The Treason of the Clerisy

> *Yet in the late nineteenth century the artists and the intellectuals-the "clerisy," as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and I call it-turned against liberal innovation. The treason of the clerisy led in the twentieth century to the pathologies of nationalism and socialism and national socialism, and in the twenty-first century to the pieties of radical environmentalism, and to the dismal pessimism of the union left and the traditional right. The clerisy provided the "scientific" justifications for such attitudes, as in scientific materialism or scientific imperialism or scientific racism or scientific Malthusianism or, lately, scientific neoeugenics. The scientific schemes reasserted an elite control over newly liberated poor people. Consider Mao's Little Red Book, say, or Hitler's Mein Kampf, which extracted from the scientific dreams of left or right a plan for an ant-colony society governed by the Party.*

Deirdre N. McCloskey. Bourgeois Dignity: Why Economics Can't Explain the Modern World (Kindle Locations 636-640). Kindle Edition.