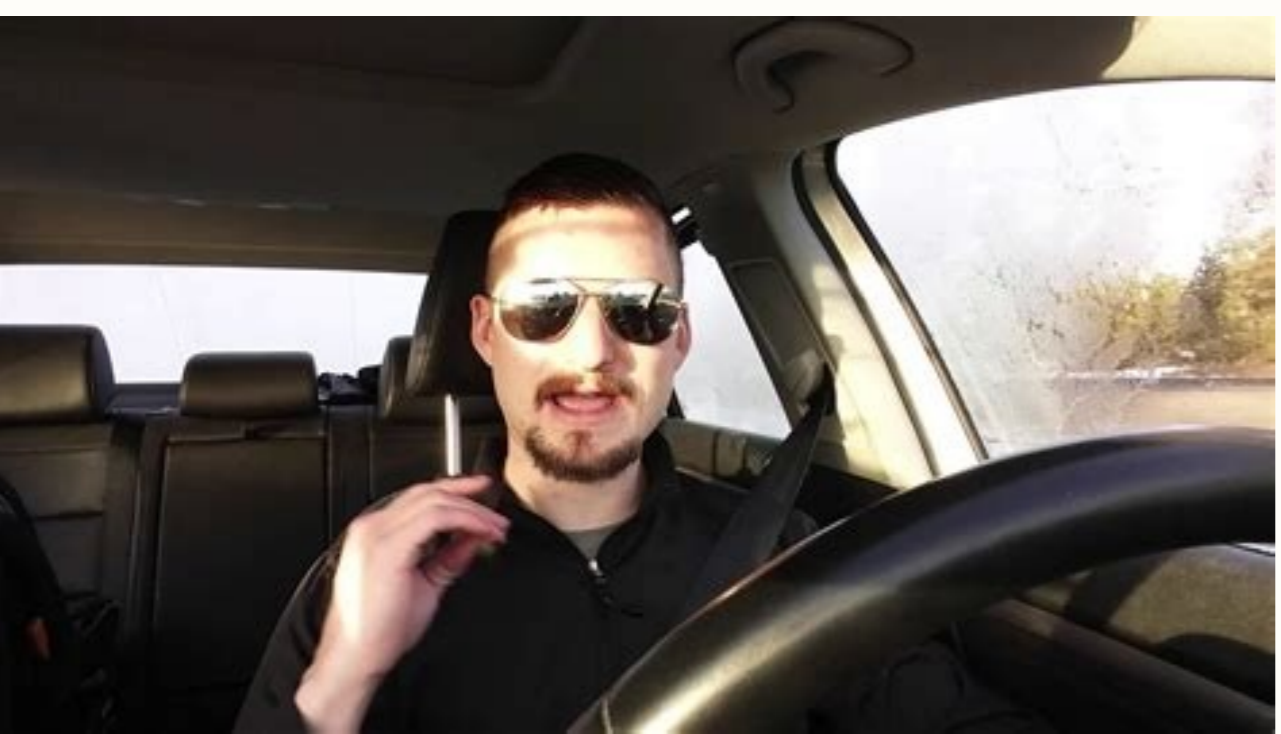
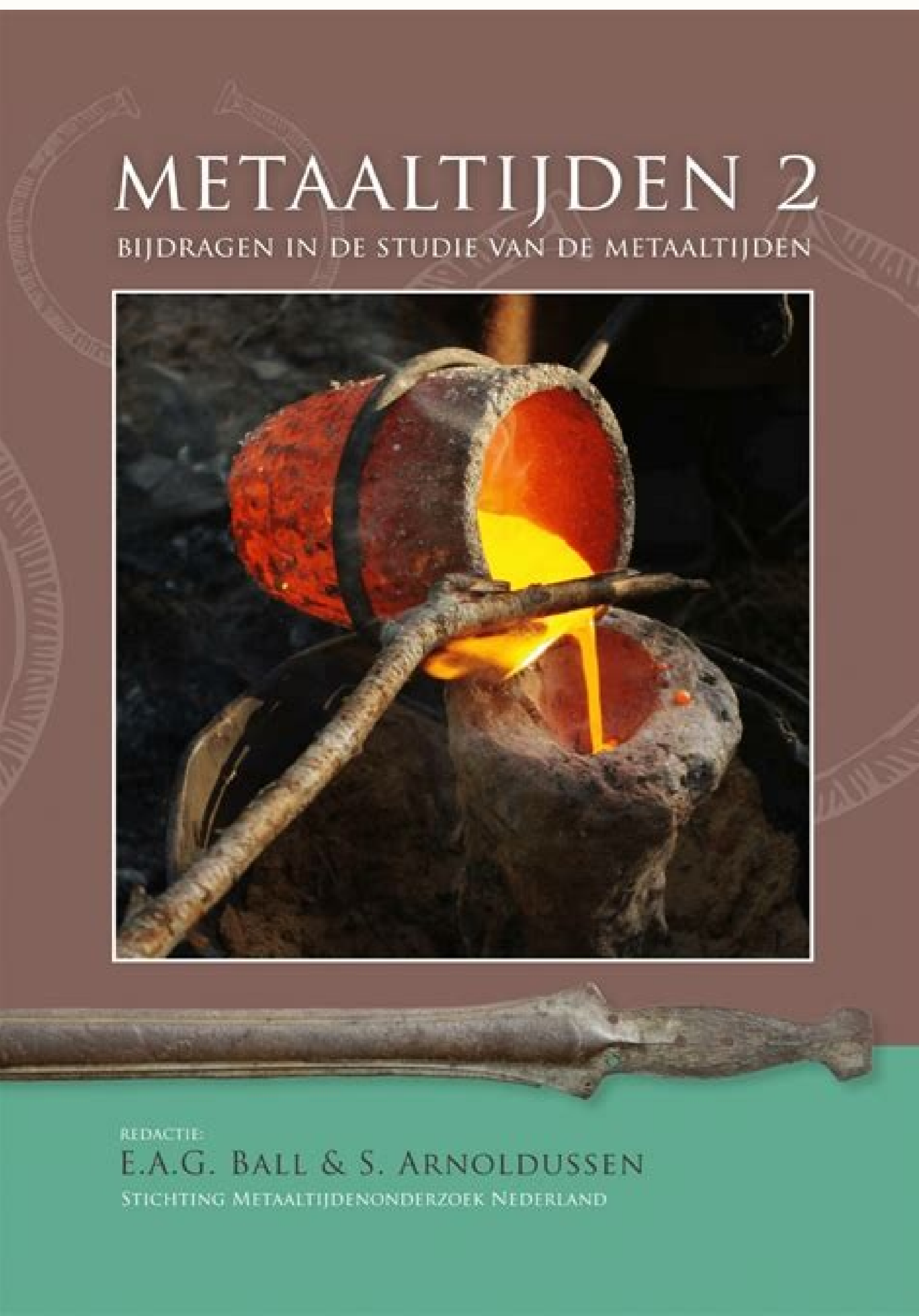


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Bronze age golden age. Bronze age examples.

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In this chaos, of which Trump is only one manifestation, it is a sign of something, or rather of many things, that this self-published book by an pseudonymous author, calling for adoption of a supposed ethics of the Bronze Age, is receiving a lot of attention. And as much as I hate to admit it, or think I hate to admit it, the philosophy that runs through this book is likely to drive a lot of discourse, and action, in coming years. True, this book is, by most measures, still obscure. It has not been reviewed in the New York Times, though I suspect that it will soon enough start making appearances there, none positive. For now, its traction is only on the Right, but there is a lot of traction there, because "Bronze Age Mindset, strange to say, acts to coalesce the fragmented pieces of the Right, especially the youthful, disaffected Right, around a philosophy that rejects many of the more problematic elements of the non-mainstream Right. "Bronze Age Mindset" is, I think, an attempt to maneuver around a core problem for new thought on the Right—that a great many of the vocal people on the Right are clowns with stupid ideas, easily used by their enemies and of negative value to a coherent future program. "Bronze Age Mindset" is best viewed as a cloaked attempt to find an attractive Right philosophy that leaves such clowns, especially the racists, behind, while still capturing those who believe in seeing reality as it is, even though it is forbidden by our rulers. This attempt to create a new thing is the genius of "Bronze Age Mindset," not the actual narrative, a good deal of which is insane—though I think the insanity is mostly a joke designed to distract as the rest of the book strikes home, making it a jujitsu tactic, persuasion disguised with juvenile humor. Others on the mainstream Right have begun to recognize this. Michael Anton, whom I greatly admire, reviewed "Bronze Age Mindset" last month for the "Claremont Review of Books," not unfavorably, of which more later. I can assure you, if you are not familiar with the Right ecosystem, that this is wholly unprecedented. If you had said ten years ago that a man of Anton's prominence, in a publication of such note, would write favorably about a book that demands a military government and a return to pagan ways of thinking, praises men from history who are now viewed as entirely retrograde, and rejects any role for women in public life, among many other sins, all offered with an unapologetic, feral glint, you would have been viewed as crazy. Yet here we are. But first, of the book. The author of "Bronze Age Mindset" writes under the pseudonym Bronze Age Pervert. Usually he is referred to as BAP, not so much for simplicity but because endless recitation of the word "pervert" makes most people, including me, wince because it's tasteless. No doubt that is the author's intention in picking the moniker; barbed jokes of this sort characterize much of his writing. His actual name, and everything about him, is a mystery, though he affects Slavic tics in his writing, and a Russian voice narrates a podcast BAP has recently launched, called for no apparent reason "Caribbean Rhythms," to the six episodes of which I have also listened. Some people are very focused on who BAP is. I don't care who BAP is, though I suspect there is some chance, say thirty percent, he is Anton himself. What most of all characterizes BAP, and suggests he is either a fierce auto-didact or someone with an academic background, is constant references to history. The majority of his historical references are to Ancient Greece. Machiavelli also shows up several times. He refers to other interesting writings, such as Steven Runciman's truly obscure "The White Rajahs." It surprises me that he has not been doxxed; either he is very, very good at covering his tracks, or he has not gotten enough prominence. If and when he is revealed, the results may be very interesting—or completely uninteresting. Either way, the book rewards close attention, since what BAP says is not always precisely what he means, and this is deliberate. The very first sentences of the book exemplify this. "This is not a book of philosophy. It is exhortation." But that is a false dichotomy; such head fakes are common in this book. "Bronze Age Mindset" is both, and it contains quite a bit of distilled philosophy. Or, rather, applied philosophy. It is meant to be an exposition of "the thought that motivates me and the problem faced by life in ascent and decline." The philosopher most admired by BAP is Friedrich Nietzsche, although many other philosophers, mainly Greek, ranging from Heraclitus to Empedocles, make appearances, and Schopenhauer is also often featured. I have no idea if any of what BAP says actually comports with Nietzsche, or Schopenhauer, for that matter, about whom I know nearly nothing, but that is not the point—broadly speaking, BAP's philosophy is Nietzschean, if by that is meant a post-Christian view focused on hierarchy and power. The basic points of the book can be boiled down. First, the vast matter more than the many. The vast majority of humanity, today and since the dawn of civilization, has led lives of useless distress, under forms of slavery. But in all times and places, some men will not live under slavery. They are who matter. Second, all higher life inherently seeks space and dominance. Not just territorial space, even more "space to develop inborn powers." Offering examples from the animal kingdom, BAP says "All of this is higher organism organizing itself to master matter in surrounding space. Successful mastery of this matter leads to development of inborn powers and flourishing of organism. . . ." What higher life wants is power and freedom, not mere survival and reproduction. This is the teleology of man. Human nature is real; very much is "in the blood," inborn. Leftists foolishly pretend this is false. Fourth, the proper view on life is the "enchanted worldview." This is not a reasonable, calm, hyper-rational worldview. It is more like "religious delirium," and it is what characterizes all great men in their performance of great deeds, from warriors to artists to scientists. The disenchanting worldview, in contrast, is "the tight-assed attitude of the science cultist and materialist." It is worthless and no different than the outlook of slaves. And fifth, all these realities, and more, the "star of Nemesis," have been concealed in our stupid modern world. But they will return, and soon, with fire and slaughter. All this appears in the first of the four parts of the book. The rest of the book is an expansion and repetition. To give you a flavor, let's take the second part, titled Parable of Iron Prison. The Iron Prison is the modern world, a place of "brokenness" and "denatured life." Carl Schmitt is quoted, "They've put us out to pasture." But, in a twist from most complaints about modernity, the modern world's prison is the return of a very ancient subjection and brokenness under new branding, promoted by new concepts and justifications." BAP does not spend time on listing the defects of modernity, though he frequently swipes at them when discussing other matters; instead, he direct us to Nietzsche in Thus Spake Zarathustra, and, interestingly, Michel Houellebecq, who has been getting a lot of play on the Right lately, though I have not read his writings myself. Then BAP offers a long series of discursive thoughts, such as pointing out that most cities, that is, most civilizations, throughout history accomplished nothing, but were rather "steaming ratpiles," analogous to slums and shantytowns, and that small, orderly, well-run cities and city states are the exception. Villages and other primitive life are no better; they tend to exalt the rule of women and weaklings. Then we get talk of Gnostic sects and the Demiurge. We go pretty far down the rabbit hole, with a near-endorsement of the Phantom Time Hypothesis and references to "far more advanced civilizations . . . buried beneath the ice" and to reincarnation. Wilhelm Reich and his "orgone" technology get a favorable mention, and we are told "Trump's family knows the secrets of Tesla" (presumably not the car company). The core point here, though, buried among apparent rambling, is that a good society must be one that "allows the ascent of life"—that is, human flourishing though mastering inborn powers. Very few societies do; that modern societies don't is not news, but it is still a problem. Well, sounds like a dreadful situation. What to do? In the last two parts of the book, BAP adds flesh to the way things should be. It would be hard to imagine a paradigm more unpalatable to the modern Left—but one which, crucially, avoids the bugbear-in-chief of the modern Left, racism. The chapter begins, "Life appears at its peak not in the grass hut village ruled by nutso mummies, but in the military state. In Archaic Greece, in Renaissance Italy and in the vast expanse of the heroic Old Stone Age, at the middle of the Bronze Age of high chariotry, lived men of power and magnificence in great numbers. We are in every way their inferiors." Noting that the inscription Aeschylus put on his grave was that he had fought at Marathon, not that he was Athens's most famous playwright, he notes "You know about their great art, science, and literature, or think you do. But these were men of conquest, exploration and adventure first. . . . You may not be able to emulate them in every way, because the age we live in is one of total repression. [But] you can still take some inspiration from their examples, and try to live the same in some way. . . . try to live according to a Bronze Age Mindset." In what does that consist? Vitality, and "the great aim, physical and military independence. Only the warrior is a free man." The ideal man is one free from the need to work who trains as a warrior. Leisure as rest is worthless. Politically, such men should rule. The men of power, that is, the free men, in ancient Greece were not racially bound, but bound to their city, culture, and language. They "would never have submitted to abstractions like 'human rights,' or 'equality,' or 'the people' as some kind of amorphous entity encompassing the inhabitants of the territory or city in general. . . . [N]o real man would ever accept the legitimacy of such an entity, which for all practical purposes means you must, for entirely imaginary reasons, defer to the opinion of slaves, aliens, fat childless women, and others who have no share in the actual physical power." For a modern example, BAP cites Alfredo Stroessner, "dictator of Paraguay for forty years." "The entire day he worked relentlessly for his country and to keep down the vicious and Satanic communist sect that would have massacred his people—but he also did this for his own glory!" Then, in one of the funniest, but also most insightful, passages of the book, he imagines, or re-imagines, Mitt Romney as Alcibiades. It is unimaginable; that is BAP's point.

Instead, we have loss of vitality, spiritual exhaustion, and living in a state of fear. Therefore, any move toward the Bronze Age is magnetic. “[A] man like Trump, who seems not to care, and to find joy in this flouting and energy in this outrageous loosening—he seduces.”The solution is not something new, a “futuristic flourishing that is not yet here.” (BAP is unlikely to be a fan of Archeofuturism and the Nouvelle Droit.) Instead, it is something old, the Bronze Age Mindset. “I want to give encouragement to some who are a certain way, in their blood, and to encourage them to become the purifying hand of nature.” The bedrock mechanism of accomplishing this is male friendships. “[E]very great thing in the past was done through strong friendships between two men, or brotherhoods of men, and this includes all great political things, all acts of political freedom and power.” Modernity rejects this, consensus and inclusivity (not a word BAP uses, but apt) are demanded because the characteristics of male friendships, and what results, “make women and weaklings uncomfortable.” These friendships are not homosexual; BAP rejects even that the “Sacred Band” of Thebes was homosexual and claims that the obsessive search for historical homosexuality is a “misunderstanding and exaggeration promoted by the homonerds of our time,” pointing out, for example, that there is zero suggestion in Homer that Achilles and Patroclus were homosexuals, yet they had the type of bond BAP admires. (BAP is at least partially wrong here as a historical matter; the Greeks did to some degree engage in homosexual practices as bonding, though they were not “gay” relationships in the modern sense in any way.) The goal is to become a superman, like Periander of Corinth, subject to nobody, and accomplishing great things for their own sake. Morals have nothing to do with it; such a man is above morals. BAP even admires men like Nero as described by Suetonius, and Agathocles as described by Machiavelli.Then BAP switches gears, to more modern times, with a long profile of “the most glamorous Christian prince for me,” Conradin, grandson of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, the “Stupor Mundi.” Conradin is quite obscure; he was executed in 1268 at age sixteen after fighting, leading, and losing in the complex Italian wars of the time, but who briefly held the titles King of Sicily and King of Jerusalem. For BAP, Conradin, shooting star, was “the renewed avatar of Apollo in Europe, recalling very old memories.” Next we get a strong endorsement of men I also endorse strongly, crusaders and conquistadors, Cortes to Drake to Magellan and more, all men with a Bronze Age Mindset. Pedro de Alvarado, lieutenant of Cortes, who slaughtered the Aztec nobles while Cortes was away from Tenochtitlan, gets the most praise. He was who he was, and made no excuses. “Alvarado was a nemesis to civilization, and this is right and good. God sends such men to chastise mankind. I want you to be like this; to listen to these instincts in you. . . . Alvarado is the avatar of our new age, and I predict this: within fifty years a hundred Alvarados will bloom from deep in the tropical bestiary of the spirit. They will sweep away the weakness of this world.” “So far we have only had Gracchi . . . but Caesars and Napoleons are sure to follow. A man of great charisma who can seduce the people with a wild spirit and break through the rule of the pervasive bureaucracy-media complex is our best hope for the immediate problem . . . and maybe our only hope.”[Review continues with first comment.] ...more

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