

# The Sociopolitical Spectrum, Part I

## Ideology is a Secondary Factor in Defining the Sociopolitical Spectrum

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Journal of Orgonomy, Vol 35 no. 1  
The American College of Orgonomy

Dr. Baker's classic exposition, "The Sociopolitical Character Types" (1:153-198) has never been surpassed. 1 This was orgonomy's first attempt to scientifically address sociopolitical character types and Baker himself stated, "I do not presume to have the last word in understanding the sociopolitical character, but I believe this is at least a start" (1:158). This article will discuss revisions to Baker's original formulation that have resulted from new discoveries over the last three decades.

The sociopolitical character types are highly significant in orgonomic sociology because almost every event in the social realm is determined, to a great degree, by interrelationships between the different sociopolitical character types. For example, a complete understanding of history is impossible without knowing accurately the sociopolitical character type of each of the major participants involved. 2

Baker originally postulated a spectrum of nine sociopolitical characters from left to right:

LEFT RIGHT

i. the communist

ii. the socialist

iii. the modern liberal

iv. the true liberal

v. the unarmored character ("ideal health")

vi. the conservative

vii. the extreme conservative

viii. the reactionary

ix. the fascist

LEFT

RIGHT

Konia has pointed out that, contrary to the above schema, the modern liberal is, functionally, to the left of the socialist, and that the communist is a sub-type of the modern liberal (2). In other words, the communist is simply a modern liberal who, because of the environment in which he finds himself, espouses one specific type of modern liberal ideology (communism).

Baker's error, separating the modern liberal from the communist and placing him to the right of the socialist, was likely due to a persistent tendency in humanity's view of sociopolitical character: the tendency to use an individual's ideology as the basis for evaluation of his functioning. Baker had gone a long way toward eliminating this tendency when he stated that sociopolitical character type was protoplasmically based (3). The excerpt from "The Sociopolitical Character Types" in this issue of the Journal, which consists primarily of those parts of Baker's comments that are not based on descriptions of ideology, also shows how far he was able to progress in his efforts to go beyond ideology. However, in the preliminary state of his investigation it was not possible to completely overcome ideologically based descriptions. Baker was specifically handicapped in not having at his disposal certain organometric equations, which in subsequent years have enabled a deeper understanding and distinction of the bioenergetic realms of perception and excitation. We can consider the limitations of Baker's approach under two headings:

An incomplete formulation of the difference between the biophysical structure of the liberal and that of the conservative.

An inaccurate picture of the subtypes of the liberal and conservative structure, especially the difference between the true liberal and the modern liberal.

## **The Difference Between the Liberal and Conservative Biophysical Structures**

Baker (1:154--5) differentiated between two types of structure:

1. Those on the left whose defenses "against feeling" are primarily intellectual.
2. Those on the right whose defenses "against feeling" are primarily muscular.

These definitions are approximately correct, and Baker's formulation further specified that the liberal's intellectual defense is one "where the individual largely or wholly succeeds in losing contact with his core, enabling him to live primarily in the superficial layer of his structure." In clinical practice, the medical orgonomist can often apply the above definitions by using his own subjective perceptions to discern when an individual's sociopolitical structure is an obstacle to progress in therapy and whether that structure is liberal or conservative. This, of course, assumes that the orgonomist has adequate contact with the patient. In such cases, the orgonomist sometimes describes his subjective experience of the patient by saying, for example:

1. "This patient (a liberal) lives primarily in his head and is cut off from contact with his core."

2. "That patient (a conservative) lives primarily in his musculature and maintains contact, albeit distorted, with his core."

However, it has proved difficult to use Baker's formulation to objectify one's subjective observations of sociopolitical character type. In clinical practice, one sometimes misidentifies sociopolitical character type, especially when the type is not extreme. For example, one female patient related in such an intellectual way that her physician concluded that mild characterological liberalism was blocking her aggression. Her way of dealing with a subsequent crisis in her family, however, showed that she was a biophysical conservative. It then became clear that armoring in her jaw had propagated upwards to the head, blocking her affect. Furthermore, her occupational, family and ethnic backgrounds all encouraged intellectualization, which this patient, a suggestible hysteric, adopted as a manner of running away from her feelings. Loosening of the armor in the jaw dissolved the intellectual defense.

The difficulty in objectifying liberal versus conservative structure has sometimes resulted in elaborating informal rules of thumb, such as:

1. "Conservatives have more muscular armor than liberals."
2. "Liberals live a thinking existence, whereas conservatives live a feeling existence."

Such rules miss the mark, as shown by the case described above and by the following more general considerations:

1. Some liberals have an enormous amount of muscular armor. The "stiffness" of certain liberal and modern liberal politicians, from Brezhnev to Al Gore, has been much remarked upon in the popular press.
2. Some conservatives can do a tremendous amount of thinking. Has the human race produced anyone capable of as much (and as intense) thinking as Nietzsche? James Burnham would be another example of a

conservative who expressed himself extensively and intensively in thinking.

This is not to deny that the "stiffness" of the extreme liberal is somehow different from that of the conservative, in a way that one can feel. Similarly, the "thinking" of the liberal is different from that of the conservative. Subjectively, a trained observer can often recognize these differences and can, at least partially, describe them in qualitative terms. However, Baker's original formulation does not make it possible to describe such differences objectively. Functional thinking requires us to first understand the qualities of nature subjectively. When the qualitative understanding of a natural process reaches a certain point, then ways to objectify our observations become obvious. For example, once Reich noticed a consistent, subjective feeling of "heat" coming from the inside walls of a functioning orgone energy accumulator, he was able to devise a way to objectify its functioning with a thermometer.

In summary, the qualitative description of the difference between liberal and conservative which existed at the time of Burnham and Baker was not sufficiently accurate to permit a complete, functional objectification. Burnham's detailed analysis of the ideology of the liberal was a brilliant attempt to develop a description of how the liberal functions, using the only objective tool available at the time: observed ideology. Burnham was able to develop a list of 19 specific ideological statements which could be used as an objective "measure" of whether an individual was a liberal or not. He found that liberals would typically identify all 19 statements as being obviously true, whereas "non-liberals" would identify perhaps 7 or 8 of the statements as false. This method of objectification is like that of the cardiologist, who does not yet have a complete understanding of the nature of the cardiac biopathy, and uses a secondary measure, such as serum cholesterol, to identify that biopathy. Such a measure is often accurate, sometimes inaccurate, useful for further exploration, but incomplete.

## **Ideology, Thinking and Perception**

Despite its limitations, Burnham's description of the "doctrinal dimension" of liberalism, did contain the germ of a deeper approach, as can be seen by examining the following table (4:125-7) which contains the first three of his list of 19 "liberal beliefs" on the left and three "possible contraries," i.e., beliefs not based on liberalism on the right:

<p><b>L1)</b> Human nature is changing and plastic, with an indefinite potential for progressive development, and no innate obstacles to the realization of the good society of peace, justice, freedom and wellbeing.</p>	<p><b>X1)</b> Human nature exhibits constant as well as changing attributes. It is at least partially defective or corrupt intrinsically, and thus limited in its potential for progressive development; in particular incapable of realizing the good society of peace, justice, freedom and well-being.</p>
<p><b>L2)</b> Human beings are basically rational; reason and science are the only proper means for discovering truth and are the sole standard of truth, to which authority, custom, intuition, revelation, etc., must give way.</p>	<p><b>X2)</b> Human beings are moved by sentiment, passion, intuition and other non-rational impulses at least as much as by reason. Any view of man, history and society that neglects the non-rational impulses and their embodiment in custom, prejudice, tradition and authority, or that conceives of a social order in which the non-rational impulses and their embodiments are wholly subject to abstract reason, is an illusion.</p>
<p><b>L3)</b> The obstacles to progress and the achievement of the good society are ignorance and faulty social institutions.</p>	<p><b>X3)</b> Besides ignorance and faulty social institutions there are many other obstacles to progress and the achievement of the good society; some rooted in the biological, psychological, moral and spiritual nature of man; some, in the difficulties of the terrestrial environment; others, in the intransigence of nature; still others, derived from man's loneliness in the material universe.</p>

A comparison of the liberal doctrines versus the non-liberal contraries, shows that the difference is not merely one of ideas, but of the type of thought. The liberal ideology, as described by Burnham, represents an extreme limitation in the capacity for thought in which one attempts to think along the lines of the

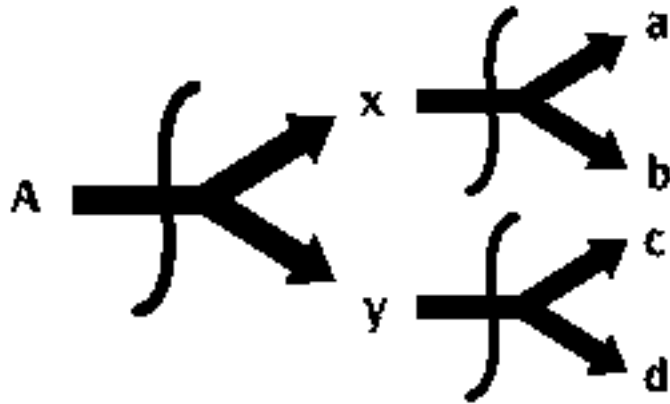
infinite capacity for new development while lacking an ability to think back toward the roots of things and to be aware of the limitations (natural law) which result from those roots.

Conservative thought has limitations of its own, but because liberalism has been the dominant ideology for so long, it is hard to find a pure example of rigid conservative thought from a contemporary mainstream social thinker. <sup>3</sup> To find a satisfactory example, I had to go back to the beginning of the Enlightenment (1688) when the following doctrine was held by five of the most respected bishops of the Church of England (including the Archbishop of Canterbury), in protest against the perfectly appropriate replacement of King James II by his brother-in-law, William III:

The king (chosen by the traditional laws of genealogical descent) rules by Divine Right and cannot legitimately be replaced. If the King is evil or incompetent, if he is damaging the nation, and even persecuting the Church, this must be endured as a punishment of the nation, by God, for its sins.

This type of ideological thought is the exact opposite of liberalism. It attempts to move back toward the root of things (God) while being unable to make contact with the capacity of functions for development. In the examples cited above, development, as conceived by the liberal ideology, bears little resemblance to natural development, nor does the conservative ideology accurately describe God or natural law. Both types of thought are distortions of functional thought, which is based on how nature functions. Reich (5:173-176) describes the basis of the two directions of thought as follows:

## **The organometric equation**



and every similar structure shows two more functions which again are paired. They are finity, representable by the number 1 on the left and infinity on the right.



Basically there are no limits, except, say, the death of an organism to the development of variations within a given functional realm... There is complete freedom to every process on the right of the equation. Just as infinity is paired with finity, so is freedom on the right paired with determinism on the left. The variations can never transcend the CFP which pervades and governs all of them...

Freedom of development is thus infinite within certain limits given by the characteristics of the common functioning principle...

...it appears that development, freedom, infinity and indeterminism group together as one set of variations which is paired with the other set, structure, law, finity and determinism. Again, the grouping has nothing whatsoever to do with ideology. I personally would feel inclined to prefer the first set of variations to the second. The ideologically conservative mind, on the other hand, would prefer the second set. Fortunately, natural functioning does not obey characterological preferences. Nature is

functional to begin with and in all its doings; and functionalism means practically the simultaneous action of opposites which are rooted in one common functioning principle...

Within this framework of thought, which is in agreement with actual natural functioning, the conservative finds his place as well as the rebel against the status quo; both have their function in the course of events. Law and freedom, determinism and indeterminism, finity and infinity are no longer absolute opposites, irreconcilable and mutually exclusive. They are inseparably paired functions of opposite signs which are rooted in a fluid common natural foundation. This is a major solution to a major problem which has pained humanity for thousands of years. It has nothing to do with the glib idea of "compromise." Natural functions know no compromise. Neither has it anything to do with so-called "smoothing out of differences of opinion." It is not the result of bargaining in matters of natural law. It is natural law itself. This means, furthermore, that conflict, movement and freezing of movement, upward toward existence and downward toward decay are paired natural functions, independent of preferences of any kind. It means basically that sharp contradictions can be solved functionally only outside their own realm by applying the "third force," the common functioning principle.

We call the two directions of thought described by Reich: "thinking to the left" (i.e., back toward the CFP at the left of the equation) and "thinking to the right" (i.e., toward the developing variations on the right of the equation). Conservatives tend to think to the left, and liberals to the right. 4 Sowell has touched upon these two directions of thinking in his description of "the constrained vision" and "the unconstrained vision." (6:13-29)

Sowell's use of "vision," to describe the essence of the two opposing types of sociopolitical thought, points correctly to the origin of the two types: differences in the function of perception itself. The ideologies cited above give a glimpse of how liberals and conservatives perceive the world, and more importantly how they perceive their own organisms, differently. The liberal perceives his orgone energy moving upward (into the head) and pressing forward ("progress"). The conservative perceives his energy pulsating, outward from and inward toward the core in expansion and contraction, always bound ("constrained") by contact with the core.

In the absence of armoring, a liberal or a conservative would "tend to prefer" (as Reich says) one direction of thought over the other, but would be capable of both. In the presence of armored thinking, one direction of thought is significantly impaired and may even operate to the exclusion of the other.

With these considerations in mind, we can identify more specifically the functional limitations in Baker's original formulation:

1. It is not clear how it happens that contact with the core is lost in the liberal, but not in the conservative. Baker knew that in the liberal energy is "pulled up into the head," away from the genital. But this is a bioenergetic shift involving the segments of the body. What is the underlying protoplasmic factor in the liberal that enables this to happen?
2. Baker refers, correctly, to different ways of defending against feeling in the liberal and the conservative, but the term "feeling" is not defined. Specifically, the distinction between the two types of feelings, sensation and emotion, is not made. Liberals experience feelings, sometimes perhaps as much as conservatives do. As Burnham has pointed out (4:149-158) liberals often follow these feelings in preference to the logical conclusions of their thoughts and theories, especially when they are up against the contradictions in their ideology. The difference is that the "feelings" experienced by a liberal are sensations, whereas the "feelings" experienced by a conservative are emotions.
3. Important components of both intellectual and muscular defenses, components which can be loosely described as "tension in the brain" and "tension in the muscles," lie in the realm of excitation. However, the primary difference between the liberal and conservative is not in the realm of excitation, but in the realm of perception. A more accurate understanding by Konia, based on organometry, of the distinction between liberal and conservative is presented in this issue of the Journal in the article "The Biophysical Basis of Sociopolitical Thought." Konia's observation, that the liberal perceives himself and the world through sensation and that the conservative perceives himself and the world through emotion, successfully resolves the limitations described above and moves us much closer to an objective formulation of the sociopolitical spectrum.

## The Modern Liberal Versus the True Liberal

Baker used Burnham's ideologically-based definition (4:89-97) to distinguish between the true liberal (what Burnham called the "classic liberal") and the modern liberal. Burnham's definition of the classic liberal vs. the "modern liberal" can be summarized as follows:

1. The classic liberal is one whose beliefs are based on the 19th century liberal ideology which was individualistic and opposed to intervention in personal life by the aristocratic, hierarchical governments of the time ( i.e., classic liberal ideology was laissez faire or libertarian).
2. The "modern liberal," according to Burnham, is simply a liberal whose ideology has changed with the times to a more collectivist viewpoint, in favor of massive intervention in individual life by the government, which is now perceived to be a government expressing the "popular or general will."

Burnham's description of the shift in liberal ideology is true, as far as it goes, but does not really discriminate between the true liberal and the modern liberal as sociopolitical character types. It only points out the fact that, in the democracies of the West, many true liberals and nearly all characterological modern liberals have changed their ideology. Burnham's explanation, above, of the cause of the change is deduced from his analysis of liberal ideology and therefore misses the essence of the change in the nature of government in modern times:

1. National governments in past centuries were, in fact, governments, i.e., organizations whose function was to govern. Present day "governments" are a mixture in which half-hearted attempts to govern take second place to efforts at reengineering society in accordance with various ideologies. Following the important distinction made by Konia (2) we can say that the older governments functioned in the realm of politics and that modern "governments" have begun to function in the realm of sociopolitics.

2. The older governments were not merely hierarchical, but authoritarian. Modern governments are not merely democratic, but are becoming anti-authoritarian. 5

3. The anti-authoritarian trend, in both government and in society as a whole, has transformed social contact from a process of "simple (attractive) opposition"



where opposing forces make direct contact and confront each other in a manner that produces a constructive resolution, to "antagonistic (mutually exclusive) opposition"



where opposing forces react to each other in such a manner as to pull the social fabric apart (7). In recent years there has been a functional transformation from:



to



Thus we can see that the shift in the nature of government, the shift in the nature of social authority itself, and the corresponding superficial shift in liberal ideology described by Burnham are a result of centuries-long sociopolitical (emotional plague) activity, primarily by the modern liberal. 6 Sowell describes the relation between liberal and conservative that exists in the present state of antagonistic opposition:

These different ways of conceiving mankind and the world lead not merely to different conclusions but to sharply divergent, often diametrically opposed, conclusions on issues ranging from justice to war. There are not merely differences of visions but conflicts of visions. (6:309)

It has always been true that the two different forms of perception and thought are "diametrically opposed" and lead to "conflict" in the form of opposition. Sowell does not mention, however, that opposition, even diametric opposition, does not have to be "divergent" (moving away from each other). The present day divergence is a manifestation of antagonistic opposition. In the past, there have been periods when the views of true liberals and conservatives met in simple opposition (came together, i.e., attractive opposition) to lead to a satisfactory resolution of social conflicts. For example:

1. In the framing of the United States Constitution, conservatives and liberals came together in disagreement about one crucial question: Should the United States become a nation or continue as a confederation of independent states? The framers set up a working arrangement for themselves (which included no publicity of the debates) which made it possible for the conflict to be resolved successfully: the United States became a nation. Various compromises were made which satisfied the legitimate concerns of the losing side without compromising the essential decision that was made.

2. The war (1861-1865) between the United States and the rebelling southern confederacy, the so-called "Civil War," in which the North and South came together, after years of drifting apart, to resolve the primary issue of union and the important secondary issue of slavery. Lincoln had to contend constantly with two elements working to make the conflict an antagonistic one:

a. Those, including most of his commanding generals prior to Grant, who regarded the South as a separate nation, an attitude which by definition perceived the parties as mutually exclusive, i.e., antagonistic. This manifested itself repeatedly in failure to "engage" with the opponent militarily.

b. Radical elements who wished to exact a vicious revenge on the South, i.e., pure antagonism.

Thanks to Lincoln, the ultimate outcome of the war was to bring the nation together in permanent unity. This example shows that it is not the superficial qualities of the interaction, e.g., the presence or absence of physical violence, but the essential interrelation between the contending functions, that determines whether there is simple, attractive opposition or antagonistic, mutually exclusive opposition. Pre-war, nonviolent interaction between North and South, particularly after 1854, had been essentially antagonistic.

Returning to the question of the distinction between the true liberal and the modern liberal, a great deal of confusion can be resolved by considering that the term "modern liberal" is used with three different meanings:

1. generically, to refer to a liberal who happens to live in modern times, just as we would say a "modern automobile" or a "modern physician," etc.,
2. in Burnham's sense of the term, to refer to a liberal who has adopted one particular variety of modern ideology (collectivism), and
3. as a biophysical description of the deep (protoplasmically based) sociopolitical structure of an individual, i.e., the emotional plague character on the left. The reader should be aware that when the term "modern liberal" is used in the Journal of Orgonomy it is usually with this specific meaning.

In defining the "modern liberal" Baker was, at least to some extent, following Burnham's definition, to which he added definitions of the socialist and communist to the left and formulated a symmetric set of four ideological categories on the right. When the emphasis on ideology is eliminated, it becomes clear that in most cases any particular "modern liberal" (in Burnham's sense of the term) and any particular socialist could be either a characterological true liberal or a characterological modern liberal. Similarly, a typical conservative living in Alabama in 1967 might have met, based on his ideology, Baker's criteria for "extreme conservative" or "reactionary." But this ideology was more a function of the individual's time and place, i.e., his environment, than of his degree of biophysical conservatism. That same individual (some are still alive today) most likely now has a more moderate set of beliefs without necessarily having experienced any change in his biophysical structure. In short, the biophysical character type is innate but the ideology varies greatly depending on the individual's environment. Ideology (which shifts with time, place, circumstances, and other environmental influences) is not wholly reliable as an indication of the degree of sociopolitical armoring.

## **A Revised Version of the Sociopolitical Spectrum**

A more reliable, and simpler, description of the sociopolitical spectrum can be constructed as follows:

LEFT RIGHT

i. the modern liberal (emotional plague on the left, including the communist)

.....ii. the extreme liberal (socialist)

.....iii. the true liberal

.....iv. the conservative

.....v. the extreme conservative (rigidly mystical)

.....vi. the fascist (emotional plague on the right)

LEFT

RIGHT

A description of the detailed characteristics of each sociopolitical character type and how each type can be defined without relying primarily on ideology will be presented in part 2 of this paper.

**Examples of the Discrepancies Between Ideology and Sociopolitical Character Type**

We can give several examples of how the emphasis on ideology confuses the perception of sociopolitical character:

**Conclusion**

Examples such as those given above have led me to conclude that attempts to identify sociopolitical character types based on political beliefs, voting patterns, mannerisms, and even individual actions involving superficial life functions are prone to inaccuracy. It is often possible to make an accurate diagnosis only when one can observe the individual in a situation where he must exert authority to safeguard the core functions of life.

## Footnotes

1. An excerpt, "The True Liberal, the Modern Liberal and the Environmental Liberal" appears elsewhere in this issue of the Journal.
2. Assessing sociopolitical character type is different from psychiatric diagnosis. Psychiatric diagnosis requires examination of a patient by a physician, including evaluation of his functioning in private life. Identifying sociopolitical character type requires an accurate understanding of an individual's public acts and their consequences.
3. Much of what is now considered "conservative" thought is simply healthy thought that may not be particularly conservative, but is labeled as such because it contradicts liberal doctrines. Thought that is specifically conservative, unless it comes from fringe elements, is usually articulated so as to pay token respect to some liberal principle as well.
4. Note that this terminology uses "right" and "left" contrary to their usual political meanings. Those on the left think toward the right. Those on the right think toward the left.
5. The term "anti-authoritarian" as used here means "acting to destroy authority itself," and not merely "opposed to authoritarianism." It would be less ambiguous, but grammatically awkward, to use the term, "anti-authority."
6. There remains the question of how great a contribution to the current social deterioration has been made by right-wing sociopolitical "government," of which Nazi Germany is the clearest example, and the question of whether or not the

Nazi government was, as this author believes, also anti-authoritarian (despite appearances). These questions are beyond the scope of this paper.

7. "Environmental liberal" does not mean a liberal concerned with the preservation of nature, but rather a biophysical conservative who has liberal beliefs which he has picked up from his environment. When Baker first used "environmental liberal" in the mid-1960s it was clear and unambiguous. However, the subsequent widespread use of the catchy, but meaningless and confusing, term "environmentalism" makes clarification necessary.

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