physical process is compatible with infinitely many semantic interpretations); therefore formal thinking is not a physical process. Searle’s “biological naturalism” - which attempts to treat consciousness as emergent from brain processes while denying reductive physicalism - cannot account for either the unity of experience or the determinate character of thought. See Feser, Edward, *Immortal Souls: A Treatise on Human Nature*, Editiones Scholasticae, 2024, Part I; *Philosophy of Mind*, 2005, chs. 6-9; “Kripke, Ross, and the Immaterial Aspects of Thought,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 87:1, 2013. See also Oderberg, “Hylomorphic Dualism,” *Social Philosophy and Policy* 22.2, 2005.

¹⁴“Libertarian” free will - i.e. genuinely undetermined choice - follows from the immateriality of the intellect established in [^13]. If the intellect is not a material process, then its operations are not determined by prior physical causes in the way that material events are. The will, as the intellectual appetite, inherits this freedom: it is a real causal power of an immaterial agent (see #causation), capable of initiating action rather than merely transmitting the effects of prior physical states. This is why the causal powers ontology is indispensable. If the only causation in one’s ontology is efficient causation - billiard-ball mechanics, where every event is the inevitable product of prior events - then every apparent “choice” is just the next link in a deterministic chain, and free will is an illusion. You cannot have genuine agency in a universe where things merely transmit force; you need things that act *in virtue of what they are*. The immaterial intellect, being the kind of thing it is, has the power to initiate, not merely to transmit. Without real powers grounded in the natures of things, neither free will nor any other form of genuine agency is intelligible.

will. These constraints also form the boundaries of moral culpability - for example, someone not in full possession of their rational intellect (for example through mental illness) may have reduced moral culpability for an action.

13. **Limited Rationality.** We observe that though humans possess rationality and the ability to reason about abstract universal concepts, this ability is slow, limited and error-prone. Science (in the sense of any rationally-derived body of knowledge) is the work of many centuries; this not only includes the study of natural science, but also of philosophy and history (etc.).
14. **Incentives.** Given [16. Goodness](#), human beings act toward ends they perceive as good, including what is good for themselves. Incentive structures shape which goods are most readily pursued and which costs are most readily avoided. We do not always respond rationally - [12. Human Imperfection](#) and [13. Limited Rationality](#) constrain our judgment - and we may rightly intuit that a simple incentive fails to capture additional dimensions of the good that a narrower calculus ignores. Nevertheless, any political philosophy which ignores the reality of incentives, or which presumes that behaviour can be reshaped by decree rather than by altering the conditions under which people pursue the good, will fail. This principle has direct implications for institutional design ([70. Incentive Engineering](#)) and political economy ([79. Free Enterprise](#)).
15. **Trial and Error.** Given [12. Human Imperfection](#) and [13. Limited Rationality](#), together with the complexity of social and natural systems, progress in knowledge is best achieved through careful trial and error rather than sweeping rationalist redesign. The characteristic timescales involved with ecosystems and societies imply that a multi-generational sensitivity to change is often needed¹⁵. Given Knightian uncertainty, unintended consequences are the rule, not the exception. It can be demonstrated empirically, per Taleb's "via negativa"¹⁶, that the removal of an intervention (a law, a pharmaceutical drug, etc.) carries less risk of unintended consequences than the addition thereof. This epistemological principle has direct implications for political philosophy (see [60. Burkean Progressivism](#)).

Morality

The Source of Morality

16. **Goodness.** Goodness is not a subjective valuation but an objective feature of reality. Alongside goodness, the classical transcendentals of truth and beauty are likewise real, objective features of the world whose properties may be reasoned about. Truth is the conformity of the intellect to reality; beauty is the radiance of rational order - the quality by which the form, proportion, and harmony in a thing become perceptible and move us. All three are convertible with being: every real thing, to the extent that it exists, is in some measure true, good, and beautiful. A thing is good to the extent that it fulfils its nature - that is, to the extent that it actualises the potentials inherent in the kind of thing it is. A good knife is one that cuts well; a good oak is one that grows deep roots; a good triangle is one that precisely instantiates the form of triangularity. This is not a value judgment imposed from outside but what the word "good" *means* when applied to anything with a real essence. Goodness, in this sense, is convertible with being itself: to exist more fully in accordance with one's nature is to be

¹⁵Scott, James C., *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, Yale UP, 1998. Scott's account of "scientific forestry" in 18th-century Prussia is paradigmatic: it took a full century to discover the many implicit ecological processes which were destroyed by the rationalisation of forests into monoculture plantations - processes invisible to the legibility-seeking state but essential to the ecosystem's long-term viability.

¹⁶Taleb, Nassim Nicholas, *Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder*, Random House, 2012. Taleb's "via negativa" principle holds that removal of harm is safer, more robust, and more universalisable than the addition of positive intervention, because subtractive actions carry fewer unintended consequences. This has direct epistemological implications: we learn more reliably from what fails than from what succeeds, and the accumulation of knowledge through the elimination of error is the characteristic method of both science and prudent statecraft.

more good. This follows directly from **2. Metaphysical Realism** and **3. Universals** - if essences are real, then so is the standard against which any particular instance may be measured.

- a. This is the critical foundation for any objective morality. Without real essences, there is no objective standard of what anything *ought* to be, and “good” is reduced to subjective preference, cultural convention, or raw power. It is precisely because modern philosophy has abandoned the metaphysics of real essences - beginning with the nominalists and culminating in Kant’s severing of phenomena from noumena - that it has found itself unable to ground moral claims in anything more substantial than feeling or procedure. We acknowledge that discerning the essence of a thing - and therefore what is good for it - is the slow, difficult work of reason and empirical study, not a matter of intuition or self-evidence (see **2. Metaphysical Realism**). But the difficulty of the task does not impugn the reality of its object.
17. **Natural Hierarchy.** Given **3. Universals** and **16. Goodness**, all things in nature are ordered in hierarchies of perfection. Every particular thing instantiates its form to a greater or lesser degree - one oak is a better oak than another, one act of justice is more perfectly just than another. This is not a value imposed by the observer but an objective feature of reality given the reality of essences: if there is a real form of “oakness” or “justice,” then any particular instance can be measured against it. The universe is thus structured as a hierarchy of participations in perfection, from the most complete to the least. Contra egalitarianism, we affirm that this applies also to human beings: given every person’s unique characteristics, varied outcomes are natural and moral, though we recognise **22. Moral Equality**. We strongly condemn the post-modern notion that all hierarchy is unnatural and therefore only ever sustained by power and oppression. Hierarchy is a fundamental feature of reality itself; the question is not whether hierarchies should exist, but whether they are rightly ordered.
 18. **Moral Good.** We affirm objective moral good as those decisions made by free will which further human flourishing, as found in empirically universal human nature, which we take to include life, health, procreation, family, sociality, knowledge, and rational living¹⁷. Tendencies like violence are excluded as privations that undermine these goods. Such a morality is objective, accessible to reason, and exists prior to any experience or given system of laws.
 - a. Consequences of rejection: Without **16. Goodness**, morality loses its objective foundation and the alternatives all fail for the same underlying reason - they attempt to build morality without the metaphysics of real essences. The Kantian perspective yields a morality that is purely formal and procedural: the categorical imperative provides a test for moral rules but no substantive content about what human flourishing actually consists in. It cannot tell us whether assisted dying, or the dissolution of the family, furthers or frustrates human good - only whether the maxim is universalisable without contradiction. Since many mutually incompatible maxims can pass this test, Kantian ethics degenerates in practice into precisely the intersubjective moral debate it was meant to transcend (see footnote 3). The result, as MacIntyre argues in *After Virtue*¹⁸, is emotivism - moral claims become expressions of preference dressed in the language of reason, with no shared framework capable of adjudicating between them. Nietzschean or Darwinist approaches which

¹⁷A typical counterargument is to raise Hume’s “is-ought problem”: that normative claims (“what ought to be”) cannot be derived from descriptive claims (“what is”). However, our realist position explicitly links “human flourishing” to “the good” (**16. Goodness**) and is therefore normative by definition - more perfectly instantiating an essence is precisely what “good” means. It is the role of the intellect to correctly abstract and clarify what this normative human nature consists in. Though Aquinas himself claimed that morality can be fully known via reason, we stress a level of humility due to the ambiguity inherent in this process of abstraction.

For those who instinctively shy away from such talk of telos, we would argue that most alternatives (e.g. Utilitarianism, Contractarianism, Randian Objectivism) implicitly contain teleology because they still assume there is a “good” or “flourishing” or “utility” which is inherent to human nature. Another alternative may be found in the Seven Basic Goods of Grisez & Finnis’ New Natural Law (NNL) theory (see Grisez, “The First Principle of Practical Reason,” *Natural Law Forum* 10, 1965; Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, Oxford 1980, 2nd ed. 2011, chs. IV-V; Grisez, Boyle & Finnis, “Practical Principles, Moral Truth, and Ultimate Ends,” *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 32, 1987). Grisez and Finnis claim that NNL avoids the is-ought problem by holding that the Seven Goods are self-evident to reason. We are generally sceptical of claims to self-evidence, and therefore prefer the natural law approach which aims to ground its observations in empirical study of universal human nature.

¹⁸MacIntyre, Alasdair, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, Duckworth, 1981; 3rd ed., University of Notre Dame Press, 2007. MacIntyre’s diagnosis of the Enlightenment’s failure to ground morality without teleology remains definitive: the result is emotivism, in which moral claims become expressions of preference dressed in the language of reason.

admit only reproductive fitness (however defined) risk reduction to domination and eugenics. Utilitarian approaches presuppose a teleological account of human good (namely the maximisation of happiness) which they cannot ground without recourse to the very reasoning about essences and natures they claim to reject.

19. **Existence as Good.** This same definition provides that existence itself is good since it allows for the actualisation of potentials.
20. **Prosperity.** The advance of prosperity is defined as the furthered ability of all people to attain these goods; this is necessarily a moral good by our definition. This should be distinguished from “prosperity” defined narrowly as material wealth.
21. **Virtue.** Per Aristotle¹⁹, virtues of character enable humans to better achieve flourishing through rational activity aligned with our nature as rational and social beings. Per MacIntyre²⁰, virtues are communal and formed through practice and action, not via signalling (contra the liberal tendency towards emotivism). Such virtues might include, for example, justice, prudence, and courage. These virtues are held to be morally good in that they aid free agents in pursuing human flourishing.

Humanism and Moral Equality

22. **Moral Equality.** We hold that all human life is sacred, and that all human life holds equal moral value. The case for the dignity and equal moral value of human life was historically a Judeo-Christian achievement. Judaism and Christianity share the doctrine of *imago dei* - that human beings are made in the image of God. Christianity adds the radical claim that all are “one in Christ” and that the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, from which follows a uniquely strong account of the sanctity and equality of every individual human life. It was this specifically Christian inheritance that universalised a principle which classical philosophy had intuited but failed to extend beyond the citizen class, and which was near-absent in pre-Christian societies where practices such as infanticide and the domination of the weak by the strong were commonplace. Given our commitment to theological neutrality, we seek a philosophical account of human dignity that does not *require* Christian revelation, though it is consistent with it. Given [3. Universals](#), human nature is a real essence shared by all members of the species. This essence includes rational and moral capacities *in potentia* - the capacity for reason, for moral judgment, for free choice - which are not possessed by any other kind of being. It is this that gives human beings a special dignity: not a difference of degree but a difference of *kind*. A human being who has lost the exercise of reason through illness or injury does not thereby lose their humanity, any more than a damaged triangle ceases to instantiate the form of triangularity. The dignity of the human person inheres in the *kind* of being they are, not in the *degree* to which they currently exercise their distinctive powers. Equal dignity among humans follows because all share the same essence - the same capacities in potentia - regardless of actualisation. This position requires the prior acceptance of [2. Metaphysical Realism](#) and [3. Universals](#). Those who reject this metaphysical framework will find human dignity and moral equality difficult to defend on any basis other than convention or sentiment - which is precisely the predicament of modern liberal ethics, and the reason it is so vulnerable to the resurgence of social Darwinism and utilitarian dehumanisation.

- a. With regards to [17. Natural Hierarchy](#), we distinguish sharply between moral *worth* and moral *expectation*. All human beings possess equal moral worth as humans, because all

¹⁹Aristotle: In Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle defines virtues as habits of character (e.g., courage, justice) that enable humans to achieve eudaimonia (flourishing or the good life) through rational activity aligned with their nature as rational and social beings. Virtues are cultivated through practice and guided by phronesis (practical wisdom), balancing extremes (the doctrine of the mean).

²⁰MacIntyre’s Adaptation: MacIntyre adopts Aristotle’s virtue ethics but reinterprets eudaimonia as achievable only within specific social practices (e.g., farming, teaching) embedded in community traditions, not as a universal ideal. He argues that modern liberalism’s emotivism - where moral judgments are mere preferences - has severed virtues from their communal context, leading to moral fragmentation. In *After Virtue*, he proposes restoring virtues through practices that yield internal goods (e.g., excellence, community bonds), not external goods (e.g., wealth).

share the same essence (see above). However, the very principle of hierarchy that structures all of reality applies also to the *obligations* attendant on one's position: those who occupy positions of greater power, influence, or public trust are rightly held to higher standards of moral conduct, precisely because their actions bear greater consequences for the common good. This is a direct consequence of **17. Natural Hierarchy** : greater actualisation of capacity entails greater responsibility for its right use. Equal dignity in nature; unequal obligation before one's community.

23. **Ordo Amoris.** Contra the Kantian categorical imperative, we affirm the practical ordering of loyalties by proximity (*ordo amoris*) due to the closeness of bonds and reciprocal obligations, the practicality of responsibility, and the limits of one's finite stock of affections. It is this *ordo amoris* that justifies treating one's child differently to a stranger from across the world. The depth of this ordering is more profound than is commonly appreciated. Consider the ease with which one can talk for hours with someone one went to school with, about shared teachers, shared places, shared experiences - there is a depth of *philia* there that cannot be manufactured or substituted. As Eliot observed²¹, culture is the incarnation of a people's deepest commitments, and it is transmitted most powerfully through proximity: through families, neighbourhoods, schools, and congregations. The family is the primary vector of cultural transmission, and therefore the innermost circle of *ordo amoris*. This organic depth of bond is precisely what is being destroyed by the atomisation and geographical dispersal of modern society - the breakdown of civic *philia*. (See **38. Philia** for an extended treatment of the conditions required to maintain social cohesion.)
- a. We note, however, that *ordo amoris* carries its own pathology: the risk of amoral familism, whereby loyalty to kin degenerates into nepotism, corruption, and indifference to the common good. A rightly-ordered love of one's own must be constrained by justice and oriented towards the flourishing of the wider community, not merely towards the advantage of one's immediate circle. The family is the first school of virtue, not a licence for vice.
24. **Contra Marx.** We reaffirm **17. Natural Hierarchy** : that the ordering of persons and groups into hierarchies of merit, responsibility, and authority is natural and good, not a pathology to be eliminated. We acknowledge that categories such as "worker" and "capitalist" describe real economic phenomena and real imbalances of power which may at times require political attention. What we reject is the Marxist *elevation* of such abstract categories above the more concrete and deeper reality of organic ties - family, locality, trade, congregation, nation - which are the true sinews of social life. To prioritise ideological class identity over these organic bonds is precisely the inversion of **23. Ordo Amoris** .
- a. **Aristocratic Class.** We observe, drawing on Eliot²², that organic class structures - rooted in locality, tradition, and intergenerational continuity - serve a function that purely meritocratic selection cannot replicate. A meritocracy which selects the most talented individuals from every stratum of society and elevates them to positions of influence may be efficient, but it severs those individuals from the communities which formed them. They become a rootless elite with no *philia*, no local loyalty, no organic connection to the people they govern. An organic class structure, by contrast, preserves the continuity of culture and obligation across generations within a community. The question is not whether elites should exist - they inevitably will (**17. Natural Hierarchy**) - but whether they remain embedded in the communities they serve.

²¹Eliot, T.S., *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, Faber and Faber, 1948. Eliot argues that culture is not a separable product of conscious planning but the incarnation of a people's deepest philosophical and religious commitments, transmitted primarily through the family and the organic structures of class, locality, and congregation.

²²Eliot, T.S., *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, Faber and Faber, 1948. Eliot argues that culture is not a separable product of conscious planning but the incarnation of a people's deepest philosophical and religious commitments, transmitted primarily through the family and the organic structures of class, locality, and congregation.

Political Philosophy

The State

The State of Nature

25. **State of Nature.** We affirm that there is no autonomous “state of nature” - man is always a social animal with reciprocal obligations. We are born as children, fully dependent on family and community, and we develop corresponding responsibilities. Thus we take the Thomistic view of the state as being natural in origin due to humanity’s social nature (contra Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau).
26. **Political Authority.** We affirm that political authority is natural to human society, not a product of contract or individual consent. Human beings are naturally social and political creatures (9. Human Nature) who organically form families, communities, and polities; authority structures emerge from this social nature as a practical necessity - where many pursue a common life, unity requires a principle of unity. The moral legitimacy of government issues primarily from its faithfulness to objective principles of justice grounded in natural law and oriented toward the common good²³. We reject the Lockean and Rousseauian social contract, which posits a founding moment of agreement among atomistic individuals as the origin of political authority²⁴. Following Burke, we hold that society is an inherited order, not a contract among atomistic individuals (see 40. Stewardship for our full treatment of the intergenerational trust). The ongoing consent of the governed, expressed through custom, democratic participation, and the habitual acceptance of authority, serves not as the *foundation* of legitimacy but as a practical indicator that government is in fact serving the common good. A government which has lost this consent faces a warning: either it has drifted from the common good, or it has failed to persuade the people of the justice of its course. We equally reject the view that faithfulness to principle alone suffices without accountability - this is the path to tyranny, against which resistance may be legitimate when authority is directed to the ruler’s private good rather than the common good (Aquinas, ST II-II Q.42).

The Nature of Rights

27. **Rights.** Rights are practical determinations of natural law: concrete specifications of what justice requires for a given people, in a given place, at a given time. The natural law (18. Moral Good) provides the normative foundation; prudential reasoning within a political community provides the specific form. Negative rights (e.g. freedom from arbitrary violence, protection of property) are more readily discerned because they correspond to near-universal conditions of human flourishing. Positive rights (e.g. welfare provision, healthcare) are more contingent, depending on the material capacity of the community, the available institutional forms, and the competing demands of the common good. Neither category exists as a free-floating abstraction; both are grounded in the real moral obligations that arise from human nature as it exists in community. We therefore reject both the doctrine of a priori natural rights - rights which exist fully formed in a pre-political “state of nature” independent of any social context - and the social contract as the origin of rights. Rights are not conjured into existence by an agreement among individuals, nor are they self-evident axioms requiring no justification. Following Biggar, we reject the inflationary “rights talk” in which ever-multiplying positive rights are asserted without regard to feasibility, competing obligations, or the duties they impose on others. A right which cannot in principle be fulfilled is not a right but a wish.

²³Biggar, Nigel, *Between Kin and Cosmopolis: An Ethic of the Nation*, James Clarke & Co., 2014, pp. 30-31: “Contrary to the populist orthodoxy that prevails among us, the moral legitimacy of government issues primarily from its faithfulness to the given principles of justice, and not from its reflection of the popular will.”

²⁴“Where Burke opposes abstract, revolutionary rights with those bequeathed by constitutional tradition, Paine dismisses his appeal to ‘musty records and mouldy parchments’ in favour of the invocation by the Marquis de Lafayette of ‘the sentiments which Nature has engraved in the heart of every citizen.’ Foremost among these is the ‘divine principle of the equal rights of man... [the sentiment that] all men are born equal, and with equal natural right.[...] ‘A government’s right to exist depends entirely upon the social contract into which individuals entered to create it.’” (Biggar)

28. **Responsibilities.** We emphasise that every right has corresponding responsibilities; both on the person providing the right's fulfilment, but also in the duty of the bearer to exercise virtues of moderation, honesty and charity whilst exercising the right.
29. **Limits of Liberalism.** Human authority - of parent over child, of the state over its citizens, of the community over its members - is natural, legitimate, and necessary when ordered toward the common good and constrained by natural law. We reject the liberal premise that the individual is sovereign by default and that all authority must justify itself against his autonomy. Authority does not derive from the consent of the individual but from its orientation toward human flourishing (18. Moral Good); an authority which serves the common good is legitimate whether or not the individual consents to it, just as a parent's authority over a child does not depend on the child's agreement. What liberalism gets right is that authority can be *abused* - that rulers can serve their own interests rather than the common good, and that institutions must exist to check this tendency. In this, liberalism's opposition to tyranny is a genuine achievement. But the remedy for the abuse of authority is not the abolition of authority; it is the restoration of rightly-ordered authority, constrained by natural law and directed toward genuine human flourishing. Liberal society without such direction is self-subverting: as Biggar observes, 'the individual's exercise of freedom often amounts to the voluntary selling of the self into the slavery of addiction, which not only degrades the agent but damages the society to which he belongs'²⁵. We affirm that there is one objective truth and one objective morality. What we also affirm, given 13. Limited Rationality and the difficulty inherent in discerning the essences of things (16. Goodness), is that our grasp of that truth is imperfect, partial, and subject to error. It is this epistemic humility - not relativism - that grounds our accommodation of differing beliefs: we extend charity to those who disagree because we recognise the limits of our own understanding, and because the pursuit of truth requires open discourse. We therefore propose not a rejection of liberalism but its completion: the liberal vigilance against the abuse of power, disciplined and directed by an explicit account of the good, pursued with the humility appropriate to our imperfect grasp of it.
30. **Societal Norms.** We emphasise the importance of societal norms and duties. Norms are the informal constraints - transmitted through family, community, and shared culture - which regulate behaviour where law cannot and should not reach. We observe that when societal norms are liberalised, the resulting behaviours are disproportionately adopted lower down the socioeconomic ladder. Divorce rates, for example, rose far more sharply among lower-income families following liberalisation than among the wealthy, who continued to marry and stay married at high rates²⁶. The pattern is consistent across domains: those who advocate permissiveness are rarely those who suffer its consequences. The erosion of societal norms is therefore not a neutral expansion of freedom but a transfer of social cost from those who dismantle the norms to those who depended on them.
31. **Property.** We emphasise the importance of property rights in supporting family autonomy and national cohesion, though again being contingent on their contribution to the social good, and requiring responsible stewardship to prevent excessive inequality or harm. We oppose theories of the "primitive communism" of Lubbock²⁷ or Engels²⁸.

Centrality of the Family

32. **Family.** We affirm that the family is the basis of civil society; the state which exalts the individual at the expense of the family suffers. We affirm that the greater majority of persons

²⁵Biggar, *Between Kin and Cosmopolis*, p. 28.

²⁶Chan, T.W. & Halpin, B., "The Instability of Divorce Risk Factors in the UK," *Population Studies* 56:3, 2002 (see also PubMed 22087666). UK data shows divorce rates for the lowest income quintile at 26% compared to 9% for the highest - a pattern that widened following liberalisation. US data confirms the divergence: college-educated couples who married in the early 1990s divorced at 17% within ten years, compared to 36% for less-educated peers. See also Wilcox, W.B. & Marquardt, E., "When Marriage Disappears: The Retreat from Marriage in Middle America," *The State of Our Unions* 2010, National Marriage Project.

²⁷John Lubbock, *Pre-historic Times* (1865)

²⁸Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884)

ought to spend practically all their lives in its circle, either as subjects or as heads. Only in the family can the individual be properly reared, educated, and given that formation of character which will make him a good man and a good citizen.

33. **Cultural Transmission.** We observe the centrality of families in setting the course of history. As Eliot argues²⁹, the family is the primary channel through which culture is transmitted - not merely knowledge or custom, but the deepest philosophical and moral commitments that constitute a civilisation's character. It is families, not isolated individuals, that transmit language, faith, craft, property, memory, and moral formation across generations. The dissolution of the family as a functioning unit - whether through economic pressure, ideological assault, or state usurpation of its functions - has reliably preceded civilisational decline.
34. **Inheritance.** As per 23. *Ordo Amoris* and 32. *Family*, we affirm the principle of inheritance: that the transmission of property, knowledge, culture, and moral formation from one generation to the next is a fundamental good. Aquinas observes that private property is natural because families need it to fulfil their obligations - to raise, educate, and equip their children for adult life³⁰. This is not mere economic entitlement; as Scruton argues, property ties us to the land and to those with whom we share it, and inheritance is the mechanism by which that attachment is sustained across generations³¹. 'We do not merely study the past: we inherit it, and inheritance brings with it not only the rights of ownership, but the duties of trusteeship.' A society which prevents or penalises the transmission of inheritance undermines the family's capacity to function as a steward across generations (40. *Stewardship*), and thereby undermines the intergenerational trust on which civilisation depends. The right of inheritance need not be absolute in its fiscal treatment - Aquinas holds that surplus is owed to the common good - but the presumption must favour transmission, not confiscation. The socialist presumption - that property belongs ultimately to the state, and that inheritance should be taxed to extinction - inverts the proper order: the state exists to serve families and communities, not the reverse. To treat the family's inheritance as a resource of the state is to subordinate the natural to the artificial, and the organic to the bureaucratic.

The Nation

35. **A People.** We assert that 'A "people" exists insofar as its members acknowledge that they have certain things in common and own or participate in them together. Usually these things include language, religion, and traditions of history, poetry and music, and perhaps of literature. Invariably they include an association with a particular territory. They need not include - and probably do not - racial purity.'³² To which we would add: a shared culture and continuity of heritage. A people is defined by these commonalities, not by ethnic purity - though a people so defined will usually, as a matter of practical fact, exhibit ethnic continuity. This is a by-product of the conditions that constitute a people, not the definition itself.
36. **Nation.** We assert that 'a "nation" connotes a people that has a considerable measure of autonomy, and whose autonomy is viable.' [...] 'If being a nation is distinctive about a culturally definite people possessing a significant degree of autonomy, then nationalism is about the aspiration to acquire autonomy, increase it, or defend it.'³³ We affirm the nation as a natural and practical scope and scale for organising human society.

²⁹Eliot, T.S., *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, Faber and Faber, 1948. Eliot argues that culture is not a separable product of conscious planning but the incarnation of a people's deepest philosophical and religious commitments, transmitted primarily through the family and the organic structures of class, locality, and congregation.

³⁰Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II, Q.66, AA.1-2. Aquinas holds that private property is legitimate and necessary as a practical arrangement for the care and management of goods, but that surplus beyond what is needed for one's station is owed to the common good.

³¹Scruton, Roger, *How to Be a Conservative*, Bloomsbury, 2014. "We do not merely study the past: we inherit it, and inheritance brings with it not only the rights of ownership, but the duties of trusteeship. Things fought for and died for should not be idly squandered. For they are the property of others, who are not yet born."

³²Biggar, *Between Kin and Cosmopolis*, pp. xiv-xv.

³³Biggar, *Between Kin and Cosmopolis*, pp. xiv-xv.

37. **Distinctiveness.** We assert that, by definition, the people of a nation are distinct, and not interchangeable with others from without the nation. We echo Polanyi in not treating people as commodities in a global market, and we assert that it is moral that indigenous peoples are not interfered with in their homeland due to their spiritual, cultural and historical bond to the place³⁴. We emphasise that this bond fosters a special strength of stewardship.
- a. We note that we must find an adequate language to describe the difference between indigenous peoples, legal citizens of a state, and welcome guests. We cannot debate their respective rights and responsibilities until we agree on this language.
38. **Philia.** We emphasise the importance of the Aristotelian philia as the bond required for maintaining high trust social cohesion and positive-sum cooperation. We emphasise the fractal localist nature of organically self-organising societies, where cultures converge in similarity by proximity, mirroring the principles of subsidiarity and *ordo amoris*. Though it be made up of a tapestry of locales, we therefore seek a broadly monocultural consensus at the national scale. This low-mixture “fractal localism” is necessary to reduce the domination of one group over another which is so predictive of social tension³⁵. We thereby reject multi-culturalism. As T.S. Eliot observed³⁶, culture is ultimately the incarnation of a people’s deepest philosophical and religious commitments; it follows that where those commitments diverge, so too will the cultures, and the attempt to force disparate cultures into shared public spaces generates friction. This is confirmed empirically by Rutherford, Bar-Yam et al.³⁷, whose research demonstrates that the primary predictor of intercommunal violence is not the specifics of history or policy but simply the degree of mixing of culturally distinct groups and the absence of clear boundaries between them. People naturally seek to live among those who share their way of life; partial separation with poorly defined boundaries fosters conflict, as groups large enough to impose cultural norms on public spaces inevitably clash with those who do not share them. Peace is found either in thorough integration (where no group is large enough to develop a dominant collective identity) or in clear separation with local autonomy - as in Switzerland’s cantons. The middle ground is the dangerous one.
39. **Contra Globalisation.** Whilst acknowledging certain economic benefits, we also criticise the effects of globalisation in eroding the cultural distinctiveness of nations. Drawing on the science of complex systems, we recognise that it is borders which enable distinct entities to diverge and develop diverse characteristics, and that any entity (be it biological or societal) without borders ceases to exist.
40. **Stewardship.** We recognise that we are custodians, not owners, of our national inheritance. Following Burke³⁸, society is ‘a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born.’ In the English common-law tradition, this may be understood as an *entailed estate* held in trust by the living generation for the benefit of past and future heirs. We receive our national inheritance - territory, institutions, common law, cultural patrimony - without payment, and are bound to preserve its substance and continuity, in reverence to our ancestors’ sacrifices and for our posterity’s benefit.
- a. No single generation possesses legitimate authority to fundamentally transform what future generations will inherit. Irreversible change - whether demographic, constitutional,

³⁴Whether this obtains as a negative right to non-interference depends on circumstances - namely the practicalities of defence, and the extent to which any given nation has a desire to uphold the right.

³⁵Rutherford, A., Harmon, D., Werfel, J., Gard-Murray, A.S., Bar-Yam, S., Gros, A., Xulvi-Brunet, R. & Bar-Yam, Y., “Good Fences: The Importance of Setting Boundaries for Peaceful Coexistence,” *PLOS ONE* 9:5, 2014, e95660.

³⁶Eliot, T.S., *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, Faber and Faber, 1948. Eliot argues that culture is not a separable product of conscious planning but the incarnation of a people’s deepest philosophical and religious commitments, transmitted primarily through the family and the organic structures of class, locality, and congregation.

³⁷Rutherford, A., Harmon, D., Werfel, J., Gard-Murray, A.S., Bar-Yam, S., Gros, A., Xulvi-Brunet, R. & Bar-Yam, Y., “Good Fences: The Importance of Setting Boundaries for Peaceful Coexistence,” *PLOS ONE* 9:5, 2014, e95660.

³⁸Burke, Edmund, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1790. The partnership passage reads: “Society is indeed a contract... it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born. Each contract of each particular state is but a clause in the great primeval contract of eternal society.”

or cultural - lacks moral legitimacy precisely because it violates the trust in both directions: the unborn cannot consent to it, and the ancestors who built and bequeathed the inheritance did so with a reasonable expectation that its character would be preserved. This is the constraint on alienation inherent in any trust: the trustee may manage the estate, improve it, adapt it to changing circumstances, but may not squander or fundamentally alter its character. A generation which treats the nation as its own property to dispose of at will - as an “economic improvement zone” rather than the inherited home of a continuous people - has betrayed its fiduciary obligation.

41. **National Interest.** Per ordo amoris, we affirm the prioritisation of national interest ahead of universal global interest. The people of all nations do, however, have moral duties of cooperation with their counterparts in other nations, in order to seek the common good insofar as they can.
42. **Exclusivity.** Any non-trivial conception of the good is necessarily exclusive: it excludes those beliefs and practices which contradict it. This is not a regrettable side-effect but a logical necessity - a society which claims to tolerate everything has, in fact, no moral position at all. As Popper recognised, a society which tolerates the intolerant will be destroyed by them. No polity can be neutral on questions of the good; every society must choose what it will and will not accept. Liberalism, contra Rawls, is not neutral - it imposes its own vision of the good, namely the primacy of individual autonomy, no less dogmatically than any alternative. The proper examination of competing moral positions is woefully lacking in the modern West, due to a peculiar cocktail of misguided anthropology (the assumption that everyone shares our moral premises) and relativism (the claim that there is no objective morality). Once one looks closely, one finds that alternative viewpoints, sustained by no less deep philosophical ideas, reach considerably different and often mutually antagonistic conclusions. We are honest about this: we hold an explicit account of the good, we acknowledge that it excludes, and we pursue it with the epistemic humility appropriate to our imperfect understanding - but we do not pretend that the choice can be avoided.

Just War

43. **Just War.** The right of a nation to defend itself follows from [40. Stewardship](#) and [41. National Interest](#) : a people which will not defend its inheritance will not long possess one. However, the use of force is subject to the strictest moral constraints. Per Aquinas³⁹, war is justified only when all of the following conditions are met: it must be waged by legitimate authority ([26. Political Authority](#)); it must have a just cause - defence against aggression, protection of the innocent, or the recovery of what has been unjustly seized; it must be undertaken with right intention, directed toward the restoration of peace and the common good; it must be a last resort; the expected good must be proportionate to the harm inflicted; and there must be a reasonable prospect of success. Crucially, any belligerent must have a clear and achievable end - a defined objective whose attainment constitutes victory and whose absence constitutes an open-ended commitment of blood and treasure with no termination condition. These constraints apply equally to the decision to enter a war (*ius ad bellum*) and to conduct within it (*ius in bello*): the deliberate targeting of non-combatants and the use of disproportionate force are prohibited regardless of the justice of the cause. A good which cannot defend itself will be destroyed by those who do not share it ([42. Exclusivity](#)); military virtue - courage, discipline, sacrifice, loyalty - is therefore to be honoured and cultivated as the precondition of the peace we seek.

³⁹Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II, Q.40, AA.1-3. Aquinas sets out three conditions for a just war: it must be waged by a legitimate sovereign authority; there must be a just cause (injury received or rights violated); and it must be undertaken with right intention - directed toward the advancement of good or the avoidance of evil, not from cupidity or cruelty. Later scholastic development added the conditions of last resort, proportionality, and reasonable prospect of success.

Systems of Government

44. **Systems of Government.** We do not, from first principles, rule out any established system of government provided it is supportive of the common good, and maintains its legitimacy by observance to natural moral laws. Per Bagehot⁴⁰, we observe that a constitution must suit its people.
45. **Constitutional Monarchy.** We observe the general practical efficacy of constitutional monarchy as leading to lasting stability. We affirm the benefits of a constitutional monarch in its central role in a fusion of powers constitution (of which more later); in its separation of symbolic state pomp and ceremony from the elected (and therefore often polarising) executive; and in its moral leadership in times of crisis⁴¹. The monarch, as the apex of the constitutional order, bears the greatest duty to defend the nation and its people - a direct consequence of [40. Stewardship](#) and [17. Natural Hierarchy](#) : the highest position entails the highest obligation, and the Crown personifies the intergenerational trust which the nation holds over its inheritance. Per Bagehot⁴², the constitution comprises “dignified” parts which command the loyalty and reverence of the people, and “efficient” parts which do the work of governing. Both are necessary: the efficient without the dignified loses its authority; the dignified without the efficient is mere pageantry. Per Aquinas⁴³, the best polity combines monarchical, aristocratic, and democratic elements, each correcting the pathology of the others. The British constitution, with Crown, Lords, and Commons, approximates this mixed constitution more closely than any codified alternative.
46. **Fusion of Powers.** Per Bagehot⁴⁴, we affirm a fusion of powers constitution for its benefits of speed and efficiency, and ability to error correct over time via the empirical trial-and-error process which spans consecutive cabinets, rather than falling into the protracted verbalistic stalemates of separation-of-powers constitutions. (See also [60. Burkean Progressivism](#)).
47. **Uncodified Constitution.** We affirm the benefits of flexibility inherent to an uncodified constitution. The revolutionary constitutions of France and the United States of America embed abstract natural rights as foundational axioms, which are expansive and often allow supreme courts to force parliaments to write laws with no democratic mandate⁴⁵. An uncodified constitution avoids this trap: its principles are discovered and refined through practice, not frozen in a founding text that subsequent generations must either worship or circumvent.
48. **Parliamentary Democracy.** We affirm parliamentary democracy per Burke⁴⁶: parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest - that of the whole - not a

⁴⁰Bagehot, Walter, *The English Constitution*, Chapman and Hall, 1867. Bagehot’s distinction between the “dignified” and “efficient” parts of the constitution (ch. I), and his observation that a constitution must suit its people (ch. II), remain foundational to the understanding of British constitutional practice. The fusion of powers - whereby the executive is drawn from and accountable to the legislature - enables the empirical trial-and-error correction across successive cabinets which a separation-of-powers constitution impedes.

⁴¹A classic example is that of Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands who acted as a figurehead of the resistance to the Nazis in the second World War, and dismissed her Prime Minister after he advocated negotiation.

⁴²Bagehot, Walter, *The English Constitution*, Chapman and Hall, 1867. Bagehot’s distinction between the “dignified” and “efficient” parts of the constitution (ch. I), and his observation that a constitution must suit its people (ch. II), remain foundational to the understanding of British constitutional practice. The fusion of powers - whereby the executive is drawn from and accountable to the legislature - enables the empirical trial-and-error correction across successive cabinets which a separation-of-powers constitution impedes.

⁴³Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, Q.105, A.1. Aquinas argues that the best form of government (*optimum regimen*) is a mixed constitution combining monarchy (one wise ruler), aristocracy (a few virtuous leaders), and democracy (rulers chosen from and by the people), each element checking the pathologies of the others.

⁴⁴Bagehot, Walter, *The English Constitution*, Chapman and Hall, 1867. Bagehot’s distinction between the “dignified” and “efficient” parts of the constitution (ch. I), and his observation that a constitution must suit its people (ch. II), remain foundational to the understanding of British constitutional practice. The fusion of powers - whereby the executive is drawn from and accountable to the legislature - enables the empirical trial-and-error correction across successive cabinets which a separation-of-powers constitution impedes.

⁴⁵c.f. the case of assisted dying in Canada, which was voted against multiple times, yet forced into law by the supreme court’s reading of the constitution. (Biggar)

⁴⁶Burke, Edmund, “Speech to the Electors of Bristol,” 3 November 1774. “Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests... but parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole... You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not member of Bristol, but he is a member of parliament.”

congress of ambassadors from hostile interests. Members owe their constituents their judgment, not mere obedience to instructions.

49. **Suffrage.** We affirm popular suffrage as both a right of citizenship and a safeguard against tyranny: a people which cannot remove its rulers by lawful means will eventually do so by other means. We observe, following Plato⁴⁷, the tendency of democracy to degrade when freedom is treated as an end in itself: the “democratic man” who regards all desires as equally valid, and resents any authority which would discipline them, produces precisely the moral disorder from which tyranny emerges. Per Bagehot⁴⁸, democracy depends on the moral character of its citizens; the cultivation of civic virtue is not an optional supplement to democratic government but a precondition of its survival.
50. **Upper Chamber.** We affirm the necessity of an upper revising chamber whose function is delay, scrutiny, and the tempering of hasty legislation. Per Bagehot⁴⁹, the value of such a chamber lies not in its democratic mandate but in its independence from the passions of the moment. An upper chamber composed of party-appointed functionaries defeats this purpose: it merely duplicates the partisan dynamics of the lower house. Drawing on Eliot’s observation (24a. Aristocratic Class) that organic class structures preserve intergenerational continuity where purely meritocratic selection severs elites from the communities that formed them, we hold that an effective revising chamber should draw on those with deep roots in the life of the nation - whether through hereditary connection, cultural leadership, or demonstrated service - rather than on those whose primary qualification is loyalty to a party machine.
51. **Aristocracy.** Given (17. Natural Hierarchy), every society produces those who lead - whether by ability, wealth, or force of character. The question is not whether elites will exist but whether they are rightly ordered. Following the thinking of Pius XII⁵⁰ on the enduring mission of the nobility, we distinguish between a *legitimate* elite - defined by moral excellence, service to the common good, and cultural stewardship - and a *degenerate* elite which treats its position as entitlement rather than obligation. An elite becomes illegitimate when it pursues self-enrichment, abandons the moral standards it expects of others, or severs its connection to the communities it purports to serve. Per (17. Natural Hierarchy) and (22. Moral Equality), the higher one’s position, the greater one’s obligation: this is not merely a sentiment but a structural principle. Historically, differentiated classes bore differentiated duties. The classical ordering of society into three estates - nobility, clergy, and people - reflected this: the nobility bore the obligation of defence and governance, the clergy of moral and spiritual formation, and the people of productive labour and civic participation. Most visibly, the feudal obligation of the nobility to provide military service in exchange for the lands they held meant bearing the greatest physical risk in defence of the realm. It was precisely this visible assumption of greater sacrifice that gave hierarchy its moral legitimacy. The modern inversion, whereby elites enjoy disproportionate freedoms while the consequences of liberal permissiveness fall hardest on those least equipped to bear them ((30. Societal Norms)), is a corruption of this principle.

a. A healthy class structure balances stability with dynamism. Too static, and it becomes a

⁴⁷Plato, *Republic* VIII, 543a-569c. Plato traces the degeneration of political constitutions from aristocracy through timocracy, oligarchy, and democracy to tyranny, arguing that each stage is produced by the characteristic moral failures of the preceding one.

⁴⁸Bagehot, Walter, *The English Constitution*, Chapman and Hall, 1867. Bagehot’s distinction between the “dignified” and “efficient” parts of the constitution (ch. I), and his observation that a constitution must suit its people (ch. II), remain foundational to the understanding of British constitutional practice. The fusion of powers - whereby the executive is drawn from and accountable to the legislature - enables the empirical trial-and-error correction across successive cabinets which a separation-of-powers constitution impedes.

⁴⁹Bagehot, Walter, *The English Constitution*, Chapman and Hall, 1867. Bagehot’s distinction between the “dignified” and “efficient” parts of the constitution (ch. I), and his observation that a constitution must suit its people (ch. II), remain foundational to the understanding of British constitutional practice. The fusion of powers - whereby the executive is drawn from and accountable to the legislature - enables the empirical trial-and-error correction across successive cabinets which a separation-of-powers constitution impedes.

⁵⁰Pius XII, *Allocutions to the Roman Patriciate and Nobility*, delivered between 1940 and 1958. Pius XII addressed the enduring mission of the nobility as a class defined not by privilege but by obligation: the duty of moral example, cultural stewardship, and service to the common good, rooted in the classical ordering of society into three estates (nobility, clergy, people).

closed caste that breeds corruption and resentment; too fluid, and it dissolves the inter-generational continuity on which cultural transmission depends (24a. Aristocratic Class). The English experience suggests the virtue of a middle course: as Starkey observes⁵¹, titled families historically rose and fell within three generations, while the system of aristocratic patronage and the educational mission of the Church were remarkably effective at identifying and elevating talent from any origin. Per Eliot⁵², the danger of *purely* meritocratic selection is that it extracts the most able from every community and concentrates them in a rootless metropolitan class, destroying the *philia* on which civic life depends. Per Polanyi⁵³ and Glasman⁵⁴, the remedy is to re-embed leadership in the life of communities rather than allowing it to float free as a purely financial class. This is 23. Ordo Amoris applied to governance: those who lead must be bound to the people and places they serve.

52. **Art of Government.** Contra de Stael⁵⁵, we affirm that the art of government is to secure the security of the people, discern public opinion, and further societal virtue in accordance with natural moral laws.

Rule of Law

53. **Law and Morality.** In affirming an objective standard of morality, we also affirm the overlap hypothesis - that law and morality are interrelated in a way not merely defined by convention. Per Finnis, we affirm that law derives its legitimacy from alignment with objective moral principles, though an unjust law may still bind practically⁵⁶. Per Dworkin, we emphasise that any judgement not entirely determined by precedent necessarily draws on moral philosophy to adjudicate⁵⁷; where the material facts differ, the judge must deliver “justice in the case” rather than mechanically applying precedent. In this way, law may be seen as “applied morality”.
54. **Rule of Law.** We assert the rule of law - that the state, populace and any person within its jurisdiction are governed by law, as opposed to the whims of the monarch or an oligarchy. A law with moral legitimacy may affect different people differently, but its enforcement must be applied without fear or favour, and without regard to the cultural background or community of origin of the accused.
55. **Common Law.** We emphasise the value of the English Common Law, which is organic and discerned during the administration of justice over generations. We contrast this with top-down Parliamentary legislation which too frequently overrides or codifies Common Law without clear evidence of unfairness or unworkability due to societal or technological changes.
56. **Anti-Legalism.** We decry the legalism which has become so dominant in the West, in particular the overreach of modern human rights law and codified constitutions, which has

⁵¹The observation that English titled families on average lasted only three generations is a recurring theme in Starkey’s work on Tudor social mobility. See Starkey, David, *Rivals in Power: Lives and Letters of the Great Tudor Dynasties*, Grove Weidenfeld, 1990, which illustrates both the fluidity of the English class system and the constant replenishment of the nobility by the gentry through cases like Charles Brandon’s rise from gentleman to duke.

⁵²Eliot, T.S., *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, Faber and Faber, 1948. Eliot argues that culture is not a separable product of conscious planning but the incarnation of a people’s deepest philosophical and religious commitments, transmitted primarily through the family and the organic structures of class, locality, and congregation.

⁵³Polanyi, Karl, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Farrar & Rinehart, 1944. Polanyi’s central thesis is that the attempt to create a self-regulating market - to “dis-embed” the economy from its social relations - is a utopian project which, when pursued, provokes a spontaneous counter-movement by society to protect itself from the destruction of its own foundations.

⁵⁴See Glasman, Maurice, *Blue Labour: The Politics of the Common Good*, Polity Press, 2022; and Glasman, M., Rutherford, J., Stears, M. & White, S. (eds.), *The Labour Tradition and the Politics of Paradox*, 2011. Glasman draws explicitly on Polanyi’s framework to argue that markets must be re-embedded in democratic and reciprocal social relations, and that leadership must be rooted in the life of communities rather than floating free as a rootless metropolitan class.

⁵⁵“The entire art of government in modern times, consists, according to Mme de Staël, in the art of directing public opinion and of yielding to it at the right moment.” (“CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA: Liberalism”).

⁵⁶John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (1980)

⁵⁷Ronald Dworkin, *Law’s Empire* (1986)

resulted in immoral and undemocratic outcomes⁵⁸. We assert that the legislative process should remain the remit of the legislature, which is able to draw on a wider range of evidence than a court. We distinguish the rule of *law* from the rule of *lawyers*: the proliferation of judicial review and the expansion of regulatory bodies with quasi-legislative powers have produced a class of unelected judges and regulators whose authority is effectively unchecked by democratic accountability.

Burkean Progressivism

57. **Conservatism.** The root of conservatism is the recognition that it is far easier to destroy than to create. Institutions, customs, and social trust are the slow accumulation of centuries and can be swept away in a generation. This is a genuine and important insight. However, conservatism as a political disposition suffers from a fundamental weakness: it has no positive vision. It can counsel caution, preservation, and restraint, but it cannot tell us where to go. A politics which can only say “slow down” is ultimately parasitic on the direction set by others, and in practice merely manages the pace of change rather than offering an alternative destination.
58. **Change.** We likewise affirm, per Bacon⁵⁹, ‘He that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils; for time is the greatest innovator.’ While human nature may not much change, circumstances and technologies do, and there are always new questions which must therefore be answered. Some change will always be needed.
59. **Progress.** Furthermore, we believe in the possibility and moral imperative of improving the lot of humanity, per 18. Moral Good and 23. Ordo Amoris . This is the fundamental call to “progress”. We do not view human, societal, or scientific progress as in any way inevitable or teleological, however (contra Hegel), and recognise its fragility and contingency on the will of individual members of society to further its cause. Likewise we recognise the relative fixity of human nature (9. Human Nature), and refute the utopian ideal of human “perfectibility”⁶⁰.
60. **Burkean Progressivism.** We term this synthesis of conservatism’s caution with the moral imperative of progress “Burkean Progressivism.” The epistemological foundations for this approach - trial-and-error over rationalist redesign, multi-generational sensitivity to change, Taleb’s *via negativa* - are established in 13. Limited Rationality and 12. Human Imperfection . Burkean Progressivism is not a compromise between left and right but a distinct orientation: the conviction that progress is both possible and obligatory, pursued through the patient, empirical methods that the complexity of human society demands.
61. **Beyond Left and Right.** We emphasise that the terms “left” and “right” are merely unhelpful hangovers from the physical seating arrangements of the revolutionary French National Assembly, and only serve to constrain political thinking. The libertarian-authoritarian axis is no improvement: it assumes the liberal premise that the fundamental political question is the balance between individual freedom and state power, when the real question is *what is the good and how do we pursue it* (18. Moral Good , 29. Limits of Liberalism). We propose a politics oriented not along an axis but toward a destination: human flourishing under natural law, pursued through Burkean trial and error (60. Burkean Progressivism). We therefore reclaim the word “progress” from those who have debased it. Progress, properly understood, is not the inevitable march of history toward a liberal utopia (contra Hegel), nor the dismantling of inherited structures in the name of emancipation, but the patient, empirical improvement of the conditions under which human beings can live well - an improvement measured against an objective standard of the good, not against the shifting fashions of the age. Progress is neither left nor right, but forward.

⁵⁸A prime example originates in Canada, where the Supreme Court’s charitable constitutional reading led it to mandate the legalisation of assisted dying, despite multiple democratic rejections.

⁵⁹Bacon, Francis, “Of Innovations,” *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral*, 1625, essay XXIV. “He that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils; for time is the greatest innovator.”

⁶⁰‘The belief in human perfectibility and inevitable moral progress no longer has credibility after Auschwitz and the Gulag Archipelago.’ (Alexander Rosenthal)

62. **Contra Revolution.** The above considerations refute revolutions⁶¹, and the “year zero” tendencies of Marxism (on the left) and populists like Curtis Yarvin on the right, both of whom seek to tear down and cast into doubt all institutions and traditions which have gone before as being suspect. In short, while we appreciate the need to replace tired bureaucracies with new entities, we must not “throw the baby out with the bathwater.”

The Role of the State

63. **Purpose of the State.** The state exists to do three things: to provide for the security of the nation, to mitigate systemic risks requiring a state-scaled response (67. Subsidiarity), and to provide a safety net for those most in need. These three, and no more. Per Weber⁶², the state holds the monopoly of legitimate violence, but this monopoly is instrumental, not absolute - it exists to secure the conditions under which families and communities can pursue the good, not to direct that pursuit. Where the state fails in this duty, or where conditions of disorder render it unable to protect its citizens, the right of self-defence remains with the people. The state exists to serve families, not the reverse. The socialist inversion - whereby the state usurps the family’s functions and claims priority over it - must be rejected.
64. **Anti-Totalitarianism.** A state which claims authority over all domains of life is illegitimate by definition. Totalitarianism - the doctrine that nothing falls outside the state’s concern - is the ultimate violation of 67. Subsidiarity : it denies the autonomy of family, community, church, and every intermediate institution between the individual and the state. As Taylor observed⁶³, ‘Until August 1914, a sensible, law-abiding Englishman could pass through life and hardly notice the existence of the state, beyond the post office and the policeman.’ By any reasonable definition, the modern British state is now near-total in its scope - through the incremental accretion of regulation, surveillance, and institutional overreach, and through the pathologies of “everythingism” (65. State Restraint) and “measurementism” (66. Measurementism) described below. The remedy is not the libertarian abolition of the state but the restoration of the “sovereign family” and the organic institutions of civil society as the primary agents of human formation and flourishing, with the state as their servant and guarantor, not their master.
65. **State Restraint.** The state need not have a position on everything. The impulse to legislate, regulate, and measure every domain of human activity - “everythingism” - is itself a pathology, born of the rationalist conceit that social problems yield to top-down design (15. Trial and Error , 13. Limited Rationality). We prefer the common law tradition of tort - where rights and remedies are discovered through the resolution of actual disputes - to the Napoleonic approach of pre-emptive codification, which presumes to anticipate every contingency and in doing so smothers the organic, empirical process by which just outcomes are actually reached (55. Common Law , 15. Trial and Error). Welfare must function as a safety net, not a ladder - preserving the dignity and agency of those it supports, not creating dependency. The state is the last resort, not the first.
66. **Against Measurementism.** Per Scott⁶⁴, the modern state requires “legibility” - the simplification of complex social realities into categories it can measure and manipulate. This legibility destroys *mētis*: the practical, tacit, local knowledge and informal processes that keep complex systems alive. Bottom-up, informal systems patch up and make viable top-down formal systems - a high-trust society is one such informal system - and the drive to measure

⁶¹A more detailed exposition on revolutions is needed which explores the empirically manifest failures of the French and American revolutions.

⁶²Weber, Max, “Politics as a Vocation” (*Politik als Beruf*), 1919; in Gerth, H.H. & Mills, C.W. (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, OUP, 1946. Weber defines the state as the entity which “successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.”

⁶³Taylor, A.J.P., *English History 1914-1945*, OUP, 1965, p. 1. Taylor’s famous opening sentence captures the pre-war relationship between the citizen and the state, before the expansions of the twentieth century.

⁶⁴Scott, *Seeing Like a State* (1998). The core lesson is that statistics do not capture many patterns in a system; incentivising statistics thus incentivises the destruction of those patterns. Scott terms the tacit, practical knowledge which sustains complex systems *mētis* - the informal, experience-based understanding which formal legibility necessarily destroys. Most order is generated bottom-up by informal systems, not top-down by formal systems.

and formalise everything corrodes precisely these foundations. The result is a Procrustean bed⁶⁵ which narrows the scope and variety of human existence. GDP is the paradigm case: a metric which counts economic activity but is blind to quality of life, community cohesion, leisure, beauty, or the strength of family bonds. The result is “spreadsheet sociopathy” - policy driven by quantifiable targets rather than human judgement. The balance required is sufficient visibility to enforce law and provide a safety net for the most vulnerable, and no more.

Institutional Design

67. **Subsidiarity.** Power must be delegated to the lowest level of social organisation capable of exercising it effectively. This principle, anticipated by Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* and given its explicit formulation by Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno*⁶⁶, follows from 13. Limited Rationality and 15. Trial and Error : central authorities are necessarily ignorant of local conditions, and the attempt to govern complexity from above stifles the organic adaptation on which healthy societies depend. The complex systems concept of multi-scale requisite variety formalises this: different problems exist at different scales, and require solutions at matching scales - you cannot hit a bacterium, and you cannot use white blood cells to stop a bullet. Higher authorities exist to coordinate and support lower-level communities, not to dominate them - as the heart exists to serve the body, and the body sustains the heart. Subsidiarity must be reinforced by a mechanism through which powers can be pulled back down from higher levels when desired or needed; without this, delegation becomes mere decentralisation of a centralised will.
68. **Fractal Localism.** Decentralisation enables parallel 15. Trial and Error across localities - an evolutionary optimisation process in which diverse approaches are tried, successful ones are copied, and failed ones are abandoned without imperilling the whole. The complex systems foundations are fourfold: (a) complex patterns emerge from local interactions among components following simple rules; (b) central control is rapidly swamped in the face of complexity, stifling organic adaptation - this is equally true of economic planning, where dispersed knowledge can only be integrated through price signals (Smith, Hayek), not central direction; (c) behavioural independence across localities yields thin tails at the macro level, reducing systemic risk; (d) problems, challenges, and disturbances are structured at multiple scales, and human social systems must be similarly structured to meet them. This localism is fractal: cultures converge in similarity by proximity, mirroring 23. Ordo Amoris and the bonds of 38. Philia . It is boundaries - partially permeable, not impenetrable - which allow distinct entities to diverge and develop their own local cultures⁶⁷. Placelessness is a symptom of overconnection: the “small world networks” produced by modern transport, media, and the internet dissolve the local bonds on which 38. Philia depends, producing the atomisation, rootlessness, and loss of community we observe today. However, the re-embedding of culture in place⁶⁸ cannot be accomplished by state fiat - it must grow organically from the restoration of local autonomy and the boundaries that make it possible.

⁶⁵Scott, *Seeing Like a State* (1998). The core lesson is that statistics do not capture many patterns in a system; incentivising statistics thus incentivises the destruction of those patterns. Scott terms the tacit, practical knowledge which sustains complex systems *mētis* - the informal, experience-based understanding which formal legibility necessarily destroys. Most order is generated bottom-up by informal systems, not top-down by formal systems.

⁶⁶The principle of subsidiarity was anticipated by Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* (1891), which affirmed the organic structure of society and the autonomy of intermediate institutions between the individual and the state. The explicit formulation of subsidiarity as a principle came from Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), para. 79: “Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organisations can do.”

⁶⁷Holland, John H., *Signals and Boundaries: Building Blocks for Complex Adaptive Systems*, MIT Press, 2012. Holland’s framework establishes that boundaries - partially permeable, not impenetrable - are the precondition for the emergence of distinct, adaptive agents within complex systems. Without boundaries, distinct entities cannot diverge, develop, or maintain their identity.

⁶⁸Polanyi, Karl, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Farrar & Rinehart, 1944. Polanyi’s central thesis is that the attempt to create a self-regulating market - to “dis-embed” the economy from its social relations - is a utopian project which, when pursued, provokes a spontaneous counter-movement by society to protect itself from the destruction of its own foundations.

69. **Feedback Loops.** Institutions must be designed for error correction, not permanence. The British constitutional tradition - uncodified, common-law-based, with a fusion of powers enabling course correction across successive cabinets (46. Fusion of Powers) - has historically excelled at this. The question is not whether mistakes will be made but whether the institutional architecture allows them to be detected and corrected before they become catastrophic. Rigidity is the enemy: codified constitutions, entrenched bureaucracies, and supranational legal frameworks all impede the capacity for self-correction by making 58. Change prohibitively difficult regardless of the evidence against the status quo.
70. **Incentive Engineering.** Given 9. Human Nature and 12. Human Imperfection , policy must be designed around the realities of incentive rather than the rationalist presumption that behaviour can be reshaped by decree. This requires a reverence for causation and the science of causality - understanding, without vanity or ideological interest, how effects are actually produced. The state's role is not to prescribe outcomes but to shape the conditions and incentives under which families, communities, and enterprises can pursue the good on their own terms.
71. **Democratic Legibility.** Rules, rulers, and the democratic process must be legible to the citizens they govern. Per 45. Constitutional Monarchy , the best polity combines monarchical, aristocratic, and democratic elements, each correcting the pathology of the others - but this self-correcting balance depends on the governed being able to understand, influence, and hold their institutions to account. The enmeshing of national governance in opaque global frameworks of ever-increasing complexity - sprawling international agreements, supranational courts, unaccountable regulatory bodies - erodes this accountability and serves to perpetuate a global NGO and bureaucratic class whose interests diverge from those of the peoples they claim to represent.
72. **Universal Morality, Local Ethics.** Our morality is universal (18. Moral Good), but our ethics and customs are thoroughly local and particular to the heritage and dispositions of any given people, where peoples are aggregates of families. Epistemic humility (13. Limited Rationality) requires that we allow for variation in the concrete expression of shared moral principles across communities and traditions. This follows from 67. Subsidiarity : the good is objective, but the forms of life through which it is pursued are properly diverse.

Political Economy

73. **Political Economy as Moral Philosophy.** Economics is inseparable from moral philosophy: the allocation of scarce resources is inescapably a moral question. The separation of economics from philosophy and politics - the tendency of modern PPE graduates to drop the economics (Ball and Greenway, *Bluffocracy*⁶⁹), and of modern economists to drop the philosophy - has impoverished both disciplines. Markets cannot be regulated by the state alone; they require the discipline of culture, societal norms, and moral philosophy to function in the service of 18. Moral Good rather than against it.
74. **Morality of Prosperity.** Material prosperity enables human flourishing. Per 20. Prosperity , the advance of prosperity - the furthered ability of all people to attain the goods of life, health, family, knowledge, and rational living - is a moral good by our definition. Many of Finnis' Seven Goods are much easier to attain, and much harder to be prevented from attaining, with increased material prosperity. This does not reduce the good to the material: prosperity is a necessary condition of flourishing, not a sufficient one, and must not be pursued at the expense of higher goods.

⁶⁹Ball, James and Greenway, Andrew, *Bluffocracy*, Biteback Publishing, 2018. Ball and Greenway argue that the modern British governing class is characterised by the ability to bluff convincingly rather than by genuine expertise, a consequence of the separation of politics from both technical knowledge and practical experience.

75. **Rule of Law and the Economy.** No market can function without [54. Rule of Law](#). The enforcement of contracts, the protection of [31. Property](#), the adjudication of disputes through [55. Common Law](#) - these are the preconditions of economic activity, not optional extras. Trust between strangers - the foundation of trade beyond the immediate circle of [38. Philia](#) - depends on the confidence that agreements will be honoured and that fraud will be punished. It is no accident that the nations with the strongest traditions of rule of law are also the most prosperous: law and commerce are not separate domains but expressions of the same underlying commitment to rational, predictable, good-faith dealing. Corruption - the capture of state power for private benefit, the breakdown of the separation between public duty and private interest - is the acid that dissolves this foundation. Where the ruling class treats its position as a means of extraction rather than service ([51. Aristocracy](#)), and where the law ceases to be applied without fear or favour ([54. Rule of Law](#)), economic life degenerates into rent-seeking and the economy serves the connected, not the common good.
76. **High Trust.** High trust is the invisible infrastructure of a functioning economy. In a society bound by [38. Philia](#) and shared [21. Virtue](#), you do not cheat your neighbour because he is married to your best friend's sister - the social fabric itself enforces fair dealing without regulation. The posted price can be trusted without negotiation; contracts can be sealed with a handshake; commerce flows on the assumption of good faith. These tacit processes are what make the system work. Specialisation, globalisation, and atomisation break these bonds down, and the state is then forced to attempt, via *positiva*, what the social fabric once accomplished organically - through consumer protection law, trading standards, financial regulation, and an ever-expanding compliance bureaucracy. But this is a losing battle with enormous side-effects of its own ([66. Measurementism](#), [65. State Restraint](#)): regulation breeds complexity, complexity breeds opacity, opacity breeds the very distrust it was meant to cure. [68. Fractal Localism](#) ultimately wins, even where on the surface it appears less efficient, because it preserves the conditions under which trust is naturally sustained.
77. **Circular Economy.** The local economy is inherently circular: when you buy from your neighbour, your money improves his garden, which improves your view; when the local aristocracy ([51. Aristocracy](#)) prospers, it opens and maintains the church, the theatre, the school - its gain is your gain, because its members are rooted in the same place and bound by the same bonds of [38. Philia](#). This is the opposite of extraction, where wealth flows to a rootless class with no obligation to the communities from which it was drawn. The economic case for [68. Fractal Localism](#) is ultimately the same as the social case: rooted communities, where gain is shared and obligations are mutual, produce a quality of life that no amount of aggregate GDP can replicate.
78. **Commons Governance.** In some settings, neither market nor state is effective - particularly where common pool resources have no single owner and individual incentives lead to overexploitation. Per Ostrom⁷⁰, communities are capable of coordinating their behaviour to govern shared resources through locally devised rules, monitoring, and graduated sanctions (CPR Design Principles). This is [67. Subsidiarity](#) applied to resource management. Much of what sustains a complex system is tacit - the *mētis* described in [66. Measurementism](#) - and the imposition of either market or state logic on these organic arrangements destroys the very thing it seeks to optimise. The converse pathology - privatised gains and socialised losses - is addressed under [85. Skin in the Game](#).
79. **Responsible Free Enterprise.** The freedom to engage in enterprise is an expression of [11. Free Will](#) - the natural liberty to deploy one's talents and property in pursuit of the good. Free enterprise is [60. Burkean Progressivism](#) applied to economics: the stable institutional and moral framework enables bold experimentation within it. Smith's invisible hand, Schumpeter's creative destruction⁷¹ - these are [15. Trial and Error](#) at the economic scale. The

⁷⁰Ostrom, Elinor, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, Cambridge UP, 1990. Ostrom demonstrated empirically that communities are capable of governing shared resources through locally devised rules, monitoring, and graduated sanctions, refuting the assumption that common pool resources inevitably lead to tragedy without either privatisation or state control.

⁷¹Schumpeter, Joseph A., *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, Harper & Brothers, 1942. Schumpeter's "creative destruction" - the process by which new innovations render old ones obsolete - is the mechanism through which free enterprise drives

entrepreneur who fails does not bring down the state; freedom to try, fail, and try again is how practical progress is made. This freedom requires [21. Virtue](#) in its exercise. We reject the socialist principle, which supposes that economic activity can best be directed by the state. We equally reject the libertarian principle, which supposes that the free market is exclusively a force for good - markets which do not account for social externalities produce private gains at the cost of social losses.

80. **The Price Signal.** Given [13. Limited Rationality](#), no central authority can possess the knowledge necessary to direct economic activity. Per Hayek⁷², the price system is the only mechanism capable of integrating dispersed knowledge into coherent signals for action - prices aggregate what no planner could know. Where price signals are suppressed, distorted, or overridden by state intervention, the result is misallocation of resources, shortages, and the destruction of the [69. Feedback Loops](#) on which economic coordination depends. The degradation of the price signal in modern Britain - through subsidy, regulation, monetary manipulation, and the insulation of public services from the disciplines of cost - is a significant cause of economic dysfunction.
81. **Contra Fascism.** Per Mussolini and Gentile⁷³, fascism is the doctrine that ‘everything is within the state, nothing is outside the state, nothing is against the state.’ In its economic expression, fascism maintains nominal private ownership of the means of production while directing economic activity through state diktat - regulation, subsidy, mandate, and the selective application of law. This is distinct from socialism, which at least has the honesty to claim ownership of what it directs. Much of modern Western economic policy is, by this definition, functionally fascist: companies are nominally private but are told what to produce, whom to hire, what to say, and how to price, with the state bearing none of the risk of the decisions it imposes. This violates [79. Free Enterprise](#), [65. State Restraint](#), and [80. Price Signal](#) simultaneously. The proper role of the state in the economy is to maintain the framework - rule of law, sound money, contract enforcement, defence against predatory practices - not to direct the activity within it.
82. **Free Trade and Strategic Autonomy.** Free trade is the default position, grounded in Ricardo’s theory of comparative advantage⁷⁴: nations prosper by specialising in what they produce most efficiently and trading freely with others. We affirm this as both economically sound and consistent with [41. National Interest](#). However, some industries - energy, defence materials, critical infrastructure - are strategically vital to national security and cannot be left entirely to market logic. The balance is between the efficiency of specialisation and the robustness of autarky: over-specialisation creates fragility, and the management of systemic risk is precisely the kind of state-scaled intervention justified by [63. Purpose of the State](#). Protection against dumping and predatory trade practices is likewise a legitimate exception, not protectionism.
83. **Contra Globalism.** The cultural case against globalism is established in [39. Contra Globalisation](#); here we address its economic expression. We distinguish internationalism - the voluntary cooperation of sovereign nations in pursuit of mutual benefit - from globalism: the dis-embedding of markets from social relations. Per Polanyi⁷⁵, markets which are dis-embedded from the societies they serve treat human beings as

material progress.

⁷²Hayek, F.A., “The Use of Knowledge in Society,” *American Economic Review* 35:4, 1945. Hayek’s central insight is that the knowledge required for economic coordination is dispersed among millions of individuals and is largely tacit - knowledge of “the particular circumstances of time and place” which no central authority could possess. The price system is the only mechanism capable of aggregating this dispersed knowledge into signals for action.

⁷³The doctrine “everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state” was articulated by Mussolini in a speech of October 1925 and developed in Mussolini, B. & Gentile, G., *The Doctrine of Fascism*, 1932.

⁷⁴Ricardo, David, *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*, 1817, ch. 7. Ricardo’s theory of comparative advantage demonstrates that trade benefits all parties even when one is more efficient at producing every good, because each gains by specialising in what it produces at lowest relative cost.

⁷⁵Polanyi, Karl, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Farrar & Rinehart, 1944. Polanyi’s central thesis is that the attempt to create a self-regulating market - to “dis-embed” the economy from its social relations - is a utopian project which, when pursued, provokes a spontaneous counter-movement by society to protect itself from the destruction of its own foundations.

interchangeable inputs to be optimised, producing alienation and instability. The commodification of labour - whether through mass immigration, the outsourcing of entire industries, or the subordination of local communities to global capital flows - treats people as fungible economic units in violation of [37. Distinctiveness](#) and [38. Philia](#) . The economic case against globalism is ultimately the same as the cultural case: both follow from the recognition that human beings are not commodities, and that an economy which treats them as such will destroy the social fabric on which its own functioning depends ([76. High Trust](#)).

Ethics

The principles below are applied ethical conclusions derived from the philosophical framework established in the preceding chapters. They are not policy prescriptions but ethical principles that inform policy.

Applied Ethics

84. **The Silver Rule.** Per Taleb⁷⁶, we affirm the Silver Rule - “do not do unto others what you would not have them do unto you” - as the primary ethical heuristic. The Golden Rule (“do unto others as you would have them do unto you”) suffers from a fundamental defect: it projects one’s own preferences onto others, licensing moral imperialism by those who are convinced they know what is good for everyone. The Kantian Categorical Imperative suffers from a related defect: it does not observe scaling - what is appropriate between individuals may be catastrophic between nations, and what is virtuous in a family may be ruinous in a state (67. Subsidiarity). The Silver Rule, being subtractive rather than additive, scales naturally: “do not steal” applies equally to the individual, the corporation, and the state. This aligns with 15. Trial and Error and Taleb’s via negativa⁷⁷: removal of harm is safer, more scalable, and more universalisable than the imposition of positive good. The Silver Rule also grounds our accommodation of difference (29. Limits of Liberalism): we can agree on what should *not* be done more readily than on what *should* be done. The limit of this accommodation is harder to define - but the existence of a hard case does not invalidate the principle.
85. **Skin in the Game.** Per Taleb⁷⁸, those who make decisions must bear the consequences of those decisions. The separation of decision-making from its consequences - privatised gains and socialised losses - is not merely inefficient but morally corrosive: it rewards recklessness, punishes prudence, and severs the 69. Feedback Loops on which learning depends. This principle is most powerful as a constraint on elites (51. Aristocracy), not on ordinary citizens: the banker who profits from risk but is bailed out by the taxpayer, the politician who advocates war but never fights, the regulator who imposes costs he will never bear - these are violations of a basic moral symmetry. Capital which is divorced from place and community (51. Aristocracy , 68. Fractal Localism) is not affected by the social externalities of its own decisions - the environmental degradation, the wage suppression, the erosion of community - and therefore has no incentive to account for them. Skin in the game is the corrective: those who bear the consequences will weigh them. Skin in the game also reduces the pathology of 66. Measurementism : those who are close to the consequences of their decisions (67. Subsidiarity , 68. Fractal Localism) are less likely to govern by spreadsheet and more likely to exercise the practical judgement - *mētis* - that complex situations demand.
86. **The Immortal Act.** All human actions are part of a permanent continuum with unknowable and infinitely far-reaching consequences. No act is truly isolated; every decision ripples outward through time in ways that can never be fully anticipated. It is from this recognition that the deepest justification for 18. Moral Good takes its force: if all acts are immortal, then all acts must be subject to the guidance of moral reasoning, so as to maximise their probable benefit and limit their prospective harm. The practical corollary is a presumption in favour of reversibility and optionality: irreversible changes - demographic, constitutional,

⁷⁶Taleb, Nassim Nicholas, *Skin in the Game: Hidden Asymmetries in Daily Life*, Random House, 2018. Taleb’s core principle is that those who bear the consequences of their decisions make better decisions, and that the separation of decision-making from consequences - privatised gains and socialised losses - is the root of systemic fragility and moral hazard.

⁷⁷Taleb, Nassim Nicholas, *Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder*, Random House, 2012. Taleb’s “via negativa” principle holds that removal of harm is safer, more robust, and more universalisable than the addition of positive intervention, because subtractive actions carry fewer unintended consequences. This has direct epistemological implications: we learn more reliably from what fails than from what succeeds, and the accumulation of knowledge through the elimination of error is the characteristic method of both science and prudent statecraft.

⁷⁸Taleb, Nassim Nicholas, *Skin in the Game: Hidden Asymmetries in Daily Life*, Random House, 2018. Taleb’s core principle is that those who bear the consequences of their decisions make better decisions, and that the separation of decision-making from consequences - privatised gains and socialised losses - is the root of systemic fragility and moral hazard.

cultural - carry a moral burden that reversible ones do not, precisely because their consequences cannot be undone if they prove harmful (40. Stewardship). Mass immigration as irreversible demographic change, and legal complexity as a regulatory ratchet that reduces future freedom, are both instances of this principle.

Culture and Character

87. **Importance of Symbol.** Human beings are creatures of meaning, not merely of material need. Symbols, rituals, and pageantry are not ornamental additions to social life but essential instruments of cohesion, continuity, and moral elevation. Per Scruton⁷⁹, they serve three functions: they bind a community to shared identity, they connect the present to the past and future (reinforcing 40. Stewardship), and they elevate human life above the merely transactional. The erosion of national symbols, the desacralisation of public life, and the reduction of all value to the economic are symptoms of a civilisation that has lost contact with the sources of its own meaning.
88. **Beauty.** Per 16. Goodness , beauty is a transcendental of being - the radiance of rational order, the quality by which form, proportion, and harmony become perceptible and move us. Beauty in the built environment is therefore not a luxury but a public good: architecture is a public art form, and the uglification of public space is an act of violence against the spirit of a people. Per Scruton⁸⁰, the deliberate pursuit of ugliness in modern architecture is a form of moral vandalism. We affirm the European tradition of leisure - *otium* - as essential to human flourishing: a prosperous society is one in which citizens have the time, resources, and cultural formation to live well, not merely to produce and consume. The reduction of life to wage slavery and economic output is a degradation of the human person, not an expression of prosperity.
89. **Virtue Gardening.** The success of any society is determined chiefly by the moral character of its average individual and the standard of individual conduct. Per Burke⁸¹, ‘Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other’ - leadership must exemplify the virtues it expects of citizens. The state’s role in moral formation is that of the gardener, not the engineer: it cultivates the conditions under which 21. Virtue can grow - through education, public institutions, and the maintenance of a moral culture - but it cannot manufacture virtue by decree. This is 60. Burkean Progressivism applied to character: the formation of moral citizens is the slow work of generations, transmitted through 32. Family , community, and the living example of those who lead (51. Aristocracy , 90. Willingness to Serve).
90. **Willingness to Serve.** The highest human activity is service to a purpose beyond oneself. All great acts derive, ultimately, from the willingness to serve - the drive toward an end that transcends personal material incentive. The living of a great life requires the sacrifice of ease for the fulfilment of more profound missions; restraint, abnegation, and the subordination of personal interest must be practised in the name of honour and duty. This is 17. Natural Hierarchy and 22. Moral Equality applied to conduct: the higher one’s position, the greater the obligation to serve (51. Aristocracy), but the principle applies at every level of society. We affirm the dignity of work and the claim of contribution over abstract claims of need or equality.

⁷⁹Scruton, Roger, *Beauty: A Very Short Introduction*, OUP, 2009. Scruton argues that beauty is not merely subjective preference but a real value, and that the deliberate pursuit of ugliness in modern architecture and art is a form of moral vandalism which degrades public life.

⁸⁰Scruton, Roger, *Beauty: A Very Short Introduction*, OUP, 2009. Scruton argues that beauty is not merely subjective preference but a real value, and that the deliberate pursuit of ugliness in modern architecture and art is a form of moral vandalism which degrades public life.

⁸¹Burke, Edmund, *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, Letter I, 1796. “Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other.”

Applied Positions

91. **Ethics of Immigration.** The ethical treatment of immigration follows from principles already established. Per [37. Distinctiveness](#), the people of a nation are not interchangeable with others from without. Per [38. Philia](#), social cohesion depends on cultural commonality. Per [40. Stewardship](#), no generation has the right to fundamentally and irreversibly transform the demographic character of the national inheritance. Per [86. The Immortal Act](#), mass immigration is an irreversible change whose long-term consequences cannot be known. We observe that mass low-skilled immigration suppresses wages for those least able to bear it, replaces investment in automation and productivity with cheap labour, inflicts brain drain on the nations of origin, and erodes the [76. High Trust](#) on which a functioning society depends. We reject identity-based oppression narratives which seek to delegitimise these concerns by casting them as racial hostility. Our position is grounded in the [84. Silver Rule](#), not in hostility: we would not wish upon another people what mass immigration inflicts upon our own.

92. **Historical Reverence.** Consider the great civilisations - from the Confucian dynasties to the peaks of Vedic civilisation, from Hellenistic Greece to the heights of British achievement - and a common pattern emerges: all believed themselves inheritors of rich histories to which they owed reverence and a duty of custodianship ([40. Stewardship](#)), and all believed that these inherited histories were to be built upon and made a motor of future progress ([60. Burkean Progressivism](#)). They were at once the most historically literate and the most forward-thinking civilisations. Britain, if it wishes to be a protagonist of this century and the next, must do likewise: refresh its literacy of its monumental past and stand upon that high ground to reach its newest pinnacle.

Capstone

93. **The Philosophical Vacuum.** The philosophical bedrock laid out in this document - realist metaphysics, objective morality, the family and nation as natural institutions, Burkean Progressivism as method - is absent from British political life. No existing party possesses or articulates a coherent philosophical foundation. The consequences are visible: policy by opinion poll, moral paralysis dressed as tolerance, institutions which have forgotten their purpose, an elite severed from the communities it governs, and a people increasingly aware that something fundamental is missing but unable to name it. The general ignorance of philosophy and theology which this document identifies as a profound crisis ([4. Anti-Relativism](#)) has left the political class unable to reason about the good, and therefore unable to pursue it.
94. **The New Synthesis.** This framework is not the property of any existing political tradition. It is more conservative than any conservative party, in its insistence on the reality of essences, the sanctity of inheritance, and the primacy of organic community over the managerial state. It is more progressive than any party which claims that label: it demands moral equality, affirms the sanctity of every human life, and grounds both in the metaphysics that historically gave rise to universities, hospitals, and the abolition of slavery - achievements of a civilisation that took these principles seriously. It gives conservation of the environment coherent philosophical roots in [40. Stewardship](#) , where the Greens treat it as a policy preference disconnected from any broader account of what we are conserving and why. It is stronger on community than the original Labour movement - which opposed mass immigration precisely because of its wage effects and social externalities on working people, and understood that it was a tool of capital to secure cheap labour without bearing the social costs. It is stronger on the dignity of human life than Labour, which passes laws permitting euthanasia and infanticide while claiming to be progressive. It is stronger on borders and national identity than Reform, because our case rests not on sentiment but on the metaphysics of [38. Philia](#) , [37. Distinctiveness](#) , and [40. Stewardship](#) . This is not a position on the left-right spectrum. It is a position above it.
95. **The Call to Progress.** This is why a new political philosophy - and a party to embody it - is needed. Not to impose an ideology, but to restore the conditions under which a free people can reason together about the good and pursue it through the patient, empirical methods that human flourishing demands. We seek not to manage decline but to build: to recover what has been lost, to conserve what remains, and to advance toward what could be. Progress is neither left nor right, but forward.