



# Πέλοπας / Pelopas

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INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PELOPONNESE

Τόμος 1, τεύχος 2 / Volume 1, no 2  
Ιούλιος – Δεκέμβριος / July – December 2017  
ISSN 2529-1831 (Online)



ΤΡΙΠΟΛΗ / TRIPOLI



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## Power and Authority in Panajotis Kondylis's Late Work

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### I

#### Abstract

*The main purpose of the present piece is to probe the relation between power and authority in Panajotis Kondylis's late work. More specifically, it aspires to identify the conditions under which a theorist would be legitimized to view an "amorphous" or (institutionally) non-binding form of power either as a product of rationalization for the lack of validated social power or as a different quality reflecting something singular and even superior than a meagre portion or conventional crystal of "objective power". After briefly reconstructing readings of the kondylean notion of power undertaken by contemporary Greek commentators and presenting – for the first time – a series of collected excerpts and unpublished notes with crucial clarifications about the issue under discussion, we analyze the gleaned recorded and unrecorded data in the context of what we take to be a more comprehensive interpretive whole. In the light of the relevant findings, we then attempt to render more transparent the kind (or the texture) of power that Kondylis felt he was gaining from his theoretical engagement and, more particularly, from the content of his unique philosophical position.*

**Key words:** Kondylis, power, authority, dominance, M. Weber, recognition, identity, social ontology

«Ισχύς» και «Εξουσία» στο όψιμο έργο του Παναγιώτη Κονδύλη

#### Περίληψη

Πρωταρχικός σκοπός του παρόντος άρθρου είναι να διερευνήσει την σχέση ισχύος και εξουσίας στο όψιμο έργο του Παναγιώτη Κονδύλη. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, επιζητεί να ανιχνεύσει τις συνθήκες υπό τις οποίες νομιμοποιείται ο θεωρητικός παρατηρητής να αναγνώσει μιαν «άμορφη» ή (θεσμικά) μη δεσμευτική μορφή ισχύος αφενός ως προϊόν εκλογίκευσης του περί ου ο λόγος υποκειμένου για την

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από μέρους του έλλειψη κατοχής κυρωμένης κοινωνικής ισχύος και αφετέρου ως μια διαφορετική ποιότητα που αντανακλά κάτι ξεχωριστό ή υπέρτερο από ένα πενιχρό μέρισμα ή έναν συμβατικό κρύσταλλο κοινωνικής ισχύος. Μετά την σύντομη ανασυγκρότηση αναγνώσεων της έννοιας της ισχύος από σχολιαστές του κονδύλειου έργου και την παρουσίαση – για πρώτη φορά – συγκεντρωμένων παραθεμάτων και ανέκδοτων πηγών που προσφέρουν καίριες διασαφηνίσεις για το υπό συζήτηση θέμα, αναλύονται τα στοιχειοθετημένα αποσπάσματα στο πλαίσιο ενός περιεκτικότερου ερμηνευτικού όλου. Στο φως των εξαχθέντων πορισμάτων, αναλαμβάνεται, εν κατακλείδι, η προσπάθεια να καταστεί ευκρινέστερο το είδος (και σαφέστερη η υφή) της ισχύος που ο ίδιος ο Κονδύλης αισθανόταν ότι πορίζεται από την θεωρητική του ενασχόληση και, ειδικότερα, από το περιεχόμενο της ιδιαίτερης φιλοσοφικής του τοποθέτησης.

**Λέξεις-κλειδιά:** Κονδύλης, ισχύς, εξουσία, κυριαρχία. M. Weber, Αναγνώριση, ταυτότητα, κοινωνική οντολογία.

Starting from the premise that the total self-undermining of a socially active existence is by definition impossible<sup>2</sup>, we cannot but see in the undertaking of Kondylis's axiologically unfettered "descriptive theory of decision" a significant self-enfeeblement of its advocate (being the conveyor of an operation not susceptible to any sort of ideologization), which, however, by providing the latter with singularity in contrast with the vast majority of theorists and reinforcing the 'inner' sense of identity, gives him a substitute form of power. Describing this idea in Kondylean terms, we could say that "the logic of tactical rationality is subordinated to the logic of identity", resulting here in an inversion of the established manner of operation of

<sup>2</sup> Briefly analyzed – along with the necessary source references – in: Raymond Petridis, *Hegel and Kondylis. The Hegelian Genealogy of Dualism, the Bonds of the Unhappy Consciousness and the Kondylean Enlightened Stoicism*. Eurasia Publications, Athens (2011) 2017 [in Greek], pp. 54-55, 112-113. For the sake of convenience, the core argument may be summed up as follows: In paragraph 222 of *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (transl. by A.V. Miller, Oxford University Press 1977, pp. 134-135), Hegel puts forth the idea that the only way someone can supposedly renounce their "individuality" (in theological terms, read: so as to become a "vessel" for divine grace; in secular terms, read: so as to be filled with the power of "universal" Reason) is to *do* something in this direction; however, each time they perform an *act*, what they are in effect affirming is the authority *of their own* (socially manifested) "individuality" as such. Said contradictory structure of thought, connected with the notion of self-exposure, is identified by Dostoevsky (cf. *The Idiot*, transl. by R. Pevear & L. Volokhonsky, Vintage Classics, New York, 2003, pp. 278, 305/6) and is taken up by Kondylis, who proceeds to put forward a theoretical model that includes even the most extreme instances of sacrifice and suicide. These latter are interpreted as a peculiar type of "attempts to remain in [social] life" in the memory of others (by securing a place in their mind which can only be achieved through an act of suicide or voluntary exposure to certain danger), rather than a final and irreversible exit from the social-historical becoming. Regarding these extreme instances, see Kondylis' unpublished notes nos. 4117, 4129, 4136-4137, 4159-4160, 4559-4560, 4679, 4754-4755, 4757-8, 4781-2, 5435-5437, as well as diffuse unpublished aphorisms and published passages, such as his critically inclined view of the Heideggerian account of mortality in: P. Kondylis, "Heidegger's *Being and Time*: A Collection of Pretentious and Vague Platitudes" (*Telos Critical Theory of the Contemporary*: Telosscope, November 23, 2015).

the relation between the pursuit of an 'inner' feeling of identity and self-preservation in the narrow sense, an inversion in which the loss of certain elements of physical-quantitative self-preservation appears to take place for the sake of notional self-preservation. Partial or selective preference for the latter over the former already shows that there is no renunciation of power *in toto* but rather of a – perhaps the main – form of power (i.e. authority [ἐξουσία]) for the sake of another, possibly more malleable but, as such, less binding [ισχύς]. However, such a programmatic recommendation to accept a distinction between two forms of power can be legitimately made only on the basis of presupposed knowledge of the qualitative essence of 'power' as a genus concept and of the typical features that its separate forms have in common.

Thus, the primary aim of our paper is to examine the (key to understanding Kondylis's philosophy) general concept representing that phenomenon which is differentiated into "power" (or in that "feeling of power" which reflects an 'objectively' existing quality) and "authority" (as the principal form of binding power), with the aim of shedding light on that type of anti-authority which, in a symbolic way in our opinion, Kondylis represented and aspired to embody as a conveyor of substantial properties of (broadly conceived) might. In this way, by taking a step further, we will perhaps manage to provide a hint about how in the mind of our thinker the concept of inner power may be connected with that of mourning in the sense of sincere reconciliation with the fact that the only possible 'salvation' which man can feel is by accepting that there is no absolute salvation or 'final solution' in the eschatological sense of the terms (theological or secularized metaphysical). We want to say here that one must indeed possess or have attained a – no matter how faint or vague – "feeling of power", identity and personal distinctness, and hence to have embraced a moment of breach with the established institutions through an act of transgression<sup>3</sup> (or at least to feel that one has become inured to them in one's own way<sup>4</sup>), so as to be able subsequently to mourn for the non precise social recognition or universal imposition of this 'non publicly measurable' feeling<sup>5</sup> if not in the end also to come to terms with the painful, often psychologically leveling retrospective ascertainment that this vital feeling *structurally* or *qualitatively* (i.e. beyond its unprecedentedness from the viewpoint of content and intensity) differs much less than its conveyor initially believed from the

<sup>3</sup> This act, endowing Kondylis with a feeling of singularity, "subjective power" and identity, may be connected with the delving into the understanding of the reasons why it is impossible for man to think or feel himself outside "the fact of society". This idea I extensively analysed in the last two chapters of my *Kondylis and the Problem of Nihilism* (ProQuest, University of Michigan Dissertation Publications 2013).

<sup>4</sup> The individual in general has a dual stance toward institutions: on the one hand he bows to them through internalization of and obedience to their respective norms and, on the other, he violates them, by substantially interpreting the commands of each norm and of each institution which 'crystallizes' or represents the former in a manner that is in his own interest. (In connection with this, cf. Kondylis' unpublished note no. 5469). Already in his *Politics* (Book V, 1 = section 1301a · cf. also Book III, 5 = 1280a) Aristotle has stressed that everyone is willing to accept the general precept of the norm, but only to 'adapt' it to their own substantial interpretation which, naturally, differs from the interpretations of others.

<sup>5</sup> The fact, that is, that it will not be possible in *every* sense and *fully* for this "private" or singular part of one's perspective to be socially recognized in a way that is fitting for one and be placed at the core of social life – and moreover finally and conclusively.



corresponding feeling of identity of other existences deriving from breach/conformity with what has been institutionalized. The above therefore requires us to give an – as detailed as possible – account of the Kondylean concept of power based on the study of our thinker's published *and* unpublished material.

## II

It has been correctly pointed out<sup>6</sup> that *Power and Decision*, the work in which the said thinker summarizes his basic positions, lacks any definition whatsoever of the concept of power, which might have helped us build a more comprehensive picture of how the writer understands the main characteristics of this key concept; the same also holds for the first volume of his second major philosophical treatise – in which the theoretical frame of the first work is refined – namely, *The Political and Man*. Kondylis's only definition in his entire *published* work appears in a short study, *Science, Power and Decision*, in which the concept of power is defined in a very general way on the basis of the concept of self-preservation, and does not provide the researcher with any further guidance other than what is contained in the already recorded material.<sup>7</sup>

However, whatever cannot be found regarding this issue in Kondylis's published work should be sought in the unpublished notes of the third volume of his planned Social Ontology (*The Political and Man*) which – according to the writer himself – was to carry the subtitle 'Identity, Power, Civilization'. It is here that one can in the main find concise definitions of the concept of power<sup>8</sup>, clarifications regarding its relation with thematically related terms (such as 'authority', 'domination', 'violence' etc.), comparative elucidations of the differences in the semantic content of this concept relative to that of other writers (e.g. Max Weber, C. Schmitt, A. Gehlen, K. Mannheim et al.) and the outlining of its general features. While an overall identification of its main characteristics can come only from the synthetical examination of the fragmentary unpublished and published sources; more specifically, from a systematic perusal of the unpublished notes of the third volume of Social Ontology<sup>9</sup> jointly with the examined allusions or references to

<sup>6</sup> See Michalis Papanikolaou, "The Concept of Power in *Power and Decision*", (in Greek) Journal *Nea Estia*, Athens, November 1999, p. 544. This carefully written and interesting article (one of only very few commendable ones, certain objections aside – especially pp. 563, 570) deals with the indeed key issue of whether in Kondylis' view the subjective "feeling of power" is identified with or distinguished from "social power" as an objective magnitude (see especially p. 568).

<sup>7</sup> This definition is as follows: "Power is successful self-preservation via a self-reinforcement capable of safeguarding or improving the position of a certain bearer of power relative to other (potential) rivals". P. Kondylis, *Science, Power and Decision*, Stigmi, Athens, 2001, (in Greek) section 2, p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> Definitions of the concept of power are found (inter alia) in unpublished notes nos. 3656, 3621-3622, 3869-3870, 3871- 3872, 3923-3924, 4192.

<sup>9</sup> Particularly among notes nos. 3617-4209 and 4569-4645 there is a plethora of references to the concept of power – without this meaning that there are no scattered same-themed notes in the writer's *entire* unpublished corpus (such as, for example, in notes nos. 4683-6, 4710 and many others). However, precisely because the above valuable recorded findings of Kondylis' research which are contained in his unfinished body of work have survived in notes, it should not be forgotten that particular care and finesse is each time demanded in their use by researchers: that is to say, it is necessary to first of all establish whether an assertion has been made by the writer himself or whether it is the recording of some source (wherever this is not indicated) but above all to thoroughly examine and – in the worst case – surmise (on the basis of whatever available data [e.g. the footnotes in the first

features of power, which appear – with the exception of *Power and Decision* – in selected published theoretical texts of the writer (such as, for example, *The Philosophers and Power*, *Theory of War*, the “*Melancholy and Polemics*” [Greek] volume, or in the [Greek] article-reply *The Light and Dark Sides of Visions*).

Here we cannot go into an exhaustive analysis of the definitions of/references to the Kondylean concept of power in the unpublished corpus, so as to proceed on this basis to a completely thorough (right down to the last detail) discussion of the above concept; something of this sort would indeed require the space of a separate treatise. Nor do we want to confine ourselves to a reiteration of what has already been clarified in the secondary bibliography regarding the concept of power from the published corpus, but only to draw from the available subject matter whatever constitutes a necessary preliminary requirement for our further interpretive approach.<sup>10</sup> We shall therefore proceed to an examination of those characteristics of ‘power’ which are of interest in the interpretive framework that we have set, having in the meantime made sure that there is no inconsistency in meaning between the aforesaid characteristics of the passages used herein and those contained either in the unpublished excerpts with which we are not dealing here or in the corresponding extracts of the published corpus.

It would be justifiable, on the basis of the above, to begin our contemplation with the ascertainment that the reading of the published Kondylean corpus often leads certain scholars – particularly those with a sociological background – to ask whether the objective aspect of power which takes the form of *social power*<sup>11</sup> absorbs within it every so-called subjective “feeling of power” (even the reflected quality actually assuming an ontological status which Weber calls “amorphous”), thus rendering the latter simply a *quantitatively* contracted or shriveled form of social power, that is, whether – contrary to the established linguistic use – the two ‘types’ of power are ultimately amalgamated or ‘identified’ *on account of their texture* with whatever quantitative differentiation being ‘converted’ into qualitative solely for regulative/‘functional’ or albeit methodological reasons<sup>12</sup>. Rephrased, the above question could take here the following form: Does (could) the subjective “feeling of power” constitute the mere product of rationalization or element of ‘compensation’ for the lack of validated social power or does (could) the “feeling of power” perhaps constitute something autonomous or different and, at any rate, something more than the fruit of rationalization? Could the expression “subjective power” deep down constitute a contradiction in terms? Given that subjectivity itself is shaped intersubjectively against the background of a society and that every form of power can only be a form of *power* if it is from the outset socially mediated and vested, should not a (strong) feeling of subjective

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volume of Social Ontology] in what context a view or ascertainment (should) be taken. It is not yet clear whether a single corpus could be reconstructed beyond the coherent sections or solid ‘conceptual crystals’ on the basis of the unpublished material.

<sup>10</sup> This paper, presented here as a separate piece of work, in fact constitutes an integral part of a broader study that is currently in progress.

<sup>11</sup> Read: of socially ratified or legitimized power (and not just statically meant or narrowly conceived physical self-preservation), i.e. of that form of power which is gained by “whoever bindingly interprets supposedly objective normative principles and values” (the, according to Kondylis, dominator).

<sup>12</sup> In such a case, “subjective power” should be seen as a meagre portion or pale reflection of “objective power”.

power therefore necessarily emanate from the *binding* interpretation of established, predominant or important social norms?<sup>13</sup> Or, on the contrary, in (contra)distinction with what is called (legitimized) 'social power' is there an "amorphous power" (amorphous, yet nonetheless power) and a *qualitatively* differentiated, sometimes perhaps also *non-measurable* by (the given) social criteria, 'remnant' or 'leftover' of power?<sup>14</sup>

The reasons why someone studying Kondylis may be prompted in principle to ask this question are, I believe, mainly five: first, the devotion of a relatively large part of Kondylis' theoretical work (beginning from the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of *Power and Decision*) to the concept of 'social power' ignites the suspicion that the so-called subjective "feeling of power" could in some cases also be seen by the writer as a faint reflection of binding or legitimized 'social power'; second, as already noted, the complete absence of a firm definition of power in the published corpus, leaves open the more thorough treatment of the issue of the texture and character of power in general; third, the 'provocative' suppression/non explicit acceptance on the part of the writer that he himself is imbued with claims to binding social power or he too seeks to appropriate a 'feeling of power' which must be distinguished from only the *established* forms of institutionally consolidated social authority<sup>15</sup> (and not from every form of social authority in general), raises in the mind of the researcher the question of the 'paradoxical' status of the descriptive theory in the light of its anthropological criteria and furthermore fosters the idea that precisely because the writer himself did not want to openly admit that he was relinquishing legitimized 'social power' for the sake of a stronger, yet different "feeling of power", perhaps he did not speak *openly* about the analogous distinction between the two forms of power; fourth, the inadequate or unsatisfactory for some commentators Kondylean interpretation (through the idea of experiencing unprecedented 'intensity' or 'reinforcement') of the extreme cases of sacrifice and suicide, in which the relation between physical self-preservation and identity is quite clearly reversed, with the former being renounced for the sake of the latter, encourages the view that the distinction between "social power" and "feeling of power" in the broader sense must indeed be accepted *as long as* a theorist is seeking the explanation of the "entirety of the phenomena known to us", although again without this being stressed

<sup>13</sup> The posing of both this and the next question still remains vague and unclear from the moment that the semantic content of the terms "subjective", "individual" and "amorphous" has not been clarified. This clarification is made below and so we beg the reader's patience.

<sup>14</sup> In this connection M. Papanikolaou asks: "But is 'power' identified with 'social power' as an objective, tangible magnitude? Because here is the whole problem; when Kondylis tells us that subjects 'strive for their self-preservation and the expansion of their power', does he mean 'social power'... as the possibility to impose one's own will irrespective of means, ideologies etc. within the power relations of which social interactions are constituted, and in the name of some 'supposedly objective value'? If we could have a concept of power broader than that of social power, then we could also explain any reversals of the priority of self-preservation in relation to identity beyond the (temporary) tactical 'sacrifices' entailed by the complex game of social power". (op. cit., p. 568). To the above questions, let the following one be added: Could whatever is called "subjective power" be seen as an original mix or new combination of elements constituting so-called "objective power"?

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, references such as that in *The Invisible Chronology of Thought* (Nefeli, Athens 1998, p. 94) or the Introduction in *Pavese* (Stigmi, Athens 1993, p. 14), where a distinction is explicitly made between "subjective" and (institutionally consolidated) "objective" power, but there is no equally explicit elucidation of the *social* dimension of the former (though, as we shall soon see, the aforesaid social rooting has *not* altogether been overlooked).

somewhere *expressis verbis*; and, fifth, Kondylis' observation that in cases where a *disguise* of the claim to legitimized social power takes place "[although this] may embroil the existence in an often confused game of maneuvers and rationalizations in which the existence *can even lose sight of its original objectives*"<sup>16</sup>, nevertheless, this strategic artifice or last resort could have only temporary self-influence (in Kondylis' words: it could last "for a shorter or longer time"<sup>17</sup>), strengthens the conviction that even where there is no intentional 'disguising', a sincere internalization must be taking place and therefore also a choice of a different mental disposition that is clearly distinguished from that of the usual pursuit of validated "social power", something however which again he did not distinctly state.

Considering how researchers have in general so far addressed the issue raised and what position they ascribed to Kondylis, it would be extremely useful first to clarify certain key conceptual points: a) when the said thinker often speaks about the "feeling" or "sense of power" of the subject<sup>18</sup> what he obviously has in mind is a minimum (distinct) *notion* of the subjective aspect of power (regardless of whether this is ultimately seen as rationalization/overcompensation for the non-possession of objective power or as being – from the outset – qualitatively different to the latter), just as he speaks about "claim" or "claims to power" which, when imposed, provide a "power position" in the constellation of "power relations" – with this latter case constituting a manifestation of the objective side of power which is (retrospectively) visible to the theorist and does not depend on the self-understanding of subjects; b) the objective aspect of power must be understood from a certain point onward via a broader concept of social power, given that naked physical self-preservation is soon converted or evolves into social – ideational self-preservation (with language taking on a principal role); and c) the Kondylean conception of social power is not confined (in terms of the definition of the dominator "as the binding interpreter of supposedly objective principles and values") to the concept of political authority, which constitutes only a specific instance (but as the 'most visible' certainly the weightiest) of the former<sup>19</sup>; on the contrary, as has been aptly noted, "it contains the elements of the "amorphous" – from a sociological viewpoint – definition of power provided by Weber<sup>20</sup>, it is inspired by Hobbes' features of the dominator<sup>21</sup> and is

<sup>16</sup> *Power and Decision*, Stigmi, Athens, 1991, p. 89. Albeit prematurely, the italicized assertion could here be read in a more 'liberal' (than what is prescribed by its literal meaning) way: losing sight of its original aims, the existence may not realize or may forget at the moment of action that what endows it with a "feeling of power" is but the *means/ideologically utilizable tool* for obtaining 'ultimately' or in the long term the much desired *validated/legitimized social power*.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, see e.g. pp. 58, 215.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. unpublished notes nos. 3642-3643 where Kondylis writes: "*Politics is not the only field for the unfolding of power*. Politics as an end and as a separate activity is the struggle to secure those levers which enable the setting forth of commands. To the extent that politics is accompanied by ideologies, it constitutes at the same time also a power claim in the broader sense" (my emphasis).

<sup>20</sup> Although on two occasions in his unpublished notes Kondylis stresses the erroneousness of Weber's view that power (*as* being 'amorphous') cannot constitute the subject of sociological analysis. In note n. 3741 we read: "Between power and authority lies the social result. Such gradations must be found and standardized sociologically, in contrast with Weber's position that only authority can be treated sociologically. [The latter] should have taken into consideration power more generally". While in note no. 3960, Kondylis underlines equally critically regarding the Weberian concept of power: "Power, according to Weber, includes authority [*εξουσία*] and violence [*βία*]. Two possibilities: either power will include all three kinds, [namely,] force-dominion, authority, violence [*δύναμη-αρχή, εξουσία, βία*]



supplemented by the Marxist precept on the ideology of the 'common good', where the specific precept, now detached from the framework of Marxist theory, no longer relates to 'class ideologies' to which the invocations of groups and individuals regarding the 'common good' can [exclusively] be reduced".<sup>22</sup>

That being said, without further ado let us see the stance of commentators. Of particular interest is the fact that, although interpreters raised for consideration the issue of the qualitative identification/substantive amalgamation or not of the two forms of power – believing that there are indications in the Kondylis corpus which could theoretically support the reading of the notion of a subjective "feeling of power" as the fruit of rationalization or compensation for the lack of objective power, and therefore, that it would certainly be justifiable, at the very least, to pose as a question the discrimination of texture or not of the two types of power – they themselves did not eventually proceed to opt for or ascribe definitively or unequivocally to Kondylis the position regarding subjective power as the mere faint reflection of objective power, probably feeling that the aforesaid indications are insufficient to back such a strong claim. Thus, their stance shaped on the said issue in effect follows a common interpretive direction, that of attributing to the writer the distinction of the two forms of power, although there appear to be deviations regarding the degree of awareness or intentionality ascribed to him each time. More specifically, we can say that we encounter a discrimination which takes place in the framework of the *same interpretive direction*: on the one hand, that is, we have a reading which, itself starting from the position that a qualitative distinction must be made (a distinction of breadth *and* texture) between the two forms of power, and while accepting that Kondylis did indeed make the above distinction, stressed that this takes place in his work probably *de facto* or in an unintentional way, perhaps even contrary at times to his explicit intention, as attested by – the said interpretation contended – a retrospective application of the findings of the descriptive theory to itself and to the mental disposition of its advocate.<sup>23</sup> On the

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or we will reserve the term for phenomena of power which are amorphous, but amorphous is not only force-dominion but also violence. Max Weber's definition entails a contradiction" (cf. in this connection also unpublished note no. 4057). The Weberian position of the 'amorphous' – sociologically non-analysable – character of power is outlined in *Economy and Society*, transl. by G. Roth & C. Wittich, Univ. of California Press, 1978, Vol. I, chap. 1, p. 53; Vol. II, chap. 10, p. 941ff (especially pp. 946-7). Cf. also Kondylis' brief allusion on this issue in: 'The Philosophers and Power' (section 5) included in: *Pleasure, Power, Utopia*, Stigmi, Athens 1992, p. 95.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. here also the unpublished notes nos. 3625-3632, 4014, 4178-4200 et al. referring to the Hobbesian concept of power.

<sup>22</sup> M. Papanikolaou, op. cit., p. 554. Regarding this latter, the author of the article, equally to the point, explains: "Because while Marxian 'ultimate reality' consists of classes with specific functions in the context of a historical evolutionary schema of historical-philosophical origin, Kondylis does not consider ideologies to be weapons of class struggle, but rather of social struggle in general. His materialism lacks precisely the element of teleology, which characterizes the – of Kantian origin – Hegelian philosophy of history, and which now reshaped, was taken up by Marx. In this sense, his preference for French ('mechanistic' and not 'dialectical') materialism is to be expected" (See chapter on La Mettrie and Sade in: P. Kondylis, *The European Enlightenment*, Themelio, Athens, 1987, Vol. II, pp. 169-202).

<sup>23</sup> M. Papanikolaou writes for example: "Here one is tempted perhaps more than at any other time to apply the descriptive theory to itself and note that, while it is the most unsuitable for serving *social* power claims, all the more so because it forgoes active participation in social life (cf. *Power and Decision*, op. cit., p. 211), it must generate the *strongest* sense of power, since it is in a position... 'to explain the entirety of the phenomena known to us' and draw the conclusion that the theorist who

other, we have an approach, which while also accepting that the above distinction is present in Kondylis' work, this time allows its conscious/intentional character to be evident.<sup>24</sup> In both cases it is agreed that the Greek thinker indeed accepts (or at least

generates or embraces it has reasons to prefer the sense of power conferred on him by the truth of his theory to the *social power* provided by "normative standpoints". However, when Kondylis speaks about *his own motives* as a theorist, he makes no mention of a "feeling" nor of a "sense" of power, but rather "theoretical inquisitiveness" and the "infinite interest" presented by the world in his eyes." (op. cit., p. 570). Confining ourselves to a critical clarification regarding the thrust of this sentence, we can legitimately say: The 'conclusion' ("that the theorist who generates or embraces the descriptive theory has reasons to prefer the sense of power conferred on him by his theory to social power") *cannot* follow or be drawn *via* the content of the theory itself, but from an ('extraneous' to its content) irrational – in the mystical sense of the term – or 'moral' decision. The serving or maintenance of *logical* consistency within the scientific domain, on whatever scale this might take place, cannot *by itself* bring moral superiority (outside the aforesaid domain). The levels here must be strictly distinguished because, as is known, Reason cannot legitimize itself by standing on its own ground, that is to say, the scientist cannot justify the value he attaches to what he does *as* a scientist by using exclusively the scientific tools of his field or of science in general. (Evidence in support of this view can be found in: Max Weber, 'Science as a Vocation' in: *Sociological Writings*, The German Library, Vol. 60, Continuum, New York, 1999, pp. 290-291; P. Kondylis, *The Invisible Chronology of Thought*, op. cit., pp. 23-24; R. Aron, 'Max Weber' in: *Main Currents in Sociological Thought*, Vol. II, Penguin 1967 pp. 211ff, 231; R. Aron 'Max Weber and the Politics of Power' Addendum no. 3 of the Greek edition of the same work: transl. by B. Lykoudis, Gnosi, Athens, 1984, Vol. II, pp. 491-494.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, the following quote of Panagiotis Christias: «Comment arrive-t-on à adopter ou à formuler une telle théorie? Par ironie, répond l' auteur. Mais quelle ironie? Celle qui consiste à renoncer au pouvoir objectif pour atteindre le point non plus ultra de son sentiment de pouvoir...L' homme à qui l' idée que la vie n' a pas de sens effleure l' esprit et qui met cette idée à l' épreuve de l' histoire avec succès ne peut l' abandonner sans payer le prix de la contradiction interne qui consiste à abandonner son sentiment de pouvoir au point non plus ultra d' intensité existentielle au profit d' un médiocre pouvoir objectif au service des maîtres d' une vision du monde. Tel est l' ultime légitimation de la posture libre de valeurs. Celui qui se mesure à l' infini n' a que faire de la reconnaissance des hommes». P. Christias, 'Du Decisionnisme Descriptif à l' Ontologie Sociale. Une introduction à l' oeuvre de Panajotis Kondylis' in: Mouchtouris A., Christias P. (ed.), *Actualité de la Pensée Grecque* Paris, Le Manuscrit 2014, pp. 191-228 – for the above passage see pp. 225-226 – my emphasis).

I find it interesting that, of the aforementioned commentators, P. Christias appears more willing (and indeed in a more 'positivistic' spirit) to ascribe to Kondylis the title of 'exception' (hastening however to add that the Greek thinker will in time undoubtedly spurn this title, and thus he himself represent – if only among the chorus of experts – the historical 'rule') than M. Papanikolaou, who, though he too certainly contemplates this possibility (and most probably accepts it to a significant extent), he would conclude – I daresay – with the view that yes, Kondylis definitely had an analogous (more or less true) self-understanding, but that *we* should not adopt this without provisos or take it literally with respect to certain of his self-references. Thus, the former writes: "Le sentiment subjectif de pouvoir, ou la vanité poussée à son extrême, consiste dans la volonté de faire partie de ce collège mystique des grands hommes. Mais pour y arriver, aucun compromis n' est possible: on ne peut tromper que certains hommes un certain temps, jamais tous les hommes tout le temps"; while the latter, after wondering why we should not retain for ourselves too the right which Kondylis openly reserved for himself, namely, that the real motive of his theoretical activity is "theoretical inquisitiveness" and "theoretical interest" rather than the pursuit of the "feeling of power", goes on to stress that if the Greek thinker's ultimate response to the above concern is that the unpleasant truths of Kondylean anthropology "give pleasures only to those of refined taste and experts of the fringe" (who are clearly exceptions to the rule) then this answer requires concrete justification; and it is only after such concrete justification (cf. Michalis Papanikolaou expression - op. cit., pp. 570-571: "*in this case* we would be justified") that one would actually be legitimized to ascribe to Kondylis the title of 'exception' and thereafter unreservedly apply to him the substance of the splendid quote of S. Kierkegaard (included by Carl Schmitt in *Political Theology*) according to which "The exception explains the general and itself; and if one wants to study the general correctly, one only needs to look around for a true exception. It reveals everything more clearly than does the general. Endless talk about the general becomes boring; there are exceptions. If they cannot be explained, then the general also cannot be explained. The difficulty is usually not noticed because the general is not thought about with passion but with a

this is inferred from the broader performativity of his writing) the qualitative distinction (i.e. the distinction of texture beyond the distinction of breadth) between the so-called subjective and the objective-socially conspicuous aspect of power; what is shown to be contested is whether the ultimate and fundamental objective or explicit intention of the writer was to demonstrate *eventually or from a certain point onward* the identity of their texture or, on the contrary, whether he himself was from the outset gripped by the need to determine the limit of their distinction (which the 'splitting' of the self into acting social existence and theorist each time brings to mind or makes obvious) precisely in order to delimit the domain and self-sufficiency of each. This question, in the final analysis, can be reduced to the core question of whether and in what sense social power is measurable, as we shall see.

In the framework of this dilemma, the possibility appears of a third explanatory approach within this common interpretive tack, according to which, what the specific performativity of the theory seeks to demonstrate is simply how so-called subjective (but always socially constituted) power *strives* in the most diverse ways to become "objective" social power *without at the same time relinquishing or losing its singular moment*<sup>25</sup> (which precisely *and alone* (!) can give it the necessary impetus to attempt thereafter to assert itself socially). On the basis of the latter proposed reading, the idea which Kondylis in effect wished to establish is that during the transition of "subjective" power to "objective" power (or – which is the same thing – its social incarnation and 'bindingization') its very texture is transformed (as a rule, under the nose of its conveyor), since this transition from subjectively perceived to socially 'visible' must stand on exclusions which are to be repelled/'ideologized', exclusions that must become binding in order for power to now be seen *both* as objectively desirable *and* subjectively functional (although, of course, substantially these two will prove to be – for *certain* conveyors and their 'fellow travelers' – partly or totally divergent). And in this case, both aspects of the function ("subjective" and "objective power") are distinguished methodologically or nominally but only in order to be described simply as a conceptual pair that eye each other with lust; while the issue of their sought-after reduction, amalgamation, or - better- *circumincission* [αλληλοπεριχώρηση] (to recall this central theological term) – in a way that preserves the qualitative element which *may* be utilized 'ideologically' without necessarily being *from the outset* 'ideological' – constitutes the crucial point of friction whose terms are determined by the expedience of the specific circumstances.

The careful study of the *unpublished* material for Kondylis' third planned volume of *Social Ontology* undoubtedly provides valuable assistance in gaining a fuller understanding of the concept of power in general, its main properties and, of

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comfortable superficiality. The exception, on the other hand, thinks the general with intense passion." (*Political Theology*, trans. by G. Schwab, University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 2005, p. 15).

<sup>25</sup> Read: that "amorphous" or "unmeasurable" magmatic element which is not intended to be absorbed during the social moulding or "crystallization" of the critical mass of power, which in retrospect we apprehend as "transformed" or – as Weber might say – sociologically assayable.

course, regarding the issue of distinguishing its forms which is of interest to us.<sup>26</sup> In addition, it appears (for reasons we shall explain) to reinforce the third explanatory reading. However, before we attempt to summarize the unmistakable findings that may be gleaned from the unpublished corpus, in order to provide the basic definitions and outline the general characteristics of the fundamental concept of power and its forms in the light of Kondylis' entire extant work, it may be expedient to present at this point a series of carefully selected – I would almost go so far as to say distilled – excerpts or notes with crucial clarifications about the issue under discussion. This presentation, beyond the particular heuristic value and fruitfulness of the quotations, will also serve to assuage the reader's conscience regarding the textual faithfulness with which Kondylis' thinking has so far been followed (and therefore also that – at least conscious – arbitrary interpretation has been avoided), thus hopefully offsetting the cost of a further meandering prior to gathering and setting out ready and elaborated conclusions.

### III

The acceptance from the outset of the distinction (but not contradistinction!) between objectively perceived –institutionally or even non-institutionally validated/legitimized– social power<sup>27</sup> (read: "authority" primarily political<sup>28</sup>) and the subjective<sup>29</sup> "feeling of power" or from an institutional aspect *absolutely* 'amorphous',

<sup>26</sup> The utilization of the findings of the unpublished corpus, while contributing to the investigation of the matter at hand, should not, in our view, give rise to unrealistic expectations for fully adequate answers.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. note no. 3939.

<sup>28</sup> Kondylis asserts: "In non political relations we cannot speak of authority even when violence is exercised. Critique of Max Weber." (note no. 4057).

<sup>29</sup> What exactly is meant by "subjective" is an issue, given that, although in note no. 3883 Kondylis while dealing with the distinction between power [*ισχύς*] and authority [*εξουσία*] asserts that "*the former can also be individual, the latter never*" and that "the former is a substantial relation, the latter requires legitimization", in note no. 3876 Kondylis writes: "Power is exercised by invoking the General. *Individual power is a delusion*, consciousness is an individual matter, which is why power and morality do not coincide. Whoever speaks in this way carries to the domain of power individualistic schemata of intentions, appetites and other things" (my emphasis). Hence, the term "subjective" does not mean, in our view, "non social" or "non socially constituted/vested" but, on account of a person's non-conformity with *predominant* or *established* norms, only that others (and sometimes the doer himself) are not as a rule aware of the social rooting or impact of the aforesaid person's act – *as this act is perceived by the theoretical observer*, i.e. it obeys *different* social norms with whatever this entails for roles and persons in specific conditions. It will become probably apparent from the italics used for emphasis in the main text that we attach particular importance to the distinction between *absolutely* and *partially* amorphous power (where, in terms of the Weberian and Manheimian vocabulary, completely "formed" or "channeled power" is considered authority). This retrospectively – or from the viewpoint of the observer – articulated distinction, which appears in the (below cited) notes nos. 3660-3661 and 4839-4840, serves, we believe, as an initial valuable interpretive key for the hue of the subjective or innermost feeling of power and by extension for its differentiation from the so-called objective aspect of social power. However, by itself this subtle distinction does not suffice to put an end to our tribulations, given that in (also below cited) notes nos. 3923-3924 as well as 2412-2413, 2417 Kondylis appears to view power as the *representation of the same element that constitutes authority*, a fact which, if nothing else, 'diminishes', if not eliminates in a certain sense, the difference in *texture* between the two forms of power, even if there remains a minimum dissimilarity in the way power is acquired and its magnitude. (In every case, we should not forget that the material in our possession – comprising unpublished hand-written notes – has not been made public, which means that our thinker

i.e. not channeled through existing institutions (politically unrefined<sup>30</sup> or only potentially usable in hindsight) crystals of power, before any further interpretive elucidation, is demonstrated by the following unpublished notes or excerpts thereof:

"In a leveling society the power claim becomes more intense precisely because authority becomes polycentric and often anonymous, in other words, it becomes weak. *Distinction between power and authority. The more authority recedes along with its specific conveyors – the state – the more space is left for individuals to unfold their power claims...*" (my emphasis – notes nos. 3646-3647).

"*The possibility for uprisings and overthrows in a society is explained by the different texture and breadth between power and authority. Even if authority in its entirety is centralized, outside of it there still remains diffused power that is amorphous and only gradually becomes crystallized in groups and bodies which put forward their candidacy for authority. Power is mobilized against authority and whatever power is held by authority, until it itself becomes authority*" (my emphasis and underlining – notes nos. 3648-3649, cf. also 3654).

"*Difference between power and authority. The former, accessible to anyone, the latter exercised by specific persons. All the power in a society never fits in the institutional frameworks of authority*" (my emphasis – note no. 3946).

"*Power endeavors to become authority, that is, to transform itself from having general influence to having binding influence.*<sup>31</sup> However this cannot be achieved by all who put forward power claims, only by one. But there is a price to pay for success: *the binding influence on behavior can influence only a part of it, the other parts remain intact. No system of authority has yet been invented which embraces all possible facets of power in a society*" (my emphasis – notes nos. 4020 and 4021).

"*Power is broader than authority. No authority can absorb power*" (my emphasis – notes nos. 4029 and 4030).

"*Power, authority, violence: three concentric circles where violence is the narrowest and power the broadest...*" (my emphasis and underlining – note no. 4043).<sup>32</sup>

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was probably still working on the issue and therefore the impression of a sometimes shifting argumentation is fully understandable, since writing something down does not necessarily mean final crystallization but rather the facilitation of subsequent selection and further contemplation).

<sup>30</sup> It should be clarified that the use here of the term 'politically' is linked *from a certain point onward* to the term 'institutionally'. What makes the political, political, i.e. constitutes its distinctive feature, is – contrary to what Carl Schmitt believed – *the public character* of the distinction between friend and foe (not the distinction per se – see note no. 1689), and this character first appears before the state and institutions, but as time passes the latter crystallize or consolidate it. Institutions create in the place of the (most powerful) person, who initially administers the power of the public interpretation of a significant distinction between friend and foe, a *position* that can thereafter be claimed by 'successors' using different means. And this is precisely why Kondylis asserts that "politics is the struggle for meaning and social meaning exists only where there are institutions" (note no. 1724).

<sup>31</sup> In this quote it is clear that the concept of power has a broader social scope (it achieves, as is said, "general influence").

<sup>32</sup> Here Kondylis, among other things, must certainly have at the back of his mind also the usual – of Platonic origin – errors of those who to no avail and misleadingly from a theoretical viewpoint try to programmatically disconnect power from violence or authority (Jaspers, Arendt). Without wishing to expand here, see the brief but illuminating discussion of the mistakes of the aforementioned scholars in P. Kondylis, 'The Philosophers and Power' in: *Pleasure, Power, Utopia*, op. cit., pp. 94-97 and 59-64. Regarding the relationship between violence, authority and power, Kondylis adds in this connection in



"Power is institutionalized and becomes authority" (my emphasis – note no. 3635, cf. also note no. 3883).

"A war of all against all would break out if no one was interested in the position of the other. Wherever the claim to power does not become a claim to authority, there all fight against all" (my emphasis – note no. 2163).

"Magnitudes that are found between absolutely amorphous and institutionally crystallized power – that is, in authority – coexist on a real level socially with authority and their ranking and categorization occurs solely on a logical level. These are directly involved in the exercise of authority. These magnitudes are: the result, intervention, introduction of available power" (my emphasis and underlining – notes nos. 3660-3661).

"... The pursuit of power covers precisely the middle zone between the psychic fluid and its institutional crystallization. ...[In Gehlen] the zone of diffusion of power remains unexplored – the zone that lies between the fluid and its crystallization" (my emphasis and underlining – notes nos. 4839-4840).

"Between power and authority lies the social result. Such gradations must be found and standardized sociologically, in contrast with Weber's position that only authority can be treated sociologically.<sup>33</sup> [The latter] should have taken into consideration power more generally" (my emphasis – note no. 3741).

The above distinction between forms of power in the following notes appears to be 'diminished' or 'relativized' purely from the viewpoint of texture although it is not entirely erased as a distinction on account of the multilateralism of power, the variety of its shades, aspects, intensities and manifestations and, of course, due to the difference of breadth:

"Power is the relationship among persons in which the behavior of the group of persons is adapted to the desires of one or some of them. Power is not necessarily

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the following unpublished notes: "Violence... restricts the power claims of subjects, sometimes to the point of eliminating them. In contrast, order allows the subject to choose between compliance or rebellion irrespective of the consequences, even with acceptance of the crushing defeat on the part of the rebel. While violence disables the subject, order enables us to use it for our ends." (no. 3984) "In the moralistic tradition – regardless of which cause is served by each morality – power is often distinguished from violence in order for it to be stressed that 'true' power has no connection with violence but is rooted in moral factors." (no. 3999) "Violence and authority cannot but stand naked. Only power can appear as denial of itself, as an accomplice to the abolition of power." (no. 4035) "The normativists juxtapose power and authority in the peaceful shaping of society. The juxtaposition is erroneous because power essentially means a social power claim which can only be put forth as a claim to the peaceful shaping of society." (nos. 3907-8); while in an aphorism that reverses the well-known saying of Clausewitz, he writes that "politics is the continuation of war by other means". It should not be forgotten what Gorgias said in this connection, namely that persuasion is perceived as a form of power which is (partly) different to 'violence' (Diels II, 298 B 11a). We note in passing that regarding the element of violence in particular, Kondylis writes pointedly: "The absence of physical violence means that the instinct of self-preservation becomes more feeble, less willing to engage in dangerous forms of confrontation. Whoever renounces open violence, which is always a form of sincerity, should ask himself whether he is perhaps promoting hypocrisy in its place. 'Better to be a hypocrite and stay alive' is simply the voice of self-preservation – not the form of morality." (notes nos. 944-945).

<sup>33</sup> See also footnote no. 19.

connected with command. Command is connected with norm, i.e. with institutionalized political power. *Weber's terminology must be re-examined: power is not something amorphous in contrast with authority, but the representation of the same element whose three main kinds are: force, authority, violence*" (my emphasis and underlining – notes 3923-3924).

*"Authority is a kind of power, so not in principle contradistinguished. It is improper [άτοπο] to say that power is amorphous whereas authority is practical"* (my emphasis – notes nos. 4045-4046).

"In antiquity they reinstate the direct relationship between freedom and authority. The Athenians do this when they justify their hegemony. They begin with the ascertainment that *freedom is gained and consolidated with power but real power comes only from authority*. In this context, *the connection between freedom and domination appears as the supreme incarnation of the ideal of self-sufficiency*. Thanks to its principle, Athens has material and political goods. The domestic predominance of the demos is part of this general schema" (my emphasis and underlining – notes nos. 2412-2413).

"The Greek understanding of freedom tended to include in my personal freedom the right to dominate others. To closely link the demand for individual liberty with the desire to dominate another. *To be subjugated or to subjugate, that is to be free yourself or the other to be free, is perceived as the only choice*. The same schema is also applied in the conception of domestic affairs: the demos [δῆμος] either dominates or is dominated. Their freedom means leadership or domination of the others, something which Aristotle too considers rightful (Politics 1333 b38 – 1334 a2). The smaller states were just as *prepared* as the larger ones to impose their rules – terms on their neighbors (cf. Larsen, *Freedom*, pp. 231, 233 ff.)" (my emphasis – notes 2417-2418).

While the (lesser or greater from the viewpoint of texture) distinction among forms of power in relation to the key concepts of *identity* and *recognition* of an individual subject may be discerned in the following:

"... A person plays the part of many precisely because he seeks *one* thing: recognition. To be one, he must be many.<sup>34</sup> Frequently, the same person knows that he is playing the part of many. *The price for being successful on the outside is enfeeblement on the inside – although the opposite can also occur*" (first emphasis the writer's, second emphasis mine – notes nos. 4683-468435).

<sup>34</sup> This view about role-taking and role-playing echoes, of course, the well-known position of William James, that "a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their minds" (W. James, *Selected Writings*, London: Everyman, 1995, p. 207), which has since become the cornerstone of an entire school of thought on the constitution and texture of a subject's identity.

<sup>35</sup> These particular notes have been included (p. 13) in the small selection of those published in Greek under the general title 'Identity, Power, Civilization' (50 notes) in the Journal *Nea Estia* in July-August 2004, issue 1769, pp. 6-19. Cf. here also Kondylis' notable dictum on dignity, which slightly varies or amplifies the idea expressed in the above quote: "Assessment augments dignity, by showing that whatever is gained in society comes at a price which is always excessive for dignity." (P. Kondylis, Introduction in: *Chamfort*, Stigmi, Athens 1994, p. 19).

"Inner role does not mean partially unsocial, but that part of the person is socially compliant and another *part is not*. *Opposition to prevailing norms does not mean lack of social reference and sociability in general; it appears thus only in relation to the prevailing norms*. From this viewpoint it appears non social in the normative sense, *but it is social in relation to other norms; it is social and lays claim to social power and authority*" (my emphasis – note nos. 4685-4686<sup>36</sup>).

"Setting the scene for recognition, the individual sets its entire world. Also, *some existences [who] fear hardship, completely reject recognition and seek humiliation, in reality are placing the self-attribution of value in such a hidden place that no one is able to find it in order to attack it*" (my emphasis – note no. 4710).

"*The need for recognition is a deeper need than power. Many relinquish power and authority but no one relinquishes the need for recognition, albeit in a very small circle, albeit in extreme cases in your own eyes*. Current theories of power come up short because they do not comprehend this. Need for recognition means others accepting your self-understanding, *your making such an identity that your self-understanding gains the recognition of others*" (my emphasis – notes nos. 3887-3888).

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<sup>36</sup> According to this, Kondylis argues that transgression of the – each time – historical order is not a transgression of order in the social-ontological sense, but transgression of a specific or established order – no matter if the latter is often (at least to some extent) respected by the transgressor, otherwise the common criminal, for example, would not feel the need to conceal his deed. And in the case where the transgressor does not conceal it and openly seeks to overturn the content of prevailing rules (read: their substantive interpretation within specific conditions), then in essence he is presenting himself as a prospective authority wielder, by adopting a broader *political* position. If it is considered that power and authority have a common structure but appear in different forms and are outlined in different content, distinguishable on account of breadth (the power claims of prospective dominators often invoke different norms to those of authority wielders), then more light must be shed on the concept with which power is considered to be broader than authority not only from a quantitative viewpoint *but also* with regard to texture. If we were ready to completely discard the distinction of texture and retain only the distinction of breadth, then the different endowments as the raw material for acquiring power should in our eyes take on values of truth or power 'reality' solely from their evaluation *in relation to the degree of authority* which they confer upon their bearers, something which is extremely precarious. It is a key question – perhaps the most central – whether by the term *texture* Kondylis means a *form* of power which derives its autonomy and distinctiveness by virtue of the inimitable 'equipment' of its type (e.g. athletic superiority, intellectual pre-eminence, musical genius, etc. *as such*) or whether he means the uniqueness of the *way* through which an *already* institutionalized type of endowment becomes functional/admirable each time. The types of power are of course relatively constant (even if they are sometimes enriched with the birth of new ones) but their evaluation changes depending on historical conditions, aside from the fact that the evaluations each time are not universal. An endless haggling over evaluations and a war for the supremacy of heterogeneous criteria appears to be continuously taking place. Here there are two choices: either the basic types are considered to be fixed but the way that they function differs from person to person (with the alterity of the way each time forming/imposing the norms) or new types are created on account of new needs to which different endowments lead (with the manner of their social functioning remaining relatively one-dimensional). Both are possible. In every case, *the issue at stake here is the degree to which power can be objectively measured* (in the specific conditions each time or generally). Is the (collective or individual) evaluation of a certain endowment always comparable with other forms of evaluation or could it be that the importance of whatever qualitative element belonging to an endowment cannot really (at least *carte blanche* and in every case) be evaluated, measured, redeemed or exchanged with any *other* social currency, by itself conferring a non-explicitly identifiable feeling of power? It appears, in every case, that the avid quest for effective ways to objectivize or ethically absolutize the element of the endowment, of the skill or of the talent – which constitutes the raw material for acquiring a crystal of social power – for the most part distances its bearers from the maximum possible cultivation of that qualitative element.

"What does the *real* fact mean that I do things, for which I do not expect recognition from others, because by themselves they provide the satisfaction of a duty performed? It means quite simply that *the feeling of power and the possibility of acquiring power is constantly being tested with our own self as judge*. If man is a being that acts and if it is impossible for him but to act, then *the power experiment takes place simply provided he acts, irrespective of who sees him or if no one sees him. It is from here that the exercise of technical skills as ends in themselves arises, and it is from here that the selfless search for truth arises. Of course even then, recognition from others as a rule pleases and encourages. But the individual himself gains even more power by knowing that he possesses a sector where he is himself both judge and judged*" (first emphasis the writer's, the rest mine – notes nos. 4097-4098).

"*The great vanity*<sup>37</sup> as opposed to the small, which lives off the proceeds from the feverish give-and-take in the Vanity Fair of daily life, is to a large extent independent of praise and acclaim; which is why it looks like modesty" (aphorism of Kondylis which was published in the selection of *Reflections and Dictums* after the writer's death<sup>38</sup>).

Alongside the aforementioned notes and quotations which make apparent the primary distinction made by Kondylis between forms of power – even if it is debatable whether and to what extent it is a clear distinction of breadth and texture or breadth/intensity/form *which eventually or at some moment becomes/ends up* as texture – it would be justifiable to also cite a series of selected passages containing basic *attributes* of the central concept of power, in order to review more comprehensively the main Kondylean findings in a definition of power which is as concise/unified as possible, before examining what sense or texture of power our philosopher obtains (or at any rate appears or seeks to draw) from the qualitative essence of his theory:

"Power is self-transcending, self-preservation, in the sense that it must continually go beyond itself. As soon as it gains a position, it endeavors to secure it, that is, it occupies itself with the preceding level of its ambitions from the standpoint of a necessarily higher and more overarching level. Thus, *power is movement, although it would prefer to be stationary*, that is, to have overcome all the real or imaginary obstacles, that is, to be God". (my emphasis – note no. 3740; cf. note 4430[071] where regarding this matter it is noted: "The striving for/claim to power as a continuous effort of the subject to acquire that which he will never have: a firm

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<sup>37</sup> The word "vanity" can be read here as "pursuit for the acquisition of an (inner) feeling of power" just like in the characteristic quote from *Power and Decision*, in which Kondylis asserts that the "inconsistency" of publicly announcing his theory is due to "literary vanity" (see *Power and Decision*, op. cit., p. 229).

<sup>38</sup> P. Kondylis, 'Reflections and Dictums', *Nea Estia*, Athens, November 1999, p. 493. To raise the semantic intensity of the said quote, the concept of acclaim should be understood here as empathy -in the broader sense- with the subject's self-understanding (cf. notes 5609-5610 where it is stated that the said empathy is more important to the subject than the praise accorded to him only in his good or 'creative' moments).

and unshakable identity. Whoever had such a thing would not want power because he would be God, that is, absolutely tranquil and self-sufficient...").

"'I have power' and 'I exercise power' express the same thing. Having power should not make us forget that *power is a relationship*. Even physical attributes count in relation to the attributes of others. I have power means I exercise power, that is, I occupy a certain position in the entirety of social relations and on the basis of this ascertainment the others believe that I have latent power, that is, I can acquire more or another form" (my emphasis – note no. 3871; cf. also notes 3869-3870 in which it is stressed that the others regulate their reactions on the basis of the present position and capacity (for future action) of the subject, so the strict behavioristic identification of power with its exercise is rejected; similarly in note 3874 it is underlined that the desire to acquire power is intensified as a result of the inability to precisely gauge the power of the other on each occasion).

"Power is such always in relation to the power of someone else..." (note no. 4603; in note no. 3964 it is noted in this regard that "power is a relationship among people" which "in order to be calculated, there must be reference to the source, to the means, to the target and to the quantity of power", while in the corresponding notes nos. 4196-7 – commenting on the anthropological and political significance of power in Hobbes – Kondylis writes: "... Anthropologically given power is not limited solely by physical obstacles, but by the intervention of another planned act, action. I have power in the political sense if I successfully deal with such interventions. In this context, *power means something comparative, namely that I am more powerful in relation to someone else*. Power is at the same time a reference of human action to the world, as well as a reference of human activity among different people. The linkage of these two viewpoints means that a person's planned act is directed toward acquiring authority from both sides. Constant shifting and transition from the anthropological to the political level, anthropological and political objectives continuously become intertwined (cf. Schelsky, Hobbes, 84 ff.)". Moreover, in note no. 3968 it is noted that "*power may in principle be substance, relationship, capacity*", [but] *it is not the former*", this latter assertion being explained in notes nos. 3916-3917 where, it is stated, "the Hobbesian view of power as substance neglects the – important for the political act – time factor" – all emphasis mine).

"The cause of man's desire to expand his power is not always that he is not content with what he already has, but that *he must acquire more in order to assure what he has* – Leviathan XI. But how does one judge whether what he has is assured? By seeing what others have or if there are others more powerful than oneself. One must first of all acquire at least as much as others – or the relevant others – have (my emphasis – notes nos. 4181-4182).

"It is not necessary to have power over a man's goods, it suffices to have power over his power, which is power over his goods and over his capacity to do one thing or the other. *I have power over someone means that I can make his power work for me*, that is, my power by no means necessarily requires the general elimination of the other's power – only its elimination in relation to myself. *The other person is willing to eliminate his power in relation to me if I give him power in relation to others – most often he acquires power in general only if he submits totally to someone*". (my emphasis – notes nos. 3958-3959; on this point, cf. the definition of power as indirect authority in footnote no. 62, as well as what is written in note



no. 3913, where it is stressed that *"the crucial point about the concept of power is whether power can exist without being generated from this very struggle [for power]"* – my emphasis; furthermore, regarding the idea of submission as a tool for gaining power, see notes nos. 4153 & 3000 [00059]: *"Power claim does not necessarily mean imposition over others. Its objectives can be secured through submission to a more powerful when this provides the possibility for long-term self-preservation, that is, the possession of an ideational good such as identity"; "as opposed to a naturalistic conception of power – its imposition by force. Man submits himself to power depending on what he wants to be helped with on each occasion"* – my emphasis).

*"Self-preservation precedes the pursuit of power not in the sense that the static precedes the dynamic, but that self-preservation as a supreme objective is willing to become interwoven with all manner of pursuit of power, that it is willing to sacrifice every form in order to save the essence and whatever it can and bridle the pursuit of power in order to save the essence.* In contrast, pursuit of power in relation to self-preservation can take on fewer forms and is focused on more specific objectives. Self-preservation, which stands behind it, tells it whether its individual objective each time is correct or not" (my emphasis – notes nos. 4287-4288).

*"Pursuit of an objective is pursuit of power, the alteration of prevailing relations. Attainment of an objective means the alteration of a person's position relative to the positions of others"* (my emphasis – note no. 4645; On this point, in notes nos. 3912 and 3877, Kondylis writes: *"There is no power without the possibility of excluding others. I have power if I can prevent others from gaining access to certain material, social, political goods. Lawful authority consists in the existence of permanent rules on the basis of which access and exclusion take place". "... for each person who has more authority, another must have less..."*, with Kondylis explaining this viewpoint of his in notes nos. 3900-1: *"Someone expands his own power and reduces that of others. Because not only does he expand his own influence relative to others, but by expanding his own he increases the total existing power. However, when this total is increased, then the percentage of the others is automatically decreased.* It is a contradiction to say on the one hand that power is a representation, a reflection of relations and at the same time that it increases on its own" – my emphasis).

*"Power as a continuum in which one form passes unceasingly into the other and clashes with another.* Within the authoritarian system, various forms of power are used and as they alternate an imbalance of power is born which is its multilateralism" (my emphasis – note no. 3872; In note no. 3354, Kondylis refers in similar vein to the *"interpenetration of higher and lower social position and how [this] tempers or neutralizes the nominal authority"*. "People," Kondylis writes, *"who from one point of view are above, from another are below in social power"*; while in note no. 3897 he adds: *"no form of power stands alone, for it needs other forms of power also. No form of power is basic to all the others"* (all emphasis mine).

*"Power is connected with the existence of different positions and interests. If this difference did not exist, there would be no need for me to exercise power, that is, to influence the other so that he does what I want. Power is integrally connected with conflict"* (my emphasis – note no. 4569; while note no. 4005 explains: *"Between the reality of society and its normative self-preservation, which is projected also as a*

rule of conduct of its members, there is a *gap*. This gap is a constant source of friction, that is, a source of change" – my emphasis).

"Power changes the state of the doer; [Its] impact alters his preferences..." (my emphasis – note no. 3880; Similarly, in note no. 3890: "Whoever gains power subsequently changes, just as whoever seeks recognition alters his identity if necessary" – my emphasis).

"Power and authority are born in parallel with meaning, since they cannot exist without legitimization. It is no coincidence that they continuously invoke the meaning, the norm". "... universality [the characteristic of meaning] is the field in which a power claim alluding to commonality [κοινόν] can unfold. Commonality as a conscious field is born together with meaning. Meaning and political power claim are born in parallel" (my emphasis – notes nos. 3769-3770, cf. also notes nos. 4409, 4415-6, 4431-4435, 4515, 4517-8).

"Power is presented as a means for achieving ultimate goals. However, if it is presented thus, i.e. as a means, then it must first be acquired, because if it had already been acquired, then the ultimate goal would have already been attained and power would not even be needed as a means. But if power must first be acquired, then it itself becomes an immediate goal, its acquisition becomes the focus, even if nominally it is merged with the achievement of the goal" (my emphasis – note no. 3000[064]).

"The struggle for power determines who decides what the needs are. Whoever has the competitive power to stipulate the needs, does so having in mind his own needs and therefore he is automatically also the right person to satisfy them" (my emphasis – note no. 4617; previously, in notes nos. 3514-3515 it is clarified that "[distinctly human or social – i.e. not purely physical] needs do not exist from the outset and do not seek their satisfaction. In fact, the opposite is true: there is offer depending on the endowment and aims of certain individuals, and what these individuals offer in order to express their endowment and achieve their aims is transformed into the need of others depending on the degree of social influence [επιβολής] of the above individuals. A typical example is art or religion. Society as a whole does not have such needs from the outset. They are created by individuals with the corresponding endowment and aims – as long as these touch on certain anthropological constants which they seek to shape – this already takes place at the level of nutrition", while in note no. 3617 it is stressed that "precisely because endowments differ and because a different one is decisive in each era, it is not possible to construct a permanent Platonic social hierarchy" – my emphasis).

"The pursuit of power may mean two things: that I strive to attain a position where my decisions are binding on others simply on account of my position. That I am in a position to take binding decisions and I am now endeavoring to impose them" (my emphasis – note no. 4577).

"Power is exercised when both sides are in motion, active. If it is a case of distribution of roles in which no new roles are sought, then both sides are passive"; "When authoritarian power becomes perceived as causality, then it is not reciprocal, but [merely] the ability of one side to control the other. Then too, however, power is exercised practically only when triggered by the subordinate side; only then does it become activated and emerge from its fixed framework" (my emphasis – notes nos.

4573 & 4574<sup>39</sup>; in the same vein, Kondylis writes in the immediately following note (no. 4575): *"The quest for power is not causality, it is reciprocal insight [διόραση], calculation, imagination, construction of future situations as battlefields, crossover of psyches and subjectivities"* – my emphasis).

"Power is relationship. There can be no definition on the basis of general theoretical presuppositions, rather the investigation must have specific demands and stipulate the relevant sources and resources of the doers as well as the answers which they are capable of giving. *We cannot abstractly say that [one] power has a larger field for unfolding than some other if what is being sought is not the same.* If what is being sought is the same, then the doer with the greatest possibility of securing a positive answer is the most powerful" (my emphasis – notes nos. 3961-3962).<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> When the subordinate side provides occasion, either by virtue of an open claim against the dominant side or by allowing signs of doubting or future mobilization to appear, it makes the activeness of authoritarian power more conspicuous; because the subordinate, as not becoming perceived here simply as the casual and relaxed bearer of a given social role and fully identified with his specific social position, but rather as an 'autonomous' and self-directed [αυτόβουλο] 'physical subject' who may potentially (for a longer or shorter period of time) step out of his specific social persona, automatically reveals a more intense internalization of the oppressive will of the dominant and, consequently, a potentially greater future threat for the latter. What is noteworthy here is that the singular element which actually 'steps out' of the established social role, often seen (particularly in times of explicit or implicit rivalry) as threatening or undermining the power of the dominant side, is exactly the same element that constitutes the most valuable part of the service to the dominant side (in a dual sense: either as that force which (tactically-instrumentally) 'gets the job done' when the two sides are more collaborators than rivals, or, in the converse case, as that force which ('arbitrarily' or unilaterally) interpreted by the dominant side as 'centrifugal' legitimizes the status of its authority as 'necessary' for the imposition of order and austerity). The emergence of the singular moment or the raising of the person [πρόσωπον] from within the dictates of the petrified role may from the viewpoint of the observer often be interpreted in the second case as an unwitting involvement or as an imperceptible working surplus value in contradistinction to the purely typical stance (which endeavors to convince that 'I am not subordinate to you, but to your position; I myself am not subordinate but my persona'). In notes nos. 3450-1 Kondylis writes in this connection: "Without breaching institutions, the most important part of the task cannot be accomplished on time. To work strictly according to the principles of protocol is frequently the most effective form of work stoppage. Thus, the social arrangements and adjustments which undermine authority at the same time necessarily render it effective. Breach of institutions often cements authority since formalities are disregarded and substance is achieved; they [social arrangements and adjustments] consolidate authority by activating its deterrent power."

<sup>40</sup> To the above notes (or excerpts therefrom) which refer to the properties and features of the concept of power, one can add a long list of similar references. We shall cite the following headings, solely *by way of indication*, for the inquiring scholar: nos. 4185-6 (power and future), 4508-9 (power and finitude), 3841-2 (power meant neither in a vitalistic nor moralistic sense), 4054-4055 (power as avoidance of need [χρεία] and as imposition), 3836 (possible linking of power with values, authority with norms), 4161-2, 5281, 3903 (more prudent exercise of power by not totally annihilating the opponent), 4608-4609 (power as influence over others and – chiefly – over oneself), 4192 (definition of power as that which yields the inner realization of action), 3621-2, 4430[00070] (definitions of power as the capacity to actualize sizeable reserves and as the acquisition of resources), 4039 (power and evaluation), 4777-8 (magnitude of inequality of power moderates moral inhibitions), 3879 & 3937-3938 (power as relation and as privileges: the first note sets out the said distinction which the subsequent notes characterize as 'possibly unproductive', given that, as stated, "it is difficult for one to have strong social advantages without these being noticed by someone else"), 4281-2, 3881-2 (kinds of power: recurrent and expansionary, utilitarian, aggressive, deterrent, persuasive "in every different correlation in which they can neutralize one another"), 4718-4731 (primordial mechanisms of self-preservation are to be found in the Id: however, the drive for self-preservation though at first completely interwoven with pleasure principle is distinguished from the latter for the sake of acquiring

IV

On the basis of all the above crucial – selected from the unpublished corpus – notes or passages therefrom (those relating to the distinction between power and authority, to the relation between power and identity/recognition and to the attributes of the concept of power), in conjunction with the published texts as well as the published and unpublished maxims of the writer, we are now in a position to reconstruct a more complete concept of power, as the latter was conceived by Kondylis in his later work, and at the same time determine more lucidly its – pivotal for our subject-matter, i.e. regarding the kind of power which our thinker [seeks to] gain[s] from the essence of his theory – relationship with the corresponding concept of authority.

To summarize its chief attributes, power is perceived in the main as a relation and is equally seen or appraised as a comparative concept, with its comparative texture being revealed more clearly there where it itself is the common objective. It constitutes motion, although it would prefer in principle to be motionless, and in general it expresses the – in a dynamic sense – self-preservation or self-intensification which in turn secures substantive social survival, i.e. that necessary feeling of social identity which forges the solidity or 'objectivity' of a certain world-image – retrospectively justifying/legitimizing the subjective "ideological" decision on the basis of which it was created.

The increase of power of a certain subject means directly or indirectly the decrease of power of someone else (via the change of prevailing relations, which moreover is often reflected as a greater possibility for the former to access privileges or utilize resources or, conversely, to exclude or obstruct others from them) unless of course that someone else has succeeded in generally placing the subject's increased power at the service of his own aspirations either through his submission to the said predominating or reinforced subject or by convincing the latter to collaborate in order to advance the 'common interest' of both. More generally, a particular power always has within it the element of conflict with someone, which is why at the same time it is also potentially receptive to the element of consensus or amicable reciprocity with another, with whom it aligns and entrenches itself against the enemy or foe targeted each time, i.e. against any potential or actual source of resistance to its exercise or unfolding.

The possession of power – whether it is acquired due to the bindingness of a person's position or to that person's actual ability to implement decisions that are binding institutionally or *de jure* – changes its bearer (often at a speed unperceived by the latter) since it transforms the texture of his relations. Of course power is exercised or unfolds mainly when it is not perceived simply as the automated implementation of roles that are already firmly established or given but rather when

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broader power), 3970-1 (power and standing), 3972-3 (intention and power, power and influence: Marx exercised power in the twentieth century, but did he want such power to be brought into play?). In addition to the above notes, there is also a plethora of quotes referring to the concept of heterogeneity of ends [law of unintended consequences] with which, quite clearly, the concept of power is inextricably linked. Purely by way of indication, see notes nos. 3525-3534, 3593-4, 4210-11, 4552.

the subordinate side gives occasion by raising the issue of the lack of correspondence between role and person (or for that matter, as the ancient sophists used to say, 'φύσεως' and 'θέσεως'). Both power and authority present themselves as means or intermediate stages for the attainment of ultimate aims but in reality they themselves are or become (also) aims; and both are interwoven one way or another with meaning since they need (albeit a minimum of) social legitimization.

No form of power can stand alone; it needs the assistance of other forms, which interpenetrate one another, sometimes in a supplementary or auxiliary capacity and sometimes antithetically. From one viewpoint of social power (or at a given moment) somebody may be 'above', while from another viewpoint (or in different conjunctures) he may be 'below', with the criteria for appraising each form varying within the given social- historical conditions and class correlation of forces. The raw material for acquiring power in general is an (intentional) action that expresses or reflects a certain endowment, a developed skill, the offer of which is transformed into the need of other subjects, socially appraised in such a way that it eventually becomes or 'is transformed' into an object with specific importance and exchange value in the given social-historical context.

From the summary review of the above main properties of power, it would be appropriate here to keep tighter the concepts of its comparative texture, the socially necessary interpenetration of its forms, the change in their appraisal criteria and the consequent fluctuation of the position of each conveyor of a certain form of power, as well as the concept of endowment or of that qualitative element (expressed in an action) whose social appraisal within a historical context constitutes a permanent target and contentious issue or point of friction. This is because the above concepts (along with the corresponding aforementioned ones regarding the power – identity/recognition relationship) *combined* with the explicit ideas relating to the power–authority relationship which are set out immediately below, can, we believe, give us a more concise grasp of how our thinker understood theoretically and – in particular – how he aimed or intended to set forth *further* the fundamental distinction between the concepts of power and authority, an understanding whose basis subsequently makes more transparent the kind (or the texture) of power that he himself felt he was gaining from his specific theoretical engagement.

It is more than certain – as illustrated by the relevant notes cited (in which those referring to the more specific relationship between power and recognition/identity should also be included) – that Kondylis accepted in general the distinction between power and authority. However, as we have noted, the clearer determination of its texture was a focal point in his contemplation and a matter of continuous investigation, that is, whether and to what extent this distinction should be seen as qualitative, quantitative or both and mainly in what sense it is such. It appears – or at least one can (to express ourselves on this delicate point with the required modesty) discern or sense – that Kondylis initially accepted more wholeheartedly or with fewer inhibitions the ready Weberian distinction between "amorphous power" and authority (as confirmed by the aforesaid notes nos. 3648-3649 3660-3661 and 4839-4840 – where he speaks moreover, in the latter notes of a "zone of diffusion of power which lies between the psychic fluid and its institutional crystallization").



As time passed, however, he must have begun to view the Weberian manner of separating power and authority based on the crucial term "amorphous" as increasingly problematic or inadequate, though without wishing to rebuff or relinquish it *entirely* – for a reason we have already mentioned in passing in our 'third alternative reading' and to which we shall return with greater emphasis immediately below. The (also cited above) notes nos. 4045-4046, 2412-2413 and 2417-2418 and above all 3923-3924, in which the Greek thinker openly writes that "Weber's terminology must be re-examined" because "power is not something amorphous in contrast with authority, but the *representation of the same element* whose three main kinds are force [δύναμη], authority [εξουσία], violence [βία]", reveal this latter point most clearly.

The crux of the entire issue and at the same time the cause of the temporarily 'ambivalent' argumentation or whatever initial variance between the two aforementioned positions become visible in the elementary question that is latent beneath the said dilemma: Is power measured/appraised or at any rate can it be "objectively" measured/appraised? Is an objective and generally valid hierarchy or gradation of power forms constituted or can it (eventually or – albeit – within a historical 'paradigm'/definite time) be constituted? And if so, on the basis of what criteria does this in practice become or can become possible? Any affirmative reply to this question, and consequently adoption also of the view that there are in general or at a historical moment there could be, for social existences, steadfast criteria for an objective and universally accepted appraisal of power, would entail that at that hypothetical moment at which the respective unfaltering criteria would be revealed or set forth for universal acceptance, the persons, whose aptitudes, endowments or skills 'happened' to satisfy them or be in harmony with them, would *de facto* be proclaimed as authority wielders, whose authority no longer constitutes just one (the most important) power form, but rather the actual culmination (or greatest possible embodiment) of all the empirical gradations of power.

However, as undeniably shown by historical experience to date – something which prompts Kondylis himself to confirm in bold manner<sup>41</sup> – such unshakable criteria do not exist; but they do not exist, not because in general there are no criteria for measuring or appraising the forms of power which each time constitute (prevailing) scales of measurement and corresponding hierarchies, but because *the existing, real and tangible, criteria, which make up the respective measurement scales and analogous hierarchies – drawing their origin from different people or groups of people, different needs, tables of values, but also correspondingly different endowments – are qualitatively different, diverse [ετερόκλητα], one-sided [ετεροβαρή] or even conflicting, and moreover they alter with regard to their social weight or their standing according to the actual social-historical conditions, thus also rendering the corresponding scales and hierarchies continuously fluid, mixed with respect to their composition and alternating.*

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<sup>41</sup> "The action of a person or subject is not determined by the 'objective' constellation of power, but by its evaluation. *Objective measurement of power does not exist*, only the outcome of a contest can substitute for it, however the contest too is not determined solely by authoritarian power but by the realization and effective or ineffective use of this relation by the interested parties" (notes nos. 4571-4572 – my emphasis).

More certain criteria of this kind, though in a different sense, could at a specific moment (equally relative when judged in the depth of historical time) be acquired by the *theoretical observer* only after completion of the historical process through the revealed consequence of the heterogeneity of ends. The latter now makes visible the shaped - by the crossover of the doers' acts - social resultant (wherein the particular active components 'converge' but *not* as an aggregate or average) which, in turn, 'apportions' to each individual or collective subject its 'share' of power, so to speak. These latter ascertainments are particularly important because there is no disputing that in general and in a certain sense a predominant scale for measuring power is imposed or at least may in principle be imposed in a historical context - always versus other *continually coexisting* scales - and that subsequently concrete predominant measures or appraisal criteria are each time set in social practice, but this predominant measurement scale and the criteria specific thereto appear to be fluid not only from one era to the next, but also during the same era in which they seem to be erected, to predominate and be seen as 'established', they are constantly 'adapted' to the dynamic conditions and are never universally acceptable or substantially interpretable in the same way among subjects - aside from the fact that important social-political changes often relativize (appreciating and depreciating) the importance of their social value.

On the basis of this latter point, we can probe the difficulty of the issue, that is, the reason that initially (if not to some extent also in the course of his theoretical findings) made Kondylis adopt the Weberian vocabulary concerning "amorphous power" even though he had already discerned that there was something problematic with this. The cautious acceptance (in some of his notes) of the term "amorphous" - which Weber used in order to assert (mistakenly according to Kondylis<sup>42</sup>) that, in contrast with the crystallized power that is called "authority", this kind of power could not become an object of sociological treatment<sup>43</sup> - was a way to salvage a singular element or moment, so to speak, to demarcate a *qualitative* and, *as such, non-measurable, non-exchangeable* and, above all, *non-comparable magnitude* embedded within certain forms of (acquired) power. Kondylis fully realizes what is at stake but appears to disagree on this point with the eminent German sociologist because he already believes that what Weber called "amorphous" does not in principle need to be seen as absolutely undetected and unexplained, but rather, on the contrary, as something which can well become an object of sociological analysis through a (partial but sociologically sufficient) crystallization of its socially decoded 'particularity'.

In the course of things, I believe, the Greek thinker decided to relativize - *but only to some degree* - the Weberian term by using (as more appropriate) the terms "absolutely amorphous" and "partly amorphous" (see notes nos. 3660-3661) in order to be able to resolve the problem that arose: On the one hand to retain the qualitative and non-measurable/ comparable element that was more directly attached to the raw material of each form of power, that is, the endowment or

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<sup>42</sup> See aforementioned notes no. 3741 & 3960 (footnote no. 20).

<sup>43</sup> Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. G. Roth & C. Wittich, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1978, Vol. I, p. 53; Vol. II, pp. 941-948.

whatever developed skill whose social appraisal secured the sought-after power, while at the same time not impinging on the manifest-empirically indisputable truth that in order for any thing to constitute a form of power, it must necessarily *be able* to enter into the social 'appraisal office' and receive an 'exchange value' and a position among other forms of power against which it will be pitted and compared with respect to its texture and scope, (it must, that is, be able – at least to some extent – to annex, incorporate or be imbued by real or potential elements of authority<sup>44</sup>).

Thus, while in certain of his notes we see Kondylis willing to proscribe the term "amorphous" for good, even in later notes (if we are to judge from the numbering sequence<sup>45</sup>) he appears not to have irrevocably abandoned the use of the aforesaid term. Power or a certain crystal of power, as the appraisal of a specific endowment on the basis of equally specific norms, is a comparative element, but the criteria for comparison (as well as the reference to the said norms) which substantially make the power or crystal of power actual within specific conditions are – deep down – much more fluid than is usually believed. This means that power certainly has elements of authority (if not also violence in the broader sense) in order to be power, while authority shares a definite (sometimes also important) common domain with power, even though the latter has or carries a qualitatively different part which authority is not in a position to incorporate on account of its binding texture.

At this critical point we can now clarify the admitted vagueness and impreciseness of our specific previous questions<sup>46</sup>, by scrutinizing the problem of distinguishing the terms "subjective" and "objective power" (with which the crucial concept of identity is also inextricably linked) as well as by defining more clearly the relationship between this conceptual pair and the corresponding one of "power" and "authority". In current terminology, "subjective" is – as a rule – distinguished from whatever is called "objective". Each term is perceived as the opposite of the other, each ends up meaning whatever (or that which) the other is not. The core of this assertion is generally correct *if and only if* – sticking to the concept of power under discussion here – the term "subjective power" expresses the self-understanding each time of the acting social existence with reference to the power available thereto or (to use the Kondylean terms) the "feeling"/"sense of power" thereof, (contra)distinguished from the corresponding term "objective power" which a *theoretical observer* retrospectively (either heterochronically or synchronically, but *after* the completion of a certain historical process that had been in the balance) ascribes to that acting social existence. The question here, however, is whether the above distinction could *in some sense* remain conceptually active, meaningful and perceptible *among purely acting subjects*, provided we decided, that is, to completely leave out or set aside the theoretical meta-level (on which the social result that retroactively 'apportions' to the involved bearers their power is revealed

<sup>44</sup> A word of caution: To annex or incorporate elements of *authority* [εξουσία], not simply and solely – or in the narrow sense – violence! A notion of pre-eminence is activated or flourishes in the psyche of people by a variety of means and ways (although indeed the *threat* of violence, if not also its – sporadic – use is rarely absent from the process of 'authoritization' or absolutization – 'tabooization').

<sup>45</sup> See the above notes nos. 3660-1 & 4839-4840.

<sup>46</sup> See footnote no. 13.

to the theorist), and if the answer is yes, in what way exactly should the retention of its – necessarily different this time – semantic content be understood in this analogous instance.

It appears, indeed, that in principle it is not inappropriate or erroneous to keep active the distinction between the concepts of “subjective” and “objective power” *also* on the pure level of acting subjects (i.e. once one removes or methodologically renounces the consistent conceptual distinction between the practical level and the theoretical meta-level); however, its retention on just this one (‘immediate’ and torrid) level of active social practice can now, as is self-evident, take place solely on the condition that its own semantic content changes, i.e. a *different* (from the above) sense is assigned to the terms of the aforesaid conceptual pair and, consequently also, to the relation defined by them. Thus, in the matter of the apprehension of the latter in light of the redefined semantic content of its terms (necessitated by the *methodological* amalgamation of the two levels), the meaning of the very terms that constitute the conceptual pair must be differentiated, now according to the *social position* ‘occupied’ by each acting existence in a certain historical moment/period during which certain norms, certain criteria generally predominate and there is more or less a certain prevailing social hierarchy.

Here, on the one hand, the term “objective power” expresses the sense used by the ‘dominator’, the declared then (each time) prevailing-imposed form of power which he (purportedly) possesses, with the corresponding term “subjective power” for him ‘ending up’ meaning just about “individual power”, i.e. that (‘languid’/‘faint’ compared to the former) form of power (purportedly) held by the ‘dominated’ by him – a form of power (seen through the eyes of the dominator as) most often serving as a substitute or a means by which the ‘dominated’ can rationalize the lack of “objective power” that the dominator himself (purportedly) possesses. While on the other hand, the term “objective power” expresses the meaning used this time *on the part of the so-called* (by the ‘dominator’) ‘dominated’, to refer either to the representation of the power that is predominant in the prevailing atmosphere of the said subject, with which “subjective power” is now contrasted as *qualitatively* different<sup>47</sup>/superior/at times also not precisely ‘measurable’ (to a degree inversely proportionate to the magnitude of internalization of the criteria and norms of the ‘dominator’), or to overall ‘actual’ or ‘real’ social power, an organic and integral part of which is not only ‘conventional’ authority but at least equally if not more ‘individual power’ too; and in both cases, at any rate, it expresses something very different from the corresponding sense of the above-designated ‘dominator’. Of course, the terms ‘dominator’ and ‘dominated’ are used here very roughly, if not abusively, since – as already noted above (see cited note no. 3354) – someone can be ‘dominator’ in one sector and ‘dominated’ in another, possess one form of power but lack (or is short on) others, just as he/she may at a given moment, for example, voluntarily relinquish a large part of his/her own social power for the sake of some specific privilege/good or a strongly coveted narrower form of power, at times even reaching the point where by acting thus, he/she influences broader social or political

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<sup>47</sup> Even if this does not at the same time rule out, *to some extent* at least or only in a *certain* sense, one’s “subjective power” indeed being sincerely recognized by the dominated himself as a paltry share of the “objective power” of the legitimized dominator, which corresponds in the main to the above prevailing representation of what power is in general.

correlations to the extent that he/she is in the analogous key institutional position. These and many more related elements and examples in practice relativize, but without totally eliminating, the solid nature of these concepts in which a multitude of internal gradations and intermediate shades of power are also concentrated.

Now, on the basis of what we noted previously a) regarding the interlocking of the higher and lower position in the person of the same subject and, subsequently, the way this interlocking influences the acquisition of power (see notes 3872, 3354) b) regarding the fact that no form of power stands alone but requires other forms of power too, and that no form of power is basic to all the others (see note 3897) and c) regarding the different endowment of subjects from a qualitative viewpoint and the also fluid, each time, criteria for the appraisal of their certain kind of endowment which constitutes a source of acquiring social power (see notes nos. 3514-5, 3617, 4617), we may – in combination always with the (dual) aforementioned definitions of “objective” and “subjective power” on the level of social action – infer that the semantic content of the now more succinct Kondylean conception of power arises from the *alternation* and *circumincession* of the corresponding content that is expressed via the said terms of ‘dominator’ and ‘dominated’ on the level of doers. This, as is logical, means that the term “subjective power” is treated *both* as antithetical to the term “objective power” (in the sense given by the dominator) *and* as – a separate or prominent – segment of the second term (in the sense given by the dominated), which shows that it is seen *solely in specific conditions* sometimes as a delusion<sup>48</sup> or simply the product of rationalization on the part of the weak party and sometimes as a qualitatively different or broader element, which the conventionally ‘powerful’ party (the wielder of institutional authority) now arbitrarily calls ‘transgressive’ or ‘lacking real substance’ because *it simply refers to norms other than those invoked by the latter* in order to validate his power (see cited notes 4685-4686).

At this point, the intertwinement of power [ισχύς] and authority [εξουσία] becomes more than obvious since power on the one hand needs a piece of authority – if not also a piece of real or potential violence – in order to be power (despite Arendt's assurances to the contrary), that is, it needs a part of institutionally/non-institutionally legitimized or validated force and quality in order to be power, though without confining its overall breadth to such a binding domain; while authority, on the other hand, in order to be imposed in the long term must have next to the ‘monopoly of organized violence’ (M. Weber) a piece of power which by virtue of certain prevailing norms and institutions is socially accepted and active (cf. here the Kondylean example of note no. 4043 concerning *concentric* circles of different diameters delineated by power, authority and violence). Now that piece of power outlined *outside* the domain of authority, which at the same time is *not* considered in specific conditions to be a mere ‘delusion’ (but rather originates from the appraisal of a ‘real’ quality – e.g. of an endowment or a skill – having as its underlying basis *some* social significance) to some extent ‘stands on’ authority, i.e. it

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<sup>48</sup> Regardless of the fact that said delusion or purely ‘individual’ (read here: solipsistic) power *too* may – most often temporarily – be placed in the service of acquiring tangible social power, for as long as the subject acts on the basis of the ‘unshakeable’ conviction that he/she himself/herself has greater power than that to which the ‘actual’ resources pertaining to him/her correspond and the Other happens to be unaware of this asymmetry.



shows that the conveyor of that piece of power complies with or endorses the prevailing norms to a certain degree, now placing next to them other norms 'alien' to the prevailing ones, thereby expanding the general space of the norms and therefore also of the power forms specific thereto, resulting *de facto* in the contraction of the prevailing norms and their corresponding power within the broader framework set, causing them in effect to lose their previous character of absolute and universal (cf. cited notes 3900-1, 4685-6, 4645, 3912, 3877).

In one of the later – in terms of the numbering sequence – unpublished notes (no. 5469) Kondylis cites the apposite words of William Hazlitt according to which "Man... is never so truly himself as when he is acting a part". In the context of an organized society's values and norms, this means: The "subjective" element, *in order to be such*, must 'carry' the "objective", interpreting it however substantially – from an axiological viewpoint – in *its own* way (at least to some extent). While the "objective" element, by itself, i.e. for as long as it is perceived by a non-participating theoretical observer (to the extent that we accept the possibility that such an observer can exist) or for as long as it has not (yet) been 'partialized' by some acting subject within the context of an ongoing process that is in the balance, does not have – as the 'universally applicable' or as the 'Being' with which all separate subjects are connected so as to derive their distinctive features – any practical-moral orientation to offer in order to attribute to each of those separate subjects his/her worth (e.g. by making him/her superior to others); for it does not have, *as* a single whole of this sort, the slightest *intrinsic* criterion for hierarchically 'allocating' its own value significance (as that all-encompassing whole) to individual subjects – as an essentialist-objectivist viewpoint would have us believe. In order to acquire value significance and hence safeguard its function *as* "objective" element, it must actually become partialized via a subjective interpretation that perceives the (in other respects axiologically colorless and neutral) space of the "objectively existing" as the domain of *a concrete and definite crystallized social hierarchy which in turn 'necessitates' a structural or morphological (re)formation*.<sup>49</sup> This again brings us to the realization of the importance of objectivization and of understanding the fact that there are forms of power that are potential forms of authority which, once actualized (i.e. by becoming forms of authority), automatically entail certain binding norms by ruling out or greatly degrading the others. So, the power game takes either the form of a clash among different norms which each player invokes in advance<sup>50</sup> or – something that ultimately is equivalent – the form of a conflict among the different

<sup>49</sup> See unpublished note no. 4409. Kondylis made clear that although "the" Political is assumed to be a latent and, basically, amorphous principle, it never *actually* manifests itself *as* such or in its entirety (i.e. as a universal realization of the – incessantly invoked – "common good") but only as concretized (=partializing) 'politics'. The notion of the Political thus constitutes a necessary condition for every (historically-sociologically perceived) social order and coherence, but the former's significance and axiological weight emanate mainly from its *imaginary* operation rather than its tangible ontological function in the context of social interactions. Our thinker analytically discusses this idea in *The Political and Man* (cf. Part II, chapter 3, section c; transl. by L. Anagnostou, Themelio, Athens 2007, p. 276ff – especially pp. 281-286) and indirectly certifies its validity when he generally characterizes his descriptive-explanatory theory as "an intellectual product of conventionalism".

<sup>50</sup> In one of his aphorisms, for example, Kondylis writes in this regard that "the present dominator invokes logic [I would add: safety], the future dominator lauds freedom". P. Kondylis, *Reflections and Dictums* in: *Journal Nea Estia*, Athens, 1999, p. 495.

interpretations as to what the commonly accepted (universally 'binding' yet very vague in their generality) norms ordain substantially and in specific conditions.

Since Kondylis shapes the concept of power by initially encompassing in his morphological-descriptive framework *both* different meanings of the terms "subjective" and "objective" power of the conventionally<sup>51</sup> so-called 'dominator' and 'dominated', he accepts also the broader notion of power in relation to the respective notion of authority; i.e. he accepts, if nothing else, the *possibility* of the former expressing within a certain framework a domain of energy which reflects an 'other' quality or another appraisable kind of endowment (gift, skill) corresponding to different norms than those prevailing – a fact which in any case is often empirically verified. The crucial question that surely arises at this point is how one can validly assert at a given moment of social action whether "subjective power" is something superior or at least qualitatively different to *so-called* "objective power" (i.e. to the sense of power which each 'dominator' has) or simply constitutes a delusion or faint reflection of tangible "objective power"; whether, in other words, it is appropriate or more prudent for one to embrace the sense of power of the 'arbitrarily(?)' so-called (by the dominator) 'dominated' or whether one should, to the contrary, adopt the corresponding sense of power of the 'conventional' and institutionally legitimized dominator. Because any solid-plausible answer that may be given in general can come only by considering the specific conditions of each 'paradigm' or social-historical context, the certainly safer judgment comes only subsequently from the theorist, after completion of the (retrospectively examined) process – as Kondylis himself lost no opportunity to repeatedly affirm<sup>52</sup>. However, because, as is evident, acting existences by definition can neither see nor, of course, wait for the upcoming and retrospectively perceived social result in order to specifically appraise each form of power, they are obliged to instantly grasp on the basis of the "tact of judgment" (Clausewitz) the element that finally tips the balance in favor of one or the other view about which notion of power ought to be preferred each time. Here, it must be realized that as a rule it is not the existing or even potential correlation of forces among rival conveyors alone (no matter how significant its specific weight jointly with that of corresponding 'extraneous' chance occurrences may be), but rather the subject's *taste* – i.e. the deeper inclinations and expectations of each deciding existence on the basis of which the latter will appraise a (projected) endowment or a (projected) skill as important or as weak – the element that primarily determines whether a crystal of power is outside the walls of authority or merely a by-product and derivative (of rationalization) of the latter. It

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<sup>51</sup> We intentionally choose the term 'conventionally' over 'abusively', because, as we have noted, a socially certifiable comparison does indeed take place between the different forms of power (even if the magnitudes compared are subsequently transformed, making the process of their evaluation topical precisely because of this constant volatility). Of course the conveyor of the dominant authority or meaningful form of power wants to perceive this as rock-solid and unique, and in this way shakes off any suspicions he may have about the unstable character of its evaluation each time. Whatever the case, it appears that in the depths of historical time certain – socially prominent – forms or types of power become consolidated (for long periods at a time), a fact which, moreover, also enables great names to be preserved in history.

<sup>52</sup> In unpublished note no. 4552, the Greek thinker relevantly writes: "... man makes his own history, but he does not know it".

appears that we cannot deduce much more on this point from Kondylis' overall available work.

Before proceeding further with our reasoning on whether the Greek thinker himself (as being a model of all-round theorist) eventually felt that he was acquiring power or authority from his theoretical activity and the recording of its harvest, we should like to make an additional observation concerning an analogy that one can discern on the levels of macrostructures (historical ideal types) and microstructures in relation to the operation of the mechanism of heterogeneity of ends [law of unintended consequences] – always in the light of what we have said above regarding the interpenetration of power forms and the differentiated notions of power on the basis of social position.

Precisely because not only the forms of power but also the ways of acquiring it (e.g. through imposition, submission, persuasion, cooperation, etc.) are many and varied and precisely because no form of power can stand by itself but must engage also with others, the social predominance and superiority of individuals or groups may to some extent be due to the prowess and ability of their bearers but at the same time it is also the function of many heterogeneous social-historical factors which sometimes or frequently cannot be traced back or ascribed – at any rate not exclusively – to the planning and intentional 'rational' action of the said subjects. Thus – to use an admittedly oversimplified example from the field of individual psychology – a person can seize authority or an important crystal of social power not only on account of his cultivated inclinations, skills and abilities but also the timely coinciding of his 'weaknesses'/'disadvantages' with historical conjunctures in such a way that the latter do not impede his/her acquisition of power but on the contrary and 'paradoxically' facilitate it (as, for example, in the case of a man that is powerful in a number of sectors who, when obliged for various reasons to relinquish his primacy to someone else or others, may also 'flatter' such a strong – at that moment – need of the latter for supremacy or recognition, that – for example instead of the intention to perpetuate the rivalry – he procures his/their cooperation along with the indirect increase of his power in exchange for the fact that – at that pivotal moment for the latter's identity – the former accepted to place himself in his/their charge or play second fiddle), thereby showing that elements which theoretically or on a first reading are considered to be 'inadequate' or 'devoid of power', as links in a larger chain of interactions and correlations within specific conditions, can easily constitute or be transformed into precipitates or materials for the acquisition of power.

This ascertainment, which by itself does not seek accolades for having any particular quality or originality, nevertheless takes on considerable weight if it is significantly extended in scope so as to be perceived on the social macro-level, in turn prompting someone to consider that collective formations and entire historical ideal types (those providing crystals of social power to certain individuals, groups or classes of people), which at first glance appear to have been shaped strictly in accordance with the action, planning and needs of precisely those who reap the benefits of their historical preponderance and 'control' their meaning, in essence are

only the fruits of ferment and processes which are a long way from the intentional and planned action of dominators or leading players at any given time.<sup>53</sup>

It seems to us that what the interested observer should regularly recollect is that every socially solid or significant crystal of power can be composed – and in the main this is the case – of individual pieces which if seen separately, i.e. are detached from the broader framework of their interactions, are comprised of diverse or even mutually exclusive materials. Thus, although conveyors in hindsight often appear to associate their acquisition of power with a 'pre-ascribed' subjective meaning, it is in fact the result of a conjuncture of (significant) acts of many social existences, and this makes it quite difficult for one to determine *exactly* how the acquisition takes place, because the aforesaid result can be perceived only in retrospect through the mechanism of heterogeneity of ends. In saying this, we do not mean of course that it is impossible *per se* to widely describe (always in retrospect) the structure of this process on the level of social ontology and, consequently, that this description can be accomplished only on a limited scale through an abrupt transition to the levels of sociology and history, but that the real possibility for the social-ontological description and drawing of the broadest possible conclusions cannot, as such, provide specific answers and for specific situations without exceeding its limits, that is, cautiously interweaving them with those of the other two levels. However, recognizing in every case the crucial role played by the mechanism of heterogeneity of ends in shaping the character of microstructural typologies and macrostructural ideal types, it does not seem trivial to provide a reminder here – together with A. Lavrantonis and in opposition to the corresponding counter-arguments of normativists – about a general idea that certainly incites or awakens the psychological resistance of the overwhelming majority of scholars and which is none other than: "They who feel the heterogeneity of ends to be dismal do not understand that it was precisely this that created them too [so as to feel it (also) as dismal]"<sup>54</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> As Kondylis indicatively and characteristically notes in this regard: "Historical ideal types – capitalism – in which collective action is crystallized, are historically born from the heterogeneity of ends, however, their clarity gives the impression that they emerged from pure rectilinear – tactical rationality with respect to order, i.e. that the action which created them had this meaning subjectively. But it has this meaning only objectively – viewpoint of the observer – who is in danger of viewing as subjective meaning whatever exists as a historical formation" (unpublished notes nos. 5397-8). The other idea of utilizing the benefits of popular revolutionary action to seize authority and consolidate the superseding (exploitive) status quo by the new powers that be – which was astutely analyzed by A. Lavrantonis and P. Kondylis in their early writings – does not lose its heuristic value and significance in view of the above ascertainment but is merely supplemented (or at least relativized to only a certain degree). For the developed latter idea cf. Antonis Lavrantonis "The Revolutionary Ideology and its Vicissitudes" in: *Journal Martyries* no. 10, Athens 1964, pp. 4-9 [in Greek]; P. Kondylis's Preface in: J. Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution*, transl. by P. Kondylis, Kalvos, Athens, 1970, pp. 9-24 (especially p. 22); Antonis Lavrantonis, "The Formative Years of Panajotis Kondylis" in: *Journal Simeioseis*, no. 54, Athens 2000, p. 25ff.

<sup>54</sup> This perceptive remark, from a personal conversation with Antonis Lavrantonis, is quoted here to make the general point that whatever conflicting or mutually exclusive is encompassed in the actual materials or elements which comprise social formations, precisely this will pass spermatically also into their bearers or 'products' (i.e. into those consciousnesses that are shaped within such social formations). While in relation to the concept of identity, we might consider the following idea: It is precisely because the shaping of individual subjectivity takes place within the each time social-historical formation, which emanates from the operation of the mechanism of heterogeneity of ends, that the very identity of the individual subjects – only by becoming so comprehensive as to

After all the above ascertainties, we now arrive somewhat better informed and equipped at the threshold of two fundamental questions: Is it mostly power or authority which Kondylis feels he draws from his general theoretical activity and more specifically from the quintessence of his worldview and the consequent public disclosure of its findings? And if it is considered that he acquires power rather than authority (despite the interrelation and intertwining of the two which often makes their explicit boundaries variable and indistinct), *why does he continue* (by virtue of his theoretical undertakings) *so wholeheartedly* to favor power or seek to increase it, when he himself has become fully aware of the great importance of authority – frequently, even for the acquisition of power itself (as a prerequisite for the latter)?

It is difficult to find a clearer answer to the first question than that which is provided in one of the writer's unpublished notes: "There are domains," our thinker writes, obviously having also himself in mind, "which have power – *domain of the spirit* [πνεῦμα] – but not authority. However, just as power is diffused in all domains, authority too exists in all in different amounts" (note no. 3655 – my emphasis). In connection with the latter assertion, and indeed with an equally explicit reference to the spiritual domain, Kondylis hastens to clarify that "... power, for as long as it lies beyond/outside [ἐκείθεν] authority is also institutionalized" [that is to say] "it is gathered along with the possibility of violence in certain loci [ἐστίες] so that it does not move around freely, available to anyone", [just as] "for example, intellectual power is concentrated in universities" (note no. 3989) or, in similar vein, that "phenomena that live *primarily* on the drive for power, such as the spirit, are crystallized into authority, when they are institutionalized" (note no. 3059 – my emphasis) while stressing (if not at the same time acknowledging) that "*it is possible for individuals who are in circles where political power is not pursued directly to themselves have a greater thirst for power than those who are in politics because other gifts [χαρίσματα] or other coincidences brought them there*" and this, as he writes, because in principle "competition in society takes place in connection with the relative others at any time" and "every individual wants to expand their power

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accommodate generally conflicting elements – retains its entrenching and functional role. So, identity shapes or transforms the antitheses and ambivalences; it does not eliminate them. It is because – as Kondylis says – "the Ego is an energizing fluid, which takes form when poured into various vessels" (see: 'Identity, Power and Civilization' [50 unpublished notes], *Journal of Nea Estia*, Athens, 7-8/2004, op. cit., p. 16) that it must be conceived as an overseeing and unifying shaper of mutually conflicting cathexes and decathexes, investments and disinvestments. In a deeper sense, it is precisely the lack of 'grand' self-awareness (that one constitutes the locus of – potentially active – contradictory elements) or obliviousness of one's self as the 'incarnate objectivization of heterogeneity' which strengthens self-confidence, revitalizes the motivation for action and gives rise to great works. It is 'accomplished' or 'achieved insincerity' (something slightly more 'fruitful' than Nietzsche's 'superficiality out of profundity') and not 'performative sincerity' to which honor should be accorded for rescuing the creative drive. As our philosopher put it in unparalleled manner: "Whoever seeks to rally and entrench his self instead of diffusing it, must fashion and burn effigies of himself *in order to divert attention from his own self*." (P. Kondylis, Introduction in *Machiavelli*, Kalvos, Athens 1970, p. 18 – my emphasis). And elsewhere: "Real self-awareness, *if it were possible*, is perhaps far less appropriate for action. Factitiousness, the borrowed light of personality [το ετερόφωτο της προσωπικότητας] do not weaken its struggle for recognition – quite the opposite." (unpublished note no. 4748 – my emphasis).

and recognition by the circle to which they belong" since "the more polycentric a society, the more the need for recognition" (notes nos. 4183-4184 – my emphasis).

This – sometimes more frequently sometimes less commonly – manifested greater thirst for predominance in domains of non-political power, the spiritual being the prime example, as a rule utilizes the considerable advantage that it can much more easily disguise or conceal itself since – in contrast with "violence and authority which cannot but stand naked" – "only power can appear as denial of itself, as an accomplice to the abolition of power" (note no. 4035).<sup>55</sup> In the above sense, such power can (or seeks to) be imposed on the Other not as the result of his/her *unconcealed* coercion but as his/her voluntary acquiescence to or 'compliance' with the dictates of his/her own deeper 'benefit' or his/her long-term 'interest' which are now intentionally invoked by anyone making claims to social dominance.<sup>56</sup> Perhaps for this reason (i.e. on account of the *persuasive capacity or quality of power*, which on its part presupposes a different from the viewpoint of content but equally strict – if not stricter than authority – inner 'asceticism' or real harnessing of one's own drives in order for the disguise to be effective) Kondylis too notes that "pre-eminence [*αυθεντία*] - prestige - belongs to power, not to authority" (note no. 4009) or, more precisely, that "the pre-eminence linked to power is broader... than that which is specific to authority..." (note no. 4019).<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup> For an analytical account of this argument see: P. Kondylis, "The Philosophers and Power" in: *Pleasure, Power, Utopia* Stigmi, Athens 1992 pp. 59ff, 102-103.

<sup>56</sup> Let us recall here one of Kondylis' characteristic definitions of power: "Authority means to force someone to do something against his will. Power means to compel someone to do something in the belief that this is his will" (note no. 3656). Said definition is significantly influenced by Max Weber's respective definition of domination: "...*domination* will mean the situation in which the manifested will (*command*) of the *ruler* or rulers is meant to influence the conduct of one or more others (*the ruled*) and actually does influence it in such a way that their conduct to a socially relevant degree occurs as if the ruled had made the content of the command the maxim of their conduct for its very own sake. Looked upon from the other end, the situation will be called *obedience*." (Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, University of California Press 1978, Vol. II, p. 946).

<sup>57</sup> It may be logically inferred from this latter that relinquishment of authority does not mean relinquishment of power in general but relinquishment of a (significant) portion of power in the broader sense, just as, on the other hand, relinquishment of authority *and* (expansive) power does not mean total relinquishment of recognition – let alone self-preservation itself! – but only of one of the two reservoirs from which recognition is extracted (namely, relinquishment of one's recognition of oneself as 'superior') precisely *for the sake of* self-preservation, which is now interwoven with the other reservoir of recognition, that drawn from the providing of services to others, that is, recognition of the Ego by the Other in exchange for the latter's *open* elevation to a level of jurisdiction to which the former refers. Only in extraordinary cases (due to "the experiencing of unprecedented intensity and reinforcement") is physical self-preservation sacrificed for the sake of corresponding ideational/social self-preservation, i.e. their initial value position is entirely reversed.

In accord with the above – to make at this point, incidentally, a number of important conceptual clarifications and distinctions – what in principle and as an overwhelming rule continually constitutes the absolute constant is self-preservation: "Self-preservation comes before the pursuit of power not in the sense that the static comes before the dynamic, but that self-preservation as a supreme objective is willing to become interwoven with all manner of pursuit of power, that it is willing to sacrifice every form in order to save the essence and that it can even bridle the pursuit of power in order to save the essence. In contrast, pursuit of power in relation to self-preservation can take on fewer forms and is focused on more specific objectives. Self-preservation, which stands behind it, tells it whether its individual objective each time is correct or not" (notes nos. 4287-8). Physical and by extension – its 'derivative' (and potentially autonomized) – notional self-preservation (read: one's own

preserved world-image and identity on the social plain) is in turn safeguarded by virtue of the recognition given by others, which has *either* a 'positive' hue (show of love, friendship, trust, joyful acceptance, forgiveness, etc.) *or* a 'negative' one (show of hostility, hatred, anger, seeking of revenge, undermining, supplanting, show of disdain, ostentatious indifference, etc. – e.g. the expression "your hatred is evidence of our power" used by the Athenian representatives when addressing the Melians [Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book V, 95] is but an illustrative example of such 'negative' recognition), since man is generally recognized either by perceiving himself via his intersubjective relations as a 'centrality' and imposing himself on the significant Other (e.g. by ordering him, something which certainly balances nerves and assuages) or indirectly, by receiving the unforced/voluntary acceptance and consensus of the Other through a previous provision of satisfaction and temporary 'centrality' to the latter or identification therewith, ultimately alternating these two practices, *each* of which gives him recognition as an enemy (and even as foe) or as a friend depending on specific needs and conditions (see also notes nos. 3216-3217, 4292). Relinquishment of the 'negative' texture of recognition, i.e. that which is drawn from enmity and is equivalent to relinquishment of claims to more direct authority for oneself and the exercise of violence against the Other, in no way means simultaneous relinquishment of the so-called 'positive' form of recognition by the latter (as a friend), and therefore of power in general – quite the contrary in fact (this should also be read conversely). Full and sincere recognition of the Other *as* Other, i.e. ultimately, consistent and total renunciation of the identity of the Self (to the extent that this is not simply a tactical – 'instrumental' or temporary transition to another identity for the sake of the physical subject itself), annulment of *every* form of recognition for oneself, constitutes (at the level of practice) *annulment of the conditions of possibility of the existence itself* and is something, in any case, impossible.

In light of the above clarifications it is demonstrated that "positive recognition" or "celebrated dependence" or, for that matter, "attained forgiveness", which many Hegelians, Marxists and advocates of Critical Theory erroneously view or commend as the *only* condition of possibility for a "functional" relationship, considering the respective "negative recognition" to be simply secondary or – at best (in common, here, with their opponents, the liberal advocates of the "invisible hand", despite the reversal of prefixes by both sides) – as the organic part of a possible future (desirable) equilibrium of a 'positive' shade (as if there were no clashes which do *not* lead to an equilibrium – unless, of course, Marxists/Hegelians or, respectively, liberals would be prepared to include in the term 'equilibrium' *also* the social result of the mechanism of heterogeneity of ends deduced in retrospect by the *theoretical observer...*), has the same conceptual structure with the kind of the (exorcized) "negative recognition" and not only does it *not* constitute its relinquishment, but composes jointly each time with the "negative" whatever is called 'Being' or 'Nature'. Having sensed this the aforesaid Hegelian moralists used the artifice of eliminating all concept of '(pure) theoretical observer' or completely merging the latter with the acting social existence in order to identify 'becoming' with 'Nature' (seeing in this the wholeness and immanence of Being) and *utilize the fluidity of the former and the absence of a visible or immediately/shortly expected (with theological or secularized signs) 'worldly' future eschatology as an argument in favour of toleration and 'forgiveness'*, since, as they maintain, the relativism of time will *in any case* eventually crush every 'unilateralism' and absolutism or any kind of political foundationalism, every singular 'entrenchment', so as for *Man* to – partially or wholly – avert (or prevent) the analogous 'unwisely launched' (but most probably inescapable) development. However, not only is it forgotten here that relativism would not *in principle* be possible without the 'abhorrent' or 'surmountable' to the Hegelians 'unilateralism' or individual absolutized perspective (first confounding of time levels), but also that the universal acceptance of the rumored or proclaimed-invoked 'forgiveness' (i.e. more comprehensive perspective which would supposedly contain on the practical level the each time mutually exclusive individual components so as to lead or open the way for the longed-for 'consensus', 'toleration' and 'pluralism') would either remain vague and meaningless without substantial interpretation that translates what this prescribes in specific conditions (in which case the cycle of confrontations would again be initiated, this time through the conflicting individual interpretations of the aforesaid supposedly 'unifying' perspective) or – to borrow Kondylis's example – it would mean the freezing of life itself, if, adopted at face value, it was driven to its extreme logical consequences, for the same reason that two completely selfless people standing at a doorway would never enter the room because each would continuously invite the other to cross the threshold first. In addition, moreover, one can justifiably ask what meaning the concept of forgiveness could retain – as a performative act of friendship – if (in the framework of a 'rational'/'mature' world, for example) it was elevated to a universal virtue and all notion of revenge was absent, in precisely the same sense that one would be justified in pondering the meaning of the concept of friendship if the



If, on the basis of the above, it appears more or less clarified or obvious that Kondylis acquires power, in the main, rather than authority (notwithstanding, as we noted previously, the intertwinement of the two) from his theoretical activity and especially from the qualitative essence of his own particular philosophical position – as a vital contribution to the harvest of theoretical work to date – it is not clarified equally explicitly why he insists during his life course on not doing *whatever* he can to 'institutionalize' (or even 'cash in' for tangible privileges of various kinds) the power he possesses in his domain, in other words to 'transform' it into authority, i.e. socially legitimized/validated or binding power. Of course, the public disclosure of his works<sup>58</sup> as well as his elaborate, polemic, polished and possessive – at times even openly contentious and ironic – writing style, together with his occasional public (topical or not) interventions in the – Greek and German – press, suggest that the above ascertainment should be qualified to some degree, so as to stress in addition that some notion of indirect authority does not appear to be entirely uninvited, i.e. an aspiration for a broader crystallized and socially institutionalized form of intellectual power – which, sidestepping political authority, serves as counter-prevailing power with political significance. Nevertheless, his overwhelmingly predominant existential withdrawal and isolation, which verged on a kind of "secular asceticism" (a prerequisite for his freedom and integrity as a writer), his forgoing of a professorship and a restrictive academic environment as a career base and his consequent conscious choice to remain a "private scholar" throughout his life, as well as the selectiveness of his social interaction, point to, I believe, the correctness and 'legitimacy' of the initial impression put forward, namely that our thinker did not yearn for authority with any particular fervor, even though this impression is moderated to some extent by the aforesaid public acts.

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(internal and external) point was reached at which all notion of enmity were absent, and consequently also every related need for entrenchment against a third party. It is precisely because the said 'moral philosophers' and other intellectuals-'visionaries' repel or ignore sober or demythologizing (and, as such, 'unpleasant') logical ascertainments analogous to our own, mixing together at will relativistic, universalistic, conventionalist and – regardless of how paradoxical this may appear – 'foundationalist' or metaphysical articles of faith, that they can even deceive themselves with a clear conscience by perpetuating their usual ideological games which are however so necessary on the front line of the spirit or the broader struggle for social power. If, on the contrary, they were able to realize that the relativism is a prerequisite and vehicle for sound and steadfast – transhistorically valid – social-ontological knowledge of the structures of human action and behaviour, i.e. for that kind of deeper knowledge which has so far never been refuted and nor will it be refuted in the future regarding the confrontational structure of human nature, they would also be in a position to understand the *vital necessity* of the each time 'unilateralism' and individual absolutized perspective *as* such for the retrospectively gained knowledge or 'wisdom' and, additionally, that every thing high and admirable (such as the aforesaid 'wisdom' in the present case) 'stands' precisely on the ground of 'unilateralism', exclusion, enslavement, oppression and cruelty. But something of this nature would immediately deprive them of their main moral-forming and pedagogic role as 'theorists'- enlighteners to the extent that they would become aware that their 'wisdom' is equally based in the corresponding ground.

<sup>58</sup> In contrast, in this respect, with his very early 'mentor' and main Greek interlocutor, Antonis Lavrantonis, who did not intend his analogous crystallized ideas and radical conceptions to be systematically recorded and widely published, but almost exclusively for nurturing verbal discussions with friends – interlocutors and very infrequently for written presentation, mostly in the form of letters. A more hermetic – though *strictly* in a certain sense – enigma with regard to the existential-practical treatment of the problem of outright theoretical nihilism is *perhaps* left to us by Lavrantonis with his aversion to writing rather than by Kondylis.

As things stand, the reason why Kondylis himself appears so 'abstemious' or 'detached' with regard to *political* authority perhaps requires specific explanation (in the light of what has already been said about the interweaving of power and authority), however, a cursory or fleeting – yet more perceptive – glance might reveal that this reason as set out immediately below is not far from the corresponding reason in the case of earlier eminent philosophical figures – such as Nietzsche for instance. When the latter (to remain with this indicative example) noted that climbing to power entails a disproportionately heavy price for the spiritually gifted, since "politics swallows up all serious concern for really spiritual matters", when he cautioned that "if one spends oneself, the quantum of understanding, seriousness, will, and self-overcoming which he himself represents, for power and power politics, then it will be lacking for the other direction" since "in the end, no one can spend more than he has"<sup>59</sup> or, relatedly, when he emphatically stated that a distinguishing – among others – mark of a true philosopher is his – for the sake of the imperative need to conserve energy for the attainment of his set aim – shrinking from the dazzling light of contemporary fame and the glittering company of those in power at the time, which inevitably obscures the clarity of his broader perspective, holding their conveyor 'captive' in his time only and depriving him of any possibility for real radiation on the timeless horizon of history<sup>60</sup>, he is probably thinking, just like his spiritual descendant, the Greek thinker, one century later: The seeker of historically 'undying' power (Nietzsche would say: power on which time futilely tries its teeth), dismisses – through his work – in the person of whoever happens to be in authority and his/her institutional adulators-'advisors' (often called 'intellectuals'), not only those persons' particular practices but also their dominant position and footholds, contesting, that is, the norms invoked by whatever dominator *as* dominator (king, priest, politician, chieftain<sup>61</sup>).

If the bearer of personal power, that drawn from a certain skill or a special endowment, boasts that it is not merely a delusion, a faint reflection or rationalization to make up for the lack of authority, then the said bearer is required to show that it 'stands' on evaluations and norms which are simply not included in the narrow confines of the norms and institutions to which the politically and intellectually dominant stand. Only in the one-dimensional light of the norms of the latter does such power that stands on other ground look like the mere product of 'arbitrariness'. The bearer of power is consequently called upon to show that if it is possible for his/her power to be socially acknowledged, this can happen because the field of norms is generally considered to be broader than that which the politically dominant initially wanted to believe, so that it encompasses not only those norms to which this power of different texture alludes but also the corresponding ones alluded to by the predominant form of power (with their common ground being detectable by the theorist precisely on the basis of the existing structural-typical

<sup>59</sup> F. Nietzsche, *The Twilight of the Idols* ('What the Germans lack', sections 1 & 4) in: *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. & transl. by W. Kaufmann, Penguin Books, New York 1976 [1954], pp. 506, 508-9.

<sup>60</sup> See F. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* III, 8 in: *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, transl. by W. Kaufmann, The Modern Library, New York 1992 [1966], pp. 544-548.

<sup>61</sup> The notion of chieftain contains *mutatis mutandis* also the new type of dominator emerging in mass democracy, namely the financial tycoon who is dressed in the subservient attire of the 'salaried' manager in conditions of mature state capitalism.

common points of both). To achieve this, however, the bearer of this distinct form of power must first *push to the limits his own particular gift*, the sector in which he is at an advantage (having cultivated his special endowment therein), inflate this distinct domain in which he feels dominant and raise it to the highest possible value exponent, initially elevating its partiality to a magnitude of primary importance in order to relativize the hitherto predominant 'absolute' (with which the position of prevailing authority is connected) by placing it next to the latter. If the bearer manages to sufficiently 'enlarge' the overall domain of power in general (i.e. that which includes all its discrete forms) he automatically shrinks the corresponding domain of authority, given that the enlargement of the former through the addition of a newly arrived distinct form of power, namely intellectual, takes place also *with terms of binding social power* because it expands the common (institutional) ground that is shared with the prevailing authority.<sup>62</sup> Thus, the intellectual power he gains now reaches the point of being seen (by those placing a high value on imposition) as another form of (potential) authority which indirectly seeks to become the binding rule itself by repudiating the primacy of the once predominant political authority and its legitimizers or would-be suitors. At some point, power is raised to a new form of authority which retains *something* of the status of the old form so as to be in a position to show the one-sidedness of the established or prevailing authority. He who seeks power rather than authority equally wears the sculpted and elaborated mask [προσωπείο] of a new legislator: now holding *loosely* in his palm the – made up of thousands of constituent grains – sand of power in order to make it slightly more compact (so as to resemble somewhat the solid composition of authority) and, as such, more 'secured', seeks more generally to *show* that the more firmly one clasps power in order to safeguard it, the more it slips from one's hands and dwindles; while on the contrary, whoever wishes to keep in their possession more power and for longer will probably have to hold it with delicate and flexible fingers that are kept together but never completely closed or clenched into a tight fist, always – of course – running the risk of a strong gust of violence or primitive atavism which can scatter it in an instant. Quite simply, this means: *Long-term* dominance is as a rule gained when one convinces the other to recognize whatever skill one has, along with the precepts one dictates, without the other feeling that he is being forcibly coerced; only thus does one have any real chance of growing roots in the soul of the other. But even still: As soon as one manages to rise to the level of the theorist, looking back on things, one sees that this claim to power also, although more malleable and long-term than the claim to authority, constitutes from a structural viewpoint merely a different way to acquire might with its own legalizing means; whilst the activation of such a claim verifies more generally the universality of the structurally repetitive movement for precisely this shared element that in conditions of an organized society is necessarily connected with an overlying level of legitimation or a supra-empirical throne, which one endeavors to make one's own by using one's discrete means. The choice of means and their actual use for gaining power determines of course the texture of the social identity of subjects which, again, is necessarily marked by greater or lesser differentiation vis-à-vis the specific way that other subjects acquire power.

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<sup>62</sup> See Kondylis's already cited, unpublished notes nos. 3900-1.

Based on what we have said so far, it appears that the deeper explanation why our thinker in particular disregards all forms of narrowly political authority in order to increase his own power in the philosophical field can be sought in two main causes: a) in his profound realization that, since no system of (political) *authority* can encompass all possible significant forms or aspects of power<sup>63</sup> (see aforementioned notes nos. 4020-4021, 4029-4030), the wholehearted and absolutely invested axiological striving for its possession and securing, appears futile and vain from one point on and b) in the awareness that the deeper, more qualitative and more long-term form of power is as a rule nothing short of that which is ultimately based on the *voluntary* will of the Other to provide it to the party requesting it and therefore it should be sought and found in domains of non-political authority such as the intellectual *par excellence*, where the element of coercion appears in a certain sense to be much more moderate. This second element is important, because by itself the

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<sup>63</sup> Although this is *precisely* the demand and challenge of the future, as illustrated by the frenetic interdisciplinary collaboration among technologized scientific branches, as well as by similar cooperation in the past among theorists but also artists: to devise a system of authority which is so comprehensive, resonant and robust that it absorbs within it every form of power and leaves no margin for even thinking about resistance and no concealed skeleton key – something which will quite clearly place all these ‘intellectual athletes’ in a quandary about what kind of formations will embrace their own creative conceptions.

Systematic cooperation among distinct fields of exact sciences (biology, physics, cybernetics, space, ballistics, etc.) just as, *mutatis mutandis*, the corresponding creation of single forms of art stemming from the combining and synthesizing of the achievements of various arts (indeed, more recently, under the increasingly frequent aegis of cybernetics), already reveals to the alert observer the said targeting, which, clearly, was always active even if it had been illustrated in the distant past by isolated, unsystematic, political acts (e.g. in the ceremony of apotheosis of emperors); and if this latter sounds exaggerated, if not outrageous, to the “extremely refined ears” of our contemporary ‘improvers’, they should ponder for a moment the words of one of Kondylis’ relatively late letters: “... very few know just how fruitful the results have been so far from comparative morphological analyses of fields that are ostensibly quite unrelated. Who could imagine, for example, the relationship that exists between perspective, as discovered by Renaissance painting, and the contemporaneous discovery of firearms, i.e. the deepening (of perception) of space via ballistics? ... Is the fact that around 1900, in a period of approximately 20 years, there was a *simultaneous* and *radical* change in the form of literature, the visual arts, music, natural science, linguistics, sociology, logic, etc. etc. coincidental and irrelevant?” (letter dated 13-4-1992 to Spyros Tsaknias – published in the publications catalogue of Stigma Editions [no. 23], February 2007, pp. 55-60; for the above quote: pp. 57-58). And if all this fails to generate any circumspection whatsoever, they might at least consider for a moment the hardly inconsequential words of Arthur Brittan – which Kondylis included in one of his unpublished notes (no. 4430 [086]) – regarding the *degree of spiritualization* which such a future “totalitarian” effort to secure ‘universality’ through multifaceted interdisciplinary collaboration may be expected to take on: “To say that life is dramatic is to say that people are interested in preventing others from having full perceptual penetration of their motives. Performances, playacting and role-playing take place in order to minimize the risk of self-discovery” (A. Brittan, *Meanings and Situations*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1973, p. 123). See also, in the same vein, Kondylis’ following unpublished aphorism: “The greatest hope of liberty lies quite simply in the fact that the perfect oppression has not *yet* been devised” (my emphasis). As for the way in which a *certain* kind of conservatism – and not that which is frequently and naively attributed to Kondylis – might be connected precisely with observations similar to those above regarding the appearance of considerably less favorable social terms (than the current ones) precisely as a result of wholehearted intentions for ‘improvement’, this will have to be dealt with on some other occasion.

realization of the incapacity of authority to encompass all the discrete forms or crystals of power portends nothing absolutely binding and necessary for the level of practice in the direction of relinquishing authority, no matter how much the various opponents of the militant theory of decision and champions of 'reconciliatory' Reason would like to make precisely this implication nomological, imbued with the classical rationalistic prejudice that 'enlightened'-critical Reason could one day, with its 'wisdom' and 'maturity', eliminate 'obsolete biases' and 'totalitarian practices'.

The careful elaboration of the above two ideas, and more particularly the clearer determination of their relationship, gives us, I believe, a suitable interpretive device for 'unlocking' Kondylis' position on power: If the ascertainment, that no form of authority can embrace in its framework or 'absorb' each possible form of power, constitutes an argument in favor of the relativity, inadequacy and general incapacity of authority *as* authority to become a permanent and universal form of domination, then, the other ascertainment regarding the often greater or more substantial impact of a not openly imposed and more 'malleable' (compared to authority) power, constitutes, we could say, an argument in favor of the position that *it is relatively or to a point* feasible to gain possession of a kind of more permanent or qualitative influence (than that of authority), which however is less binding and at first more closely linked to a specific sector; it is, in short, a limited or moderated, but nevertheless important, relativization of the first argument. It certainly does not invalidate the generally valid and more comprehensive first argument, because the said relativity and inadequacy or inability to achieve absolute 'universality' covers with its veil not only the domain occupied by each system of authority, but also the corresponding domain of each possible form or aspect of power, no matter how refined or composite the latter appears; it does state, however, that although it is indeed impossible to secure a permanent, universally accepted and historically unshakable position of dominance, if there is (to some extent at least) a more qualitative, deeper and longer lasting social recognizability and effect, this should probably be sought, on account of its particular texture, primarily in the broader sphere of power, not that of authority in the narrow (i.e. political) sense. From a certain point on however, it is precisely the very acquisition of each specific form of power which *de facto* shows through its *tangible – concrete partialness* the general infeasibility of possessing absolute and universally accepted power or authority. *Nonetheless, one must reach the limits of an endowment or of the cultivation of a gift to be able to feel and show that it is one of the endowments, one among other gifts*, just as one must from a certain seized or occupied social position first break with the predominant position that is connected with an established norm in order to be able retrospectively to perceive the structurally common ground which this 'transgressive' position shares with the corresponding predominant one that is associated with the prevailing norm (and therefore also the 'unilaterality' of this 'subversive' position) behind the different content or ideological signs which separate the two.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> It is here precisely that the hardly insignificant difference can be seen between Kondylis on the one hand and, on the other, Heidegger and the representatives of "heroic existentialism": While the latter – overtly or tacitly – eventually divide, in an axiological sense, individual subjects into "authentic" and "inauthentic", "resolute" and "irresolute" believing the former have finally transcended that mode of thinking based on "the magic wand of the self-evident" (as performers of a 'transgressive' action),

Kondylis, in other words, appears here to take a further step: he recognizes and admits to the generally limited crystal of power that he derives from his theoretical activity and the particular content of his philosophical account, although he does indeed believe that strictly 'within the walls' of science as the search for truth, he himself expresses the highest theoretical position and that this social-ontological position possesses the special quality of encapsulating all the main structures of thought and action. In such a realization of the generally finite nature of that crystal of power which emanates from the all-round cultivation of personal aptitudes and one's potential, we can discern a work of mourning and at the same time, as Nietzsche would say, "an intellectual ability that enables one to place before oneself the problematic or futile side of life [that can no longer be embellished by the possession of only one form of power] *which is however prescribed by the overflowing health and fullness of the existence*"<sup>65</sup>. Here, from a specific rampart, the so-called 'intellectual', the common path of society, so to speak, is chosen to show *that* and *how* one each time withdraws into one's privacy to walk that path 'at home' or inside one's existential shell before walking it anew – this time leaving his 'individual' tracks – outside the 'home', *unperturbedly* honoring the repetition of History.

At this point we can say, not without some confidence, that we have two functions or 'moments' which have been registered in the – through the theoretical undertaking of the descriptive theory and its public disclosure by Kondylis – exercise of power, one 'external' and one 'internal', which co-exist, alternate, interpenetrate, and sometimes 'slip' silently one into the other: the acquisition of power on the one hand takes place via the legislative character of the act and its corresponding performativity; in this instance, that is, through the announcement of the findings of the theory to the community and more specifically to its spiritual institutions (as a consequence of the cultivation of a skill for the acquisition of knowledge and consistent rational thinking) the person emerges who bears the said fruits of the theoretical harvest, thereby declaring his purview vis-à-vis others in the specific domain of social production/activity on the basis of which he demands bindingness; while on the other, the acquisition of power takes place from the recognition of the *general* partialness of this performance or of the said cultivated gift, which is attached to the particular content of the theory as such, and reveals the capacity of self-relativization or the resources available to the bearer to be able to see himself as an Other by taking a different social role.

At a first-level reading, the first moment appears to be the 'external', i.e. that at which power is derived as a result of the recognition that springs from the convincing or subjugation through argument of the Other, while the second appears to be the 'internal', i.e. that at which power stems from the ability of the subject to

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Kondylis on the contrary sees in this 'transgressiveness' or moment of breach with the institutionalized, merely the – necessary for some individuals – precondition for or stage of transition to the (retrospective) realization of the common structural space they share with other human existences (those, for instance, who do not indulge in discursive thinking and the corresponding experiencing of extreme existential states), irrespective of any sharp or important differences which may develop among the said subjects with respect to content.

<sup>65</sup> F. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 'Attempt at a Self-Criticism' 1 in: *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, ed. & transl. by W. Kaufmann, The Modern Library, New York 1992, pp. 17-18. (my emphasis – the first part of the sentence slightly paraphrased here).

'open up' to himself and make himself ready to accept the perspectivity of his act. It seems, however, that the above two moments or functions are in a state of dialectical interaction to such a degree that it is not always possible to see where the person [πρόσωπο] and where the mask [προσωπεία]<sup>66</sup> is located each time, which function 'feeds' the other or which is prioritized as deeper and therefore more personally invested from the viewpoint of acquiring identity. Thus, for example, the element that the Other views as an attribute of the subject which confers on the latter its par excellence privileged internal position, may be viewed by the subject himself as an instrument of self-deception, that is, there where the Other regards an act as a primary source of self-actualization of the subject or a vehicle for his supremacy and social distinctness, there the Ego may see in it only a place of heterogeneity of ends and a corner of smiling coincidence or cosmic irony, as well as conversely: there where the Other detects a wound of the Ego's worldview and identity, there the subject may find the most special aspect of his pride.

What does all this mean for the issue at hand? It means quite simply that in Kondylis' very act of announcing the findings of his groundbreaking theory, there coexist and are interwoven a moment that seeks preponderance over others and a moment that expresses the sincere will to accept the futility of the aforesaid pursuit at its original face value, since he is aware of the partialness of the acquired power as well as the structural triteness of the historically repetitive orbit of such a pursuit. What is noteworthy here is that each time the performativity of his theory seems about to unearth the moment of sincere will for reconciliation with the futility and structural triteness<sup>67</sup>, it is precisely then in a deeper or peculiar sense that the feeling and passion emanates of a paramount and fierce ambition and hidden hope for preponderance and superiority, while, on the contrary, when the objective is for power to be explicitly glorified and the inescapable need and 'justification' (vis-à-vis moralistic convictions) for dominance and mastery to be combatively underlined, often there, inadvertently or unwittingly, a feeling of 'emptiness', of lack of meaning or of futility is manifested or hovers as that *background* or *preceding status* from which the existence strives to detach itself by highlighting the notion of social preponderance, favoring, in the final analysis, the logic of "better to be (sub)ordinated or devoted to the cosmic game of power, than entirely without orientation"<sup>68</sup>. It is possible, of course, that this is not always the case, for there to be, that is, instances in which the explicit (announced) words appear largely to coincide with the bearer's actual inner conviction, but even in these instances, such 'coincidence' or 'sincerity' can take place solely because the prevailing atmosphere

<sup>66</sup> The etymological connection between the Greek terms is lost in English.

<sup>67</sup> A notion that in any case does not escape Kondylis: see the final paragraph of the essay 'Melancholie und Polemik' in: Ludger Heidbrink (ed.): *Entzauberte Zeit. Der Melancholische Geist der Moderne*. Hanser, Munich, 1997, pp. 281-299.

<sup>68</sup> In unpublished note no. 4578, Kondylis writes in this respect: "In order to find snugness and status, one is prepared to subordinate oneself to a power [read in this instance: to a social attitude]. Power [or the said social attitude] satisfies this need. The logic being: *better subordinated than without status*" (my emphasis). More generally, it should be noted that the entire aforementioned ascertainment in the main text regarding the lack of correspondence between explicitly expressed words and inner mental state echoes something of the spirit of Goethe's words, when he observed that "a person has only to say he is free and immediately feels confined. If he has the courage to say he is constrained, then he feels free." (W. Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, Penguin, 1998, p. 9).



has submitted as self-evidently applicable the need to refute, revise or at least supplement (through additional acts) a certain prevailing state of affairs; that is, solely because the verbal or linguistic operation presupposes also a polemical thrust or a referencing to something that either already opposes it or already needs supplementing by it, but which at any rate has preceded it and in practice has until then been recognized as an article of faith.

Either way, it seems to us generally correct to say that there is a moment of 'self-disclosure' and a moment of 'self-concealment' – i.e. an ambivalence in the performativity of the specific theoretical act (something that is also revealed by the polemical tone of the writer) – in every implication of preponderance deriving precisely from his scientific superiority as well as, conversely, about the exclamation of its inadequacy and relativity, and with this, acceptance of the inability of the analogous preponderance to elevate itself to absolute universality/'omnipotence' – given, of course, that the attainment of the latter, and therefore of the undivided 'centrality' of one's perspective, has indeed been ever since childhood the serious dream of every person who does not deign to deceive himself that this was not the case. Each moment (striving for preponderance -by virtue of scientific predominance- and its relativization), cannot be apprehended here as being independent of the intended each time 'antagonistic' Other.

## VI

Bearing in mind the above, we could now say by way of conclusion – returning to the conceptual pair 'power-authority' – that *what is being sought ultimately is power with – partly – terms of authority*, namely bindingness. That is to say: power is sought, at least from a certain point on, in such a way that it is not seen by others and, in the end, by the subject himself as what one obtains simply because one does not (or cannot) possess authority, but, on the contrary, as what one obtains because – even though one is aware of the great importance of authority or that one oneself possesses/could possess an important crystal of (institutionally) binding social power (by using, for example, other means too), one 'voluntarily' relinquishes it *to some degree* for the sake of a different, 'more permanent' and 'more qualitative' form of power to which significant privileged characteristics of the bindingness of authority are now ascribed.

This partial relinquishment of the crystal of authority most certainly entails some social sacrifices and concessions which cannot but remain unrationalized, however, the incurring of whatever such cost is seen here as a "higher pragmatism".<sup>69</sup> Only thus can power finally be seen as broader and (from the perspectival standpoint of its conveyor) 'more comprehensive' or 'higher' than authority, precisely because it manages to some degree to shift the center of gravity of the latter without automatically losing altogether its distinctive element, namely that of bindingness. From this it becomes easy to understand that the further the spirit progresses, the deeper, more complex, more labyrinthine and more

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<sup>69</sup> In the sense assigned to the term by Kondylis in the final sentence of *Science, Power and Decision*, Stigmi, Athens 2001, p. 66.

comprehensive is the striving for power which permeates the exercise of theoretical-scientific practice<sup>70</sup>. Precisely for this reason, Kondylis knew better than anyone else that with his theory *he does not remove the clashes* – nor did he ever try to show that he aimed to eliminate them – but that *he simply refines them, he lifts them to another plane of argumentation, he perhaps makes them more spiritual clashes*<sup>71</sup>. And in doing so, he indirectly inflames the yearning for their utopian overcoming (an overcoming of conflicts which will never come no matter what), highlighting the moment of relativity, of vanity and of structural triteness of human behavior, the idea of the eternal cycle and lastly, the exquisite moment of humor one feels when the ever increasing heat of the repetitive movement seems to lift him for a tenth of a second above all earthly tragedies. It is precisely then when it is revealed to the theoretical observer that the courageous self-relativization of the acting subject presupposes the (surreptitious) transfer of his pride or attribution of self-worth to another – less visible – place (cf. also the aforementioned note no. 4710); which is why it is only then that the voluntary exposure of the socially acting self (in reality: a part thereof) to the light of the spiritual sunshine of the thinking community presents itself or is taken as a particular form of self-concealment, such that it makes the said observer to spontaneously exclaim – in a reversal of Wittgenstein's saying: "May the others someday see that which lies before my eyes!"<sup>72</sup>; because what he apprehends is that here the bearer of the 'self-relativization' "shows the futile wound to the sun"<sup>73</sup>, seemingly completely decommissioned, but like a modern-day Prometheus full of belief in life who awaits the Heracleses of his conscience.

There is no doubt that what psychologically fuels Kondylis' motivation to continue unbowed and unrestrained along his discursive path is the fact that he has on his heels the antagonistic arrogance or conceit of 'professional' normativists and the suspicion of positivists/advocates of scientism fortified behind prevailing norms. Every action always constitutes a re-action and has deep down, in its existential rooting, an antagonist to whom it is explicitly or implicitly addressed. Thus here too, it is as though Kondylis is saying: 'So, let me speak in the language of the 'professional' writers, not because I have something entirely different to propose, but because I wish to playfully hit out at that arrogance which refuses to apprehend

<sup>70</sup> In note no. 5616 Kondylis has included the related view of Bachelard (*Le Nouvel Esprit Scientifique*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 1934, p. 12) according to which "scientific observation is always polemical observation".

<sup>71</sup> Indeed, as he himself noted with analogous provocative meaning: "... the publicizing of value-free thought merely results in the mobilization of its opponents and in the *argumentative refinement* of normative theories" (*Power and Decision*, Introduction, op. cit., p. 15 (my emphasis); cf. also "Owed Replies" in: *Melancholy and Polemics*. Essays and Studies. Themelio, Athens, pp. 149-150). It is perhaps this (initially unintentional) perpetuation of the clash – by indirectly encouraging refinement of normative arguments and the general 'spiritualization' of accompanying theories – that is partly responsible for the intensity of our theorist's internal split and ambivalence, which stems from his overwhelming need for more active participation in the social-practical 'becoming' each moment he becomes aware of himself as a strict observer or 'expert of the fringe' who does nothing else but trigger the need to entrench the – self-understood as 'opposing' – other side.

<sup>72</sup> The quote from the author of *Tractatus* 'utilized' here is of course: "God grant the philosopher insight into what lies in front of everyone's eyes." L. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, transl. P. Winch, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1980, p. 63.

<sup>73</sup> From the poem 'Don Quixotes' in the collection "Nepenthe" [=Non-mourner/one who reaches the state of no longer mourning] by Kostas Karyotakis (*Poetry and Prose* [in Greek], Ermis, 1979, pp. 22-23).

its own vanity, before letting it go free again after two or three slaps purely and simply so that it feels the meaning of the blow in general as a harbinger of a possible more profound impending 'defeat'. Let me play the game of these word-loving circles, let me win on *their own* ground in order to show in the end that this is but a separate *game* and that they should probably not take this defeat to heart but instead as a miniature or sign of a more general loss, namely that which is brought by the compelling tsunami of the finite character of all human undertakings (which – as Nietzsche would say – were built on the back of a sleeping whale), *thus relativizing every sense of absolute power but from the height of a separate superior theoretical perspective*. Let me thereby make them feel with a different seriousness or existential readiness and mental disposition the meaning of the words: "Take a leap faster than decay", [remembering always that] "the void exists as long as you do not fall into it".<sup>74</sup> Following the discursive path to its fringes, Kondylis tries to derive power with only *partial* terms of authority (to the extent that the sector of the spirit, for example, is honored socially in a tangible way). He thus chooses 'general influence' over short-term bindingness of political authority (contrary to the 'conventional' intellectual pockets) but without losing sight of the relativity and limits of the worth and significance also of his own theoretical activity simply because he engages in such a quasi-polemical and 'entrenching' undertaking.

But how, in essence, can one feel the strongest in a sector – and particularly the spiritual – and at the same time the most common man because he is the strongest *only* therein? Does our thinker indeed feel this way to some degree? The characteristic response (given in a late interview) according to which "when people are active philosophically, they do not behave differently than when they act politically and socially" to the extent that they too "take a position, which agrees with the positions of some people and at the same time is aimed against others", along with the related assertion that "the structure of the philosophical act outflanks the ambitions of those who act as philosophers"<sup>75</sup>, indeed appear to give an analogous impression, which is strengthened additionally by the other assumption that "scientific observation is always polemical observation"<sup>76</sup>. The *singularity* in this particular case consists in the fact that Kondylis as a most profound "observer of human affairs" and as an "analyst of human behavior in specific situations"<sup>77</sup> on the one hand manages to *crystallize or 'subject' to his theoretical schema all known basic structures of praxis and behavior*, but without this entailing that 'outside the walls' of science his said ability is perceived as something more than a separate accomplishment, a special skill or a cultivated gift among so many others; without, in other words, he himself managing to secure the analogous standing or prestige (which his theoretical capacity gives him 'within the walls' of science) from the moment each social appraiser decides to stride beyond the perspectival threshold of theoretical science as a quest for truth.

The obvious reason for the relative or only partial power which in principle is given to each bearer by his ability to theoretically reconstruct/'subjugate' the

<sup>74</sup> Odysseas Elytis, *Signalbook* [Σηματολόγιον], Ypsilon, Athens, 2001, pp. 11 and 19 respectively.

<sup>75</sup> P. Kondylis, *The Invisible Chronology of Thought*, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>76</sup> Unpublished note of Kondylis, no. 5616. Similarly, in note no. 5292 the Greek thinker stresses that "there is no science, only scientists – that is, human relations".

<sup>77</sup> P. Kondylis, *The Invisible Chronology of Thought*, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

structures of social action in general is that it is one thing for one to oneself embody a worldview standpoint and personally reap whatever privileges of its actual unfolding, and quite another for a third party to simply describe this standpoint and its associated results 'from outside', no matter how lucidly and precisely this is undertaken. The profound theoretical observer can readily describe (on the basis of the standpoint adoption mechanism), for example, in what sense an athlete or musician (feels that he) draws power and satisfying self-sufficiency vis-à-vis others by virtue of his separate ability; at best, he can apprehend the specific way that personal motivations and the subjective meaning associated with a social deed or interaction of an acting subject are connected to the objective results of the latter as these are retrospectively extracted from the concluding of a certain social process (i.e. that process -reconstructed by the observer- which takes place via the crossover of the separate components of the socially active people participating in a 'common' phenomenon). But under no circumstances can the aforesaid observer feel the magnitude or intensity of the satisfaction and reinforcement felt by the said athlete or musician through his/her 'self-creation', his/her aforementioned accomplishment or whatever 'victory' or existential conquest connected with the development of his/her distinctive skill, no matter how profound the description of the structures of thought and action of the said subject and how deep the emotional identification/empathy mustered in the framework of the process of understanding.

In this sense, the theoretical description as *indirect* 'subjugation' and crystallization of the structures of thought and action of the Other (read in Nietzschean terms: as rendering the latter, and especially the person who is strong in some domain, 'transparent' so as to be able to fit him notionally or from distance to one's world-image) simply has the 'shortcoming' of its own virtue. And it is the unseen effort by our thinker to address precisely this 'shortcoming' that deserves our further attention.