Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Random House, 2001); Frédéric Krumbein, "P. C. Chang: The Chinese Father of Human Rights," *Journal of Human Rights* 14, no. 3 (2015): 332–52; Johannes Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, Drafting, and Intent* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999); and Pierre-Étienne Will, "La Contribution chinoise à la déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme," in *La Chine et la démocratie: Tradition, droit, institutions*, ed. Mireille Delmas-Marty and Pierre-Étienne Will (Fayard, 2007).

The book relies to a great extent on the reminiscences of Chang's youngest son Stanley (109). This is a strength, in that it offers the reader a new source. At the same time, it is a potential weakness as the chapters on Chang's life reflect sometimes only Stanley Chang's views of his father, as the author is well aware (254).

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J. A. Colen and Svetozar Minkov, eds.: *Toward "Natural Right and History": Lectures and Essays by Leo Strauss, 1937–1946*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018. Pp. 288.)

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J. A. Colen and Svetozar Minkov have performed a valuable service by publishing six lectures and essays of Leo Strauss, which the author himself for reasons unknown did not publish. These veritable, if unpolished, gems were composed either immediately before or during Strauss's tenure at the New School of Social Research. The texts are transcribed and painstakingly annotated by Colen, Minkov, Nathan Tarcov, Christopher Lynch, Daniel Tanguay, and Scott Nelson. Each text is helpfully introduced by an interpretive essay that discusses its context and arguments as well as its relation to Strauss's published works, especially to *Natural Right and History* (*NRH*). Of these essays the editors themselves have written three, while the others are provided by Tarcov, Tanguay, and Lynch. The texts and the interpretive essays are preceded by a foreword by Michael Zuckert and an introduction by the editors and followed by an afterword by Colen in which he gives his take on the teaching of *NRH*. There is also an interesting appendix produced by Minkov listing the courses (including a brief description) that Strauss taught at the New School for Social Research, a list that shows incidentally his astonishingly heavy teaching load (sometimes up to six courses in one

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semester!). Zuckert observes that one of the contributions of this volume to the Strauss literature is that it adds "substantial new materials from one phase of Strauss's career so far little explored, his years at the New School."

But the main intention of the editors, as Zuckert also observes, is to bring into "much sharper focus" the significance of *NRH*. This work, as far as I know, has never been neglected by serious students of Strauss but it is true that in recent years it has played second fiddle to some of Strauss's later works. Colen and Minkov wish to elevate its importance in this immediate context. They do so in part by arguing that *NRH* is the result of more than ten years of work. Thus, they argue the list of Strauss's courses at the New School "shows Strauss using the bulk of his teaching at the New School to tackle the problem of 'natural right'" (6). The list, however, does not quite show this. Out of seventy-eight courses only one is devoted exclusively to this theme. Strauss's courses, however, do support a more moderate claim, namely, that *NRH* is one of the fruits of many years of thinking; they show him working on themes and authors that play a somewhat distinctive role in *NRH*: a course titled "Natural Law and the Rights of Man" (1942), two courses on religion and the rise of modern capitalism which focused on the Weber-Tawney dispute (1943, 1944), two on the Declaration of Independence and its underlying ideas (1944, 1947), one on Locke's *Civil Government* as an instance of early capitalism (1946), one on Aquinas (1947), one on Rousseau's *Second Discourse* and *Social Contract* (1948), one on Burke (1949; Burke and Aquinas are regular features of many other survey courses).

The editors also try to elevate the importance of *NRH* by closely connecting it to these six early texts. This association, of course, works both ways. More obviously, the fame of the published work is likely to win an audience for these relatively unknown works, but the editors make a plausible case that the latter could benefit the published work. These unpublished lectures or essays are more accessible and in some ways more attractive than the published text, even if they are less perfect or accurate. More importantly, many of them address themes discussed in *NRH* in ways that encourage readers to revisit the published text. They certainly had that effect on me.

Nonetheless, there is something problematic about the way the editors connect these texts to the famous work. They present the unpublished works as "drafts" or more ambiguously as "precursor texts" to *NRH*. They then employ two different frameworks. In the introduction, they treat them chronologically or developmentally, presenting the earliest text as furthest in thought from *NRH* and the last text as closest. The body of the volume, however, adopts a thematic framework by placing each text together with its interpretive essay in an order "roughly corresponding to the main sections of *NRH*." The thematic or structural framework, while useful for encouraging comparison of the two works, suffers from two sorts of flaws. First, some of the texts cannot reasonably be understood as drafts of *NRH*. For instance, "On the Study of Classical Political Philosophy" (1938) is an exposition of the

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exotericism of classical political philosophy that emphasizes the use of myth and history as an exoteric mode of conveying philosophic truth. In the second part of this text, Strauss illustrates his argument with a discussion of Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*. Now, the discussion of classical natural right in *NRH* does not focus on exotericism and its one use of that word is with reference to Cicero's writing which does not involve the use of history. If "On the Study of Classical Political Philosophy" is a precursor text to anything, it is to "The Spirit of Sparta or the Taste of Xenophon" (1939). The editors put "Historicism" (1941) in a chapter with the title "The Historical Approach," reminding one of the first chapter of *NRH*, "Natural Right and the Historical Approach." "Historicism," however, discusses its topic without a thematic reference to the issue of natural right. It is actually a source for "Political Philosophy and History" (1949, repr. in *What Is Political Philosophy? and Other Studies*) which reproduces some of its arguments and repeats many of its sentences verbatim. "What Can We Learn from Political Theory" (1942) is in no way a draft of the "introduction" to *NRH*, though it does shed light on that introduction as well as on Strauss's other introductions insofar as they argue for the political relevance of the study of political philosophy.

The other kind of flaw is evident in "Natural Right" (1946), which indeed is a precursor to *NRH*. This text is placed in the sixth chapter, "The Crisis of Natural Right," which chapter corresponds to the sixth chapter of *NRH*, "The Crisis of Modern Natural Right." Now, the chapter in *NRH* deals with the questioning of modern natural right teaching in the thought of Rousseau and Burke, but "Natural Right" is not about Rousseau or Burke. It is not even about the "crisis of natural right" but rather about the problem of natural right. Its content corresponds much more closely to chapters 4 and 5 of *NRH*. In short, while the texts published here are true gems and most of the interpretive essays cast a fine light on them, the whole thing is placed in a setting that is a bit Procrustean.

The developmental framework, though it gives a bias in favor of later positions and can facilitate false perception of changes in position, can be useful if handled with caution. For it is safe to say that Strauss's thought did undergo a development and since these essays have passages that bear on issues treated in *NRH* they can help us understand this development. For instance, Minkov in his essay on "The Origin of Modern Political Thought" makes a nice observation about Strauss's changing critique of Hobbes: "In *Natural Right and History*, Strauss faults Hobbes for allowing the 'experience, as well as the legitimate anticipation, of unheard-of progress' to render him 'insensitive' to what Pascal called 'the eternal silence of those infinite spaces'; in 'The Origin of Modern Political Thought,' on the other hand, he all but says that Hobbes himself is 'frightened' by that same silence of those infinite spaces, as well as by 'his fellow men' who 'naturally are nothing better than his potential murderers'" (162). In "The Origin of Modern Political Thought," Strauss observes that Hobbes had rejected the classical conception of the

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philosophical life as the happy life because he put more weight on man's dependence on external conditions than did the classical philosophers. This is because he felt the evils of nature and especially the evils of death more keenly than they did. Hobbes's (or modern man's) excessive sensitivity to the evils of death (death in a world without a providential God) was the result of "being accustomed by a tradition of almost two thousand years to believe himself [text amended] to be protected by providence" (195). Once the belief in providence was shattered modern man sought to secure himself from external evils by constructing a sound political order. And Strauss suggests that this political effort was influenced by a residue of the theological tradition: "When this belief became shattered, he could not immediately cease to hope for Providence, to expect help from it." In *NRH*, there is no suggestion that Hobbes borrowed unconsciously from the theological tradition; if anything, Strauss seems to criticize him for accepting "on trust the view that political philosophy or political science is possible or necessary" (*NRH*, 167). He even suggests that he was made somehow insensitive to death because of "the experience, as well as the legitimate anticipation, of unheard of progress" of science as he understood it. We are left then with two opposite interpretations: One suggests that Hobbes feared death excessively; the other suggests that he was not sufficiently mindful of it. One suggests that he was confident of the permanent success of his political project because he felt deep down that providence was on his side; the other suggests that he was indifferent to the eventual destruction of his political project because he was preoccupied with the experience of scientific achievement and legitimate expectation of future scientific and political progress.

We could add more such examples but I hope this suffices to indicate our debt to the editors for their extensive work in preparing these texts and their helpful observations about them. I will end with a critical note about their account of *NRH* itself. They try to cultivate a serious interest in the book by arguing that it contains "Strauss's own teaching on natural right," which, judging from Colen's afterword, is essentially what Strauss attributes to classical political philosophers. Now, there is no doubt that this book is more than a history of natural right, that in certain crucial passages Strauss passes judgment on the position of others, judgments that indicate his "inclin[ation] to prefer" classical natural right to modern natural right and relativism, but it is also true that the book presents the problem of natural right as an unsolved problem. By presenting the book as being more doctrinaire than it is, the editors unintentionally do a disservice to it. Secondly, in order to defend the book against the accusation of representing modern thinkers (such as Rousseau or Burke) inaccurately, the editors argue that it "should be measured not against a standard of historical accuracy that easily succumbs to what Strauss refers to as 'weakness of the flesh' that tempts accurate historians, but against a standard of philosophic depth" (10). While there may have been deep philosophers who were bad historians of philosophy or were indifferent to that history, this is not a good defense of

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NRH because Strauss's response to historicism, according to him, requires accurate historical studies, more accurate than those done on the basis of historicist presuppositions: "Our most urgent need can then be satisfied only by means of historical studies which would enable us to understand classical philosophy *exactly* as it understood itself, and not in the way in which it presents itself on the basis of historicism. … We need no less urgently a nonhistoricist understanding of historicism, that is, an understanding of the genesis of historicism that does not take for granted the soundness of historicism" (*NRH*, 33; emphasis added).

This view is confirmed by "Historicism" (1941): "if we take historicism seriously, if we take seriously the view that the whole past must be understood *adequately*, we are on the best way of overcoming historicism" (81; emphasis added). In that lecture, Strauss lists some rules of historical exactness, which he himself accepts. His standard for historical exactness was so keen that he could write: "While the modern historian accepts as binding the rules which I have intimated, he very rarely lives up to them, owing to the weakness of the flesh. As a matter of fact, I do not know a single historical study which is beyond reproach from the point of view of historical research. That study known to me which comes nearest to the goal of historical exactness is J. Klein's analysis of Greek logistics and the genesis of modern algebra" (80). The weakness of the flesh that Strauss refers to is not the desire to be an exact historian but the natural obstacles (both intellectual and passionate) that stand in the way of that goal.

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Danny Kaplan: *The Nation and the Promise of Friendship: Building Solidarity through Sociability.* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. Pp. xii, 227.)

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In 1911, Winston Churchill and his good friend F. E. Smith (Lord Birkenhead) formed the Other Club, a dining club of "clubbable" British notables. Its main purpose was to promote cross-partisan friendships, but it was also simply a social club where sociability was enjoyed for its own sake. Even so, more than twenty of its members would serve in Churchill's national government during World War II, and in July 1945, over a quarter of the entire government were members. One might say the Other Club was the crucible of Britain under Churchill.

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