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Democratic Culture and Moral Character

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Foreword

Most books on psychoanalysis and politics are either mostly about psychoanalysis, with a little bit of politics. Or books about politics, employing a very stereotypical and one-dimensional view of psychoanalysis. Braun's book is quite remarkable, and from one perspective is not really about psychoanalysis and politics at all. Rather, it is a book about the evolution of modern life by one who is deeply informed and thoughtful about politics, culture, and psychoanalysis. That is the spirit in which it is written, I believe, and that is the spirit in which it is best read.

The range and breadth of Braun's reading and understanding of the rise of the modern world, and the modern individual who goes with it, is impressive. More impressive still is his ability to pursue and convey a complex argument over a couple of 100 pages. If I were to compare it to any recent work, the most obvious would be Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism*. Only Braun's historical sweep is broader. Psychoanalysis and politics are not so much woven together as they are part of an intellectual background to a critique of contemporary western culture at a vulnerable point.

At one level, Braun's is an old fashioned project. To rethink how a contemporary liberal society and political culture, a culture for which the label "a culture of narcissism" still fits, might still promote virtue. By virtue Braun means something close to what the ancients meant, sound character as displayed in action. How can a political system that still depends on good character survive in a culture that seems aimed at destroying it? Braun's thesis, if I understand him (and here I must simplify), is that while the loss of a pragmatic sense of values, values that both stand for something and make a difference in how people act, is dangerous for the ruled, it is disastrous when it affects the elite. Plato knew this, his Republic is all about combating this, and it is reflected in the old saying that the fish rots from the head down. But Braun is not trying to tell us something new. He is analyzing the changes in the modal self-structure of the current age, to use a clumsy social-psychological term, a tendency that Braun mostly avoids. Exactly what explains this change, I am not sure. Is culture itself an explanatory variable, or that which remains to be explained? On this issue I would like to talk more with Braun.

Looking around the world, both historically and cross-culturally, we seem to be left with a choice between feudal societies that cultivate authoritarian

personalities, and democratic societies that, cut loose from the bonds of tradition (a process that took centuries) cultivate narcissistic ones. Tocqueville saw this coming 150 years ago, and Braun is at his best in his concluding chapters in weaving together the contemporary psychoanalytic literature on the self with the literature on cultural transformation. The richness of Braun's work resides in the detail with which he weaves these two stories together: one about the psychology of the self, the other about a culture that increasingly, but not without exception, fails to support the self, throwing the individual back on more primitive psychological defenses. I do not believe that I have read a more thoroughgoing treatment of the subject.

Political psychology, understood as ambitiously as Braun does, as the study of the development of the modal personality of the modern era, is only worthwhile when the psychological analysis is as subtle and sophisticated as the political. Braun's is one of the few books I have read that is as sophisticated about psychology as it is about political theory.

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Contents

Chapter 1
Introduction to Democratic Culture and Moral Character: A Study in Culture and Personality

It can be said that what is equal and unequal in traditional and modern societies are the reverse of each other. There is now more equality of opportunity for top positions but the very existence of so much modern dependence on endless economic growth based on division of labor that results at times in intense competition, and at other times in bureaucratic subservience, produces social inequalities even as the standard of living rises. If anything, the attempt to rebuild such intimate communal feelings often makes the factionalism, so driven by economic rivalries, even worse. That is because religious and ideological rivalries combine with economic interests to muddy politics.

Modern democracy of the kind enshrined in the American Constitution (after a few amendments) in fact dampens such rivalries because it produces the basis for a commercial republic where contracts are enforced, not a theocracy where virtue is ordained and then enforced. It nevertheless relies on such communal functions as produce a sense of virtue in civil society, but it makes no attempt to create such communal functions from scratch. If the people cease to be virtuous, the American Constitution will not directly make them so. Yet if people are virtuous, it will teach them one more virtue, that of tolerance.

In fact, this tolerance takes for granted the existence of autonomy, personal freedom, and the desire to be free from the impositions of the powerful off the job (even when this is not the case on the job, especially when the job is part of a bureaucratic hierarchy). This social state of affairs is characteristic of post-feudal societies like America. They try to institutionalize personal freedom off the job, sometimes producing the danger of social isolation, unlike feudal societies where social isolation is avoided (this is easier when these societies are not particularly large and anonymous, this becomes harder when these societies become densely populated) at the price of a sense of social hierarchy that pervades all of society, resulting in the need to "play up to the powerful" because of both economic and political dependence on them, something that is pervasive in most areas of social life. Social solidarity produced through social hierarchy has the danger of treating people like objects. This is all too common in Europe. Sometimes this pervasive sense of social hierarchy is moderated by a sense of chivalry taught by religion,

and the remnants of loyalties that originated in social hierarchies that were originally familial in nature, the kind that are characteristic of pre-feudal, patrimonial societies.

However, the checks and balances of feudal societies, to a large extent moral values that were inherited from pre-feudal societies, tend to diminish as bureaucratization of society increases. Therefore, post-feudal societies like America learn to moderate the temptations toward tyranny by the powerful by institutionalizing protections for the poor and those lacking in social power. This is often done through religion that emphasizes personal fairness in relationships that counteracts the narcissism of the rich and the obsequiousness of the poor, and by a political culture that institutionalizes protections conducive to political democracy such as through an emphasis on human rights and limited government.

Obviously producing an environment for the healthy formation of personality is a major justification for political democracy. Keeping all this in mind, this book will go into detail on how the ways societies are structured, particularly regarding their structures of authority, reflect and also create social and cultural environments that influence the fulfillment or deformation of personality.

This book aims to add psychological depth to what the Baron de Montesquieu (Montesquieu 1989) described when he wrote that the structures of societies influence the characters of the people who live there, so that republics (and no doubt democracies as well) function best when the mass of people are virtuous, aristocracies function best when the leaders practice moderation (obviously, it is their power that tempts them to go in the opposite direction), which is another way of saying when they do not abuse their power, and monarchies function best when these societies, which are now rather stable and quite bureaucratized compared to other forms of social order, get their elitist functionaries to fulfill their duties out of pride and a sense of honor. What is important in a monarchy is to get the elite, who tend to be either members of the hereditary aristocracy even when serving in a bureaucratic capacity, or even if not are bureaucrats personally loyal to the monarch and not to the people, to not try to gain personal advantage out of their bureaucratic positions, but also not to shirk their duties.

As to what is meant by individualism and collectivism, it is useful to illustrate this by examples. We can start by noticing that there are different degrees of middle positions between individualism and collectivism, yet these middle positions are often dragged in one direction or the other by the cultural strengths of the extremes that are also present in society. During the Middle Ages in Europe individualists would get to meet their narcissistic needs by conformity to the norms of the collectivistic society around them. However, self-sacrificing, virtuous, religious people who believed in submission to duly constituted (and worthy) authority (which would make them somewhat authoritarian) might well be wary of these religious people, especially when they attained leadership positions, whom they would consider to be too narcissistic because they were just too ostentatious in their self-righteousness, too much seeking applause for the good things they did. This is not to deny that being virtuous for narcissistic reasons is still better for society than doing the opposite. Nevertheless, in such a society narcissists must try

to hide their self-centeredness in order to fit in, I suppose unless they are the king, and sometimes even then.

In the modern era on the other hand, authoritarian collectivists often do not fit into an increasingly individualistic society because they wish to meet their need to fit into a social whole smoothly, without anxiety, which means endless competition on the job and off for status (of the sort that narcissists find appealing) upsets them. Given modern individualistic conditions, these authoritarians usually do not have a cultural basis to help them understand why they are so upset, though some if asked might think about it, and say creating social order through narcissistic competition misses the whole point of what social conformity should be all about. Nevertheless, in a modern, individualistic setting competitive narcissists often find personal fulfillment easier to achieve than authoritarians for whom losing their self-consciousness by serving a worthy cause is not easy to achieve in an anonymous, materialistic and competitive (and often not particularly encouraging of virtue) society.

However, narcissists are not necessarily happy either. Even in an individualistic society of the present sort there are extremely narcissistic individualists for whom no degree of competition is enough to meet their need to endlessly seek to be on top, or if not this to be on stage and the center of attention. In extreme cases, for sociopaths (those extreme narcissists) any bit of social conformity appears to them to be the height of hypocrisy, since they cannot imagine any purpose for social-izing other than to seek dominance over others for goals that for these others might seem to be essentially trivial.

Authoritarian people for whom fitting in socially is its own reward might consider such goals as seeking power for personal use to be unworthy, even in a society led by narcissistic leaders, or in a society where many of their fellow citizens are themselves narcissistic. However, for the more extreme ones, the need to conform might be so great that they would not even notice when the rules they are following are not working out, especially when they are fulfilling the fantasies of their leaders. This is because not being allowed to have ideals of their own, they typically end up being forced to live out the fantasies of others, and especially those of their leaders.

Of course, there are many mixed cases, of authoritarians who merely repress their narcissistic tendencies and release them by scapegoating those people whom they consider to be social inferiors, or rivals who they wish were social inferiors. And then there are the narcissists who are quite willing to have complex social structures as long as other people are bound by them. This is especially so when they get to be the leaders of this society and believe, often in practice though not necessarily in theory, that hypocrisy is the social norm so that they are only doing what is expected of them when they lie about their social aspirations, or fantasize about them the way an actor does.

Then when they gain power they will be at the pinnacle of society, a lonely place to be, but then they can imagine no other. Sometimes a society becomes so cynical that a leader being open and honest about their amoral ambitions is treated by a portion of the population as refreshing, in comparison with the hypocrisies of that leader's competitors.

A society where the mass of population desire to live vicariously through the amoral actions of their leaders obviously is on the road to decadence. Societies that submit to the rule of totalitarian leaders often have this characteristic, especially when one portion of the society is bribed to acquiesce with the despoliation of another portion of the society by sharing in the spoils.

These narcissistic leaders might even get to feel they are serving people in their own way, but with little interest in truth, or in true social relationships for that matter, how can you convince a person of the falsity of a fantasy? It can be done, through the kind of appeal to reason that is the hallmark of science, and in another venue, of law as in the pursuit of justice, and in another venue as the hallmark of religion through an appeal to loyalty to ultimate values, but there is no guarantee that the extreme narcissist, or the extreme authoritarian for that matter, will listen. Obviously, I am making an appeal for the golden mean in ethics, that hallmark of Aristotelian ethics for example, though when and where and how, and ultimately for what purpose, is the hard part, for which I hope this book will help.

The social sciences do not deal much with ultimate questions, though they did more in the past when concern with ultimate questions was all the rage; even when that early proponent of reason and science, Aristotle, was concerned ultimately with teleological, though not theological, answers as to why the world and nature seemed to have its own purposes. An older book, but not as old as Aristotle's, that recounts such ultimate questions is F. S. C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West*: *An Inquiry Concerning World Understanding* (Northrop 1946).

My own approach is somewhat more in the American pragmatic tradition, though it does overlap with some of the traditions mentioned above. It is inter-disciplinary in the sense that it tries to combine the perspectives of psychological social psychology, which tends to interpret attitudes as reflecting a kind of utilitarian calculus, sociological social psychology, which tends to be biased toward interpreting attitudes as reflecting social conformity processes, and anthropological cultural psychology, which tends to be biased toward what is left over, seeking existential meaning in life rooted in both sides of the human experience, biological needs, and cultural frames of reference. This book also tries to deal with certain practical questions relating to the nature of politics, especially democratic politics, the relation between culture and personality, and between society and personality, and how personality can be fulfilled, rather than alienated, by a sense of community, and by broader, more anonymous social structures (like the state) or close-in, sometimes claustrophobic causing, rather formal social structures like bureaucracies. I also discuss how that tool of community, politics, and government can also, and not necessarily in a good sense, become its master.

I especially want to keep in mind the existence of existential absurdities, such as when political tools, like hereditary monarchy which can serve a purpose when having elected politics of any sort is considered too hard a task, can gain functional autonomy, and then its power can run rampant, serving no good purpose other than the absurdity of its own tyranny. It is understandable of course, just as political machines in electoral democracies for similar reasons produce loyalty to the leader at the top, a rather arbitrarily chosen leader in many cases, but once the political

machine (and this leader) chooses a candidate, since the public so often acquiesces to this decision sheepishly, it guarantees the career of that hack politician and loyalty to the political machine's leader, perhaps for a lifetime. In similar manner, an ambitious person in a monarchy only has to please the monarch, not the fickle public. This is one reason monarchy was once so popular, among the wealthy classes who could get ahead by pleasing the monarch and they hoped no need for anyone else. Political democracy will hopefully do better by actually offering a voice to the mass of population.

Intellectually, the justification for political legitimacy and authority also has its absurdities, as when, let us get back to our example of monarchy, the king announces that his adherence to a certain religion convinces him that his subjects are sinners, but that he is not. Therefore, he claims his achievement of knowledge of abstract theology, his version of enlightenment, justifies his right to monitor and control his subjects, usually not for violations of public morality for which he often does not have a clue, but by constantly testing his subjects for their knowledge and their adherence to abstract ideology so that he gets to punish them for "disloyalty" to something so vague and amorphous that he can justify any punishments for any reason. Secular versions of this also exist, as when the Bolsheviks came to power in Russia and claimed their knowledge of abstruse Marxist doctrines enabled them to punish people for "disloyalty."

They may have thought this was an example of progress and an improvement over the theological justifications for the tyranny of the czars, but few nowadays would agree. Many would say they were merely continuing the same old bad habits of their predecessors in government, and in religion for that matter.

In fact, nationalism in general reflects certain escapist needs common to modern, bureaucratized societies. Nationalism as escapist fantasy has its price, just as in a family where the members should be interacting with each other and enjoying what they have in common, but if all they have in common is telling other people how their family is better than other families, then they do not have all that much in common. The same holds true for that amorphous, bureaucratized, distant relationship that citizens, who hopefully are no longer merely subjects as in the days of the monarchy, have with the state. If they are merely nationalists, enjoying the thrills of endless propaganda telling them that their religion or their ethnic group or their social class is superior, then they may well become dependent on this fantasy. Also it is likely they will not particularly enjoy each other's company. Nevertheless, it is understandable how psychological needs for social closeness can be fulfilled in the family, and even in the community, though communities are not really families written large, and even though some nations refer to themselves as a "fatherland" or a "motherland," they are neither fathers nor mothers, except as an analogy that has been expanded to an absurd degree.

It is this mixture of authoritarian loyalty (they are trapped, especially by the bureaucratic controls that envelop them, but also by having no better community to be part of) and narcissistic pleasure (they get some entertainment out of it, sometimes as passive spectators of a good show, sometimes because they are allowed to vent their emotions sadistically, especially when told to do so by

constituted authority) that forms the social institution of nationalism. This is what democratic values and political philosophy has always considered to be the worst of both worlds, an authoritarian loyalty that serves no moral purpose, and a narcissistic outlet for pleasure that serves ultimately not a higher reality, but merely a delusion based on fantasy. Benedict Anderson's book on nationalism as imagined communities has much to say about this (Anderson 1991).

This state of affairs, and hopefully what serves a more healthy sense of community, and polity, is what this book hopes to explore. I will start with some issues of democracy and personal character, go on to the relation between the way society and culture is built on the activities of people's characters as expressed in pragmatic actions on the world, and then go on to resulting effects on the sense of self and thus on personal character. I will discuss these processes in a cross-cultural and even in some ways an evolutionary perspective. The Conclusion section will try to provide some detail on what it means for personality and society to mesh.

A common point I make is that the psychological worlds of the neurotic (repressed) and the hysterical (expressive, but sometimes in a perverse way) are overly inclusive, instead of admitting they do not know and do not have control over their futures, these people deal with high anxiety levels by defense mechanisms common also to obsessions and paranoia. I mention that there seems to be an affinity between the collection of psychological states that can be described as mass hysteria, partly because of the influence of processes of social conformity, and imposed from the state social conformity often assisted by intermediary groups, that is reflected in political and cultural nationalism.

One function of nationalism is to reintegrate society and reimpose a feeling of psychological security. In many ways, social evolution by its tendency to promote anonymity and insecurity produces, not insecurity coming from fear of the vagaries of nature as in more traditional, even more primitive, societies, but insecurity coming from fear of the vagaries coming from overly complex societies, and especially their economies. It is not really a surprise, therefore, that people in primitive societies because of typical stresses, relieve those stresses in ways that in extreme form can result in hysterical personalities, but in less severe circumstances they can handle transient hysterical episodes that are fairly common because their societies are adaptable to such psychological acting out in a way bureaucratic, economically driven, modern social structures often cannot.

More authoritarian, structured, class-ridden societies on the other hand often produce both senses of self that fit in often rather blindly with their social structures, and the psychological state of paranoia as one way to relieve their stress. After all these, people spend their lives being controlled by others, no wonder they resent this and often cannot act on their frustrations except by finding scapegoats, or by overreacting to their fear of control by people they do not really trust. The opposite attitude is what, hopefully, family members have toward each other, for if they do not have basic trust, then they do not have much of anything worthwhile as a family.

Finally, modern societies by their extreme anonymity, by the sheer abstractness of the social environment so that people do not always know why they are being

discriminated against, for example in the job market, they just know they live with constant, socially induced stresses that are the result of markets that respond to social forces that they can barely comprehend, as a net effect in extreme cases can cause a severe breakdown of the functioning of the personality to the point of schizophrenia. However, more likely are defense mechanisms that start before reaching that state, such as leading to extreme narcissism based on consumer consumption, to addictions, such as those that result from being enveloped in electronic communications that substitute for close, interpersonal relations; all of which are better than complete breakdown of the functioning personality, but are far from ideal. For a general reference to many of these issues, see Julian Leff, *Psychiatry Around the Globe* (Leff 1988) and John M. Ingham, *Psychological Anthropology Reconsidered* (Ingham 1996).

Since I will be discussing later on such issues as the relation between nationalism as both reflecting and encouraging mass hysteria, and even paranoia, here is a general description of such states of personality. I will use a mode of analysis that I have developed over the years, and it is essentially the kind of personality analysis psychoanalysts, but not just them, are comfortable with. You may wish to refer to my earlier edited books on culture and personality (Braun 1993, 1995). A useful textbook on psychoanalytic diagnosis is Nancy McWilliams, *Psychoanalytic Diagnosis*: *Understanding Personality in the Clinical Process,* 2nd edition (McWilliams 2011).

Paranoia is a pathology of fear turned into anger as opposed to searching for love, as in manic depression. Paranoia is delusional masochism, projecting one's need to punish oneself for secret guilt (not necessarily a realistic fear) of the sort that may reflect the idiosyncrasies of an individual life, or the kind of shame that often arises in authoritarian families where one is constantly criticized for disappointing the parents, the neighbors, or even the state. A too common way under such circumstances to deal with this anxiety is to project it, so that others are seen as guilty. Also, this can be a way of attacking first by one who fears punishment, which is practically an occupational hazard of narcissists (though they may be too obtuse to realize the threats they face) or simply fears of being deserving of punishment (realistically or not), which seems to be a typical problem of authoritarians.

In a sense, one can refer to pathologies of feeling, behavior, and ambivalence. Anxiety neurosis, with large amounts of simple anxiety, though this may worsen into developing more specific phobias, can worsen also into something more severe than phobias, the behavioral syndrome of obsessive–compulsive neurosis, as an outlet to relieve the tensions of anxiety. Manic depression tends to be more severe, and sometimes persists at the level of severity of borderline personality disorder. It reflects a weak sense of self that has adapted to stress derived from inconsistency from the environment in providing it with emotional security and opportunities to develop trust. This state of the self is built on vulnerabilities left over from analogous situations during periods of great vulnerability during childhood, particularly from caregivers, though the effects of cruel peers should not be discounted; however, the effects of insensitive parenting are usually worse

since parental love tends to be protecting. Manic depression based on disordered feelings can evolve into the disordered behaviors that make up the varieties of perversion. Hysteria creates symptoms out of excess anxiety (reflecting repressed fear or anger or sexual desire; often made necessary by a need to fit in socially such as by playing a required social role) and failed attempts at emotional repression, while perversion is the absence not the failure of self-control, and the immediate acting out of anxiety or simply desire. Perversion reflects less overwhelming instinctual demands than unnatural "abnormal" object relations and sense of self in relations to others. Perversion is also an extreme development of recourse to unusual, often socially or self-destructive outlets for action on desires; narcissists by their social power tend to have healthier outlets, unless their warped personal (sometimes ideological) histories make perverted obsessions their anxiety relief of choice. In a sense, perversion and hysteria are opposite extremes, hysteria the leaking out of anxiety seeking an outlet when neurosis just cannot hold it in any longer, while perversion has achieved a kind of narcissistic victory, where an objective for providing tension release has been created, usually not of the mere socially prestigious sort that is the typical objective of hysterics, but usually goal objects more complex and even bizarre.

When there are extreme feelings of ambivalence at work, which is not unusual in modern social environments, when economic insecurity often results in or is the result of weak social ties and/or distrust to the point of fearing economic or social rivals, and narcissists particularly are sensitive to such rivalries since they do not get much pleasure from social solidarity and cooperation (they are not happy at the success of others, since they treat life as a zero sum game), the end result of such ambivalence can be paranoia. Likewise, perverted behavior taken to an extreme and motivated by extreme ambivalence toward one's social world can result in becoming a sociopath, though I expect such attitudes date back to the experiences of childhood, and usually do not develop in adulthood merely because of a run of bad luck.

Regarding dealing with these psychological states, the process of remembering, repeating, and working through emotions is both social (ritualistic) and individual (behavior, often obsessive), and both lead to catharsis of repressed emotions, revealing traumas, and building up ties to meaningful goals in the existential sense and to meaningful people through cathexis. The opposite process is repressing, denying, and making unreal. Sometimes personal relationships, and even whole societies, encourage the latter.

To return from psychology to politics, there is an ultimate question on the relation between government and society: To what extent does efficacy of political democracy require (1) communal efficiency in terms of consolidating common interests (producing an understanding of the common good) and thus an ease in mutual understanding and coordination because of these common interests between the leaders and the led or (2) bureaucratic efficiency in law, through either formal rules (following bureaucratic procedures and legal precedents to help interpret those procedures) and/or similar efficiencies in economics, or substantive rules (regulated by feelings of sympathy and devotion to morality)? The first mode of social coordination is similar to the mechanical solidarity described by Emile

Durkheim, you might call it the closest one can get to mechanical solidarity given modern anonymous, bureaucratic conditions, and the second mode of coordination is similar to the organic solidarity described by him, both derived from his book *The Division of Labor in Society* (Durkheim 1964). As to these distinctions specifically on the nature of law, I refer you to *Max Weber on Law in Economy and Society*, edited by Max Rheinstein (Weber 1954).

Bureaucratic efficiency results in adequacy of means, while communal efficiency produces commitment to adequate ends, usually firmly rooted in understandings of requirements of natural justice (sometimes derived from traditions of natural law that tend to be rooted in religion) and resulting standards of public morality. When there is cultural (usually based on tradition) and social (the various social groupings concur) agreement on ends, it is usually hoped that agreement on means will easily result, though given the complexity of modern societies and modern economies this is not always the case.

Such popularizers of modern sociology, and its usefulness for explaining such phenomena as globalization, as Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck tend to make the case that one result of such increasing social complexity is the increasing, not decreasing, tendency for dangerous social breakdowns. It is not that social breakdowns are necessarily more common than in earlier, more traditional societies, the reverse is often the case, especially regarding natural disasters such as famines, but when they do occur, they are much more dangerous because individual and familial independence of action is so much less. Cultural autonomy (more choice in lifestyles) and psychological autonomy (also increasing narcissism) is in some ways increasingly prevalent, but this requires the economic and social underpinnings of a complex society to provide protection against the dangers that come from taking what often are risks, psychological, but also in terms of fragmenting social solidarities (substituting organic for mechanical solidarity). An overview of this whole area can be found in Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens, and Scott Lash, *Reflexive Modernization*: *Politics*, *Tradition*, *and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order* (Giddens et al. 1994), as well as many other books on "risk society" and "social trust."

As a kind of generalization regarding social and political evolution, tribal societies evolved (that is some of them did) into patrimonial societies where the model for social solidarity and government was the family that then evolved sometimes into feudal societies where social solidarities were in some ways personal, but also in some ways impersonal and with tendencies toward bureaucratization, tendencies that often increased over time. Modern European societies are the culmination of this evolution toward the bureaucratic governance of the state and culturally are still influenced by the remnants of traditions dating back to feudal times, since bureaucracies have the twofold effect of putting into power people who have true competencies, and people who, sometimes to the point of absurdity, give off the illusion of competency, but even this illusion produces some basis for social order. Think of monarchs who are mere figureheads, but even this has the symbolic and thus psychological function of undergirding social order. For a discussion of such political evolution in Europe, see Gianfranco Poggi,

The State: *Its Nature*, *Development*, *and Prospects* (Poggi 1990) and Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors* (Spruyt 1996).

American democracy built on its frontier traditions, and the fact that in some ways it is an archaic society based on the eighteenth century traditions of the Age of Reason in Europe that became out of fashion there, through a number of cultural trends including the cultural movement of romanticism. These later intellectuals bemoaned the psychological insufficiencies of societies grown more anonymous, more based on minute division of labor, and more vulgar so that mass consumerism grew more and more important in setting the cultural tone, and yet they often came up with solutions that ended up benefited complaining elites, themselves, more than the common people that they claimed to represent.

Though the ideal was to benefit the mass of people, in theory both the political left and the political right believed in that, the practice was often at best paternalism by the state (including the eventual welfare state), which in most European societies remained under the firm control of elites, since they dominated the bureaucratic controls that governed the state. The present-day writer and scholar John Gray has written about this. See especially his *Two Faces of Liberalism* (Gray 2002). Another scholar with similar interests is Isaiah Berlin [among his many books you might want to take a look at is *Liberty*: *Incorporating Four Essays on Liberty* (Berlin 2002)] and another writer, in some ways less scholarly, but with a firm understanding of the business world and thus with a greater sense of practical relevance is John Ralston Saul who has his own critique of the misuse of the ideas of the eighteenth century Age of Reason in modern times in *Voltaire*'*s Bastards*: *The Dictatorship of Reason in the West* (Saul 1993). In his later book *The Unconscious Civilization* (Saul 1995), he emphasizes the loss of belief in the common good as the goal of politics and its replacement by interest group politics, because if politicians set their agendas mostly based on what lobbyists tell them their actions will for the most part not serve any interests other than making profits for those whom these lobbyists represent.

The primary analysis of a political problem I believe should be according to how it affects the greatest good for the greatest number, a critical issue for problems affecting the mass of working-class citizens, or how it affects critically a small section of the population but nevertheless severely, like the way drug abuse affects not everyone, but a small section of the population very severely which then affects in its consequences everyone. These are all heuristic devices for problem solving that are nevertheless often not used by politicians for whom the interests of lobbyists are the only social problems they care to solve. That is why how often elites in general are worthy of their power remains a core but veiled question in political discussion, and often the answer differs from society to society depending on how past circumstances have influenced their later social evolution, that and the vagaries of history.

To get back to America, I call American culture post-feudal in the sense it tries to retain some of the efficiencies of modern bureaucratic government [though often its standards and thus its efficiency is lower than the bureaucratic governments of much of Europe—see Harold Wilensky, *American Political Economy in Global*

Perspective (Wilensky 2012)]. In other ways, often based on eighteenth century traditions admittedly, American political tradition tries to limit bureaucratic control of society by returning power to local governments, sometimes merely to local groups that function as communities without the territorial base of government; business groupings can sometimes be described in this way.

Thus, in many ways, America is a return to the ideal of the mixed polity so common in early states. Admittedly, social classes are not represented in government, neither are religions nor ethnic groups, but a functional representation of geographical areas is considered a rather pragmatic solution to the ultimate question of political legitimacy and thus of political democracy: How can the mass of people control or at least provide oversight for their representatives who claim to represent their constituents, but are tempted to make a career of it and represent their own personal, sometimes selfish, interests, often served by acting in league with the rich and powerful who will reward them in turn, if nothing else by paying for their political campaigns?

Some will say America's solution to this dilemma of political representation is cynical, since it never really tries to return the nation to an Edenic state of communal intimacy, as if the nation can be the local community written large. Some European nationalists try to do so, or at least make lots of propaganda that make national politics almost as interesting and tense as a communal quarrel. American political leaders tend to believe these European politicians are trying to do the impossible. No doubt some of their European counterparts think that American politicians should try harder, and not just bask in their accomplishments, quite often based on their loyalty to patronage machines which requires a passive electorate (Schattschneider 2004). I suppose that in modernizing tribal societies, these people often have a plague on both your houses attitude, and wish they could retain the benefits of communal intimacy while also having economic advance, something that they often feel that neither American presidential democracy nor European parliamentary democracy can offer them.

Americans sometimes believe our mixed polity is the best that can be done in modern circumstances. People in other cultures often think we can still do better. Nevertheless, America still follows the British tradition of "muddling through" to solve social problems which means in the long run the complexity of social problems can be dealt with partly because they are tackled little by little, partly because they resolve themselves over time in an evolutionary fashion, which works out as long as America is a frontier society with many available resources, and many opportunities to forget our mistakes and start over, and perhaps for not much longer. Such opportunities will probably decline over time with the ending of our social and economic frontier. Also, this means it is difficult for us to deal with problems that are complex and simultaneous, so that they must be dealt with in big chunks or not at all.

To compare patrimonial (pre-feudal) societies and modern bureaucratic societies (and in some cultural ways, the latter are still quite feudal, since in many ways they are still quite hierarchical and not in a familial sense), it seems to be the case that what Islamic populations and secular Western European populations tend to

obsess over still differ. While comparatively small proportions of religiously conservative Islamic population might obsess over the sexual immodesty (and dress) of Western European women as a temptation to their men and a bad example for their daughters, a somewhat larger proportion I expect of the Western European population dislike Islamic dress for women because for them lack of visual uniformity in a community is disconcerting. They do not take the visual confirmation of the existence of unique communal-based subcultures as the norm as was the case in Baghdad in the 1920s (unless it is their own children like the "hippies" of the 1960s, and even then one reason this was excused was because there were lots of ways to make money off of them). Instead, lack of visual uniformity with its implied rejection of Western commercial and somewhat hedonistic society is treated as an implied criticism of that society, and often as a personal criticism of themselves.

The Middle Eastern convivial way of maintaining social solidarity, for example by exchanging gifts of food between neighbors to set up a bond, is not considered the norm among anonymous Western populations who ignore the morals of their neighbors insofar as it does not interfere with the workings of commerce. As to the effects of low morals on particular family histories, a good number of Islamic families might ponder such things, perhaps obsessively, and secular European populations in many cases would probably try not to ponder such things, again probably obsessively. But the complexity of such situations is such that cultures in the modern era, and often in earlier times also, do not remain at rest, and at times social problems cause people to rethink their social and cultural assumptions, sometimes rationally, and sometimes with the modern equivalent of traditional "witchcraft" accusations, which is to say with often a fairly strong element of scapegoating attached to them.

The "rationality" and "irrationality" of such attempts at cultural and moral revival will be a major theme of this book, particularly because it is traditionally considered a major underlying basis for the success or failure of American culture, thus for the effectiveness of American society, and ultimately for the ultimate success or failure of American democracy. I imagine similar circumstances, though the details no doubt differ, exist in other societies as well, and I will try to explore such circumstances in a comparative manner.

Both Max Weber and Sigmund Freud sought to protect the ideals of Europe's Age of Reason from the rising tide of irrationalism that became more prominent as the nineteenth century wore on, including the increasing tendency, after a relative period of peace, toward nationalism and war. This book will hopefully give some clues on why such things occur.

As an example of such a constellation of circumstances, James Billington in his classic book *The Icon and the Axe*: *An Interpretive History of Russian Culture* (Billington 1966) has as its underlying theme the utter complexity, and in some ways the at least initial futility, of trying to engage in nation-building by copying the culture of another society whose circumstances that provide meaning to its own institutions are different. Thus, this book starts with the premise that the religion of Russian Orthodoxy, put into power like almost all Russian institutions by the elite

and especially the monarch, accentuated the emotional appeals of religion to the senses (thus, the continuing appeal of art to the Russian people as a gateway to higher truths), but not the intellectual, philosophical sense of political debate side of Greek Orthodoxy from which it derives. Also, historically, there did not develop an appreciation of Aristotelian ethics nor of political analysis based on his ideas in the Russian Orthodox tradition, unlike in the Catholic tradition where it grew in prominence during the Middle Ages and has remained central as a source of virtue ethics to this day. The work of the moral philosopher, Alasdair MacIntyre, is in this tradition. Two of his well-known books in this area are *After Virtue*: *A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd edition (MacIntyre 2007) and *Whose Justice*? *Which Rationality*? (MacIntyre 1989), though some might say he is stronger in philosophical hairsplitting than in describing dispassionately alternative ways of life, which I expect would be a Russian Orthodox critique. I am by no means trying to denigrate the Russian Orthodox tradition which has its own virtues, and its own way for enhancing communal solidarity. I am just pointing out that political analysis was not historically a high priority for them though political analysis had roots in part of the Greek tradition, that part that did not take root in Russian Orthodoxy.

Instead, all-encompassing ideology as a way of legitimizing those in power, and as a way of integrating the individual into society through a kind of esthetically based ecstasy (the kind that meditating monks might think because it works for them it should work for other people also) became the method of choice for creating social order. In later ages when philosophical and even religious movements started in Russia as a way to copy the successes, economic and moral, of the West by copying what they thought were their underlying assumptions as philosophies of life, this resulted not in intellectual debate, but in the chaos of warring all-encompassing ideologies by their proponents who sought through them to mold society.

As Billington writes about the populist movements of late nineteenth century Russia, what he calls Revolutionary Jacobinism (revolutionary left), evolutionary populism (for many intellectuals, their version of Western liberalism), and Pan-Slav imperialism right-wing adoration of the Russian community to the extent of developing messianic delusions of grandeur: "the optimistic Comtian [August Comte, French founder of Sociology] belief that there was contradiction between the truths of science and those of morality was particularly hard to sustain in Russia, where analysis tended to lead to revulsion and ideals to utopianism" (Billington 1966, 404).

This was obviously a rejection of the eighteenth century aristocratic position common to pre-revolutionary France and Russia alike, so ably maintained by the Baron de Montsquieu in *The Spirit of the Laws* (Montesquieu 1989) that a society must develop out of the circumstances it finds itself in, and no social group should attain ultimate power, not the mass of people (who when virtuous lend this tone to society, but when not become a mere mob), nor the aristocratic movers and shakers of society who lead because by definition they are the ones who are the leaders (and the fact they gain their position in a hereditary manner tends to be overlooked by them as a technicality), nor the monarch who so often became the chief

executive in order to maintain social order at all cost. This latter situation is the result of the fact that in a bureaucratic society, there must be a generalist at the helm, and by default when politics is considered unfeasible and to only lead to social disorder, and then this position becomes hereditary, a least-bad situation covered up by a great deal of ritualism, and pomp and circumstance. I expect some in the eighteenth century called this analysis of Montesquieu's an out-of-power, bemused Protestant (I don't believe he was himself Protestant, though his wife was) critique of political evolution, something an aristocrat who was not really at the center of power would employ, and perhaps they were right.

Yet in nineteenth century Russia, and now in many modernizing Third World countries, this classic position of eighteenth century European politics was rejected, that moderation is a goal of both politics and culture (the actualization in effect of "the golden mean" of Aristotelian Ethics) that should be created through the social engineering of a checks and balances based constitution, that in Montesquieu's mind created a balance between social classes, but in the American Constitution created merely a bureaucratic mechanism for ever-refining and distilling the popular will through public debate. See Gary Wills, *Explaining America*: *The Federalist* (Wills 1981). Instead, intellectuals in nineteenth century Russia, and now in many other places, seek to create a society less of limited government, so ably described in eighteenth century terms by the Baron de Montesquieu and in modern terms by Alain Touraine in *What is Democracy*? (Touraine 1997), and more as the fulfillment of something akin to an ultimate religious vision of social harmony.

James Billington writes of the Russian intellectual: "Whether the object was a woman or an idea the embrace tended to be total and intercourse almost immediate. Then came a fleeting period of euphoria after which the aristocratic intellectual resumed his restless search to find somewhere else the ecstasy that eluded him" (Billington 1966, 350). Of course at that point, the previous ideas, like the previous partner, were rejected with disappointment.

The similarity with the splitting of the ego among those with borderline personality disorder, of those who project absolute good and absolute bad upon certain social referents, because without it there can be no trust in nurturance, is obvious. As James Billington describes the process among his beloved Russian intellectuals: "In their heated desire to find answers for the 'cursed questions,' the aristocratic intellectuals mixed fact, fantasy, and prophecy at every turn. They created a unique fusion of intense sincerity and ideological contradiction, which has been the fascination and despair of almost every serious chronicler of Russian thought" (Billington 1966, 352).

It is not as if the countries that once took seriously the traditions of the eighteenth century Age of Reason do not have problems of their own. The psychological side of this is the decline of moralistic individualism and its replacement by narcissism (see Lasch 1991) that results also in the decline of the kind of rationality to which moralistic individualism had once been connected, because of the decline of individual conscientiousness coupled with the decline of a sense of social responsibility. The effects of both excessive authoritarianism, a problem

commonly found in modernizing traditional societies, and excessive narcissism, a problem commonly found in the evolution of modern-style individualistic societies, will be explored in this book.

In a manner of speaking, narcissism has become increasingly common in the West among the mass of population as consumer culture has become increasingly the major value in life. The result is that consumption of goods and fantasies from the recreational industries have become a substitute for a meaningful life derived from self-control in the service of fulfilling moral values that becomes understood through social interaction with others and learning from their perspectives and experiences, that "mutual appreciation of virtue" that for Aristotle was the highest form of friendship.

At the same time, a similar kind of narcissism had fewer bad effects in traditional societies in the past since lack of means–end rationality of the scientific sort was counterbalanced by detailed knowledge of the concrete circumstances of communal life, of what could be and could not be done, but has become more dangerous in modern times as lives in these societies have become more anonymous, more constrained by markets whose circumstances are not known to immediate experience, and as communal histories and lessons from the past are forgotten. To remedy this requires the development of a more abstract kind of means–ends rationality (the kind appropriate to scientific reasoning is a good start), but instead the shortcuts of "pop" culture are being offered to modernizing traditional societies just as they are being offered to people in the West, now that individualism often to the point of narcissism increasingly holds sway. Partly this is because narcissism is encouraged by the mass media as serving, from their point of view, their ideal customer who lives in his or her fantasies.

One of the purposes of culture is to create boundaries that are wise and even necessary, but are lacking from nature. Some boundaries are self-evident, like not running into a street amidst moving traffic. But cultures produce temptations that are not present in nature, like the way knowing when it is good to stop gambling involves values and culture in a way the decision to stop eating when one is full does not. And even natural instincts toward eating, toward aggression, toward eroticism can become distorted, especially in modern society through the images sold by the mass media, for increasingly the wisdom necessary to resist these unrealistic images and messages are lacking from the mass media.

This is not to forget that pre-modernity has its own problems, that also contains the traditions of pre-science and in a sense also a strong tendency toward magical as opposed to ethical religion. As Max Weber puts it: "We have already seen that one form of the adaptation of religion to the needs of the masses is the transformation of cultic religion into mere wizardry. A second typical form of adaptation is the shift into savior religion, which is naturally related to the aforementioned change into magic by the most numerous transitional stages" (Weber 1963, 102). Even now societies that evolve from their pre-modern traditions are nevertheless marked by their cultural origins.

The Age of Reason was the foundation stone of American political culture, what eventually led to the acceptance of the norm of a responsible citizenry as a

hoped-for political reality, and thus raising the feasibility of having political democracy eventually developed in America as the natural outcome of the conditions that immediately followed the American Revolution. However, there was always the fear that this boon of America's frontier position would not last. Such cultural trends may reverse themselves. Or they may not.

Pre-modern societies tend to have a great deal of formality in communal and even familial life (social integration through following religious custom for example), and rather less formality in government. The executive branch often takes on the formal qualities of monarchy, while the legislative branch is often underdeveloped since traditional customs rather than new laws are considered sufficient for most circumstances. Modernization tends to bring stress to such societies, and religious revivals with emphasis on "popular magic," as well as moral crusades, charismatic leaders, and seeking out ecstatic experiences that drown out the anxieties of the self are common mechanisms of social integration.

Postmodern societies (this term in the present-day social science has connotations that social progress is no longer assured) have evolved in the direction of a great deal of formality in government, for example in the processes of holding elections rather than relying on consensus among communal elders, while communal life has become not only more informal (outside of bureaucratically organized economic institutions), but also downright anonymous. The result is that communal revival movements are often led by parts of the entertainment industry, such as the mass news media who are often driven by a desire to entertain its audience through sensationalism.

Communal revival movements in pre-modern and postmodern societies still reflect their different origins, but through the influence of the present-day practices of mass entertainment and mass communications, and the formations of lifestyle communities based on these influences are becoming increasingly alike in their tendencies toward mass escapism. The temptations of mass escapism through fantasy colors many kinds of mass movements nowadays, mass escapism, the moralistic revival movements that react against mass escapism, and the lifestyle communities that rebel against the authoritarianism of such moralistic movements, but that often include elements of both traditional as well as innovative religion. What becomes weakened in this process is the traditional ideal (sometimes practiced well, sometimes not) of small communities reasoning together because of adherence to common values and the knowledge based on common experiences making it possible to put these values into effect. This was the ideal of the eighteenth century Age of Reason, that charter for American liberties, when American society had much more *gemeinschaft* (communal) qualities, partly because their communities really were smaller and more intimate than today.

It was an ideal of much of the rest of the world as well, but for which they usually had less than favorable circumstances to put it into effect, particularly because of social class tensions. Whether such tensions return, and with it a return to bread and circuses escapism for the masses (with occasional moralistic backlash among some of them), and snobbish eccentricities among elites (wanting to reform society, but not knowing in a practical sense how to among some of them;

for others, they only want to enjoy their wealth in peace), only time will tell. Regarding means–ends rationality, just as Max Weber anchored much of his discussion in this area in his discussions on religion, a modern version of that can be found in Martin Riesetbrodt's book *The Promise of Salvation*: *A Theory of Religion* (Riesebrodt 2010). Ultimately, his book rests on a discussion of changes in frameworks for the ways societies understand the world, and thus ultimately themselves, and by extension how they interpret the supernatural as opposed to the natural world, which nevertheless does also affect their interpretations of the natural world.

He distinguishes between the eighteenth century Age of Reason critique of religion found in Western Europe and its colonies, with its emphasis on developing standards for rationality in analysis and in discourse, which allowed it to demarcate what can be learned from religion (social and moral advice), and what can be learned but cannot be proven (everything else religion deals with, especially the supernatural). He goes on to mention the discourse of the Romantic Age in the nineteenth century, that reaction to the Age of Reason, that no longer judged religion by any standards other than its own, so that religion became conceived of as a self-enclosed world of emotional expression, comparable to esthetics but to not much else.

Then later he mentions there developed a whole discourse on secularization, a kind of return to the standards of the Age of Reason but in more extensive form, which studied the where and how of the remaining influence of religion, important because modern societies were admittedly developing with fewer and fewer concerns for meeting religious standards. He goes on to describe the trendiness of our own era, the Age of Postmodernism where "faith" in the rationality (some would just call it the reasonableness) of secular society has been replaced by increasing distrust of that society. He admits people who adhere to this critique emphasize that society is based for the most part on power structures and strategies of legitimating domination.

I would call this last approach a return to some themes of the Romantic Age, that revolve around alienation as one result of modernization that cuts off people from some of their sources of human fulfillment that once existed in more convivial, more intimate (though admittedly less intellectually developed) previous societies. The reason why I say Prof. Reisebrodt is probably more familiar with the Christian culture that surrounds him than other religious traditions which he has curiosity about is that in the very title of his book he highlights "salvation" as what religion offers to alienated members of society. This is a very Christian approach.

In a sense, Christianity offers forgiveness of sin, curing the soul in a psychological sense, though for the most part society does not change, though because of this Christianity, these societies also produced later on secular rebels who in fact relied only on changing society—the paradox that Max Weber wrote about regarding the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (Weber 2001). Islam offers avoidance of sin, in a cultural sense being made pure by living in a virtuous society, and Judaism offers purification from sin, being made whole after the expected and somewhat

unavoidable alienation from society—by both reconciliation with society and purification of society itself from its immorality-producing dross.

In a sense, Christianity offers through forgiveness of sin a recompense for the alienation between the individual and society and alienation or lack of coherence between elements of the personality itself (goals, longings, and all the elements of the personality that lead to self-esteem or lack of it), so that salvation serves as a psychological feeling of escape from resulting anxiety. This also relies on the expected pervasiveness of feelings of unworthiness, the effect of a belief that there is almost a requirement to be a sinner in order to function in society. Islam on the other hand emphasizes more avoidance of sin through loyalty (and obedience) to correct social order as promulgated by sacred law. Judaism on the other hand emphasizes purification from sin, being made whole through gaining trust in society through a sense of reconciliation, partly made whole by the workings of fate which means the workings of God in history—that reconciliation so exemplified in the biblical Book of Job.

Riesebrodt rejects the postmodernist critique that each culture is so unique that the scholarly apparatus of the West is not capable of making generalizations in order to compare and contrast various traditions. He also rejects such one-sided perspectives as religion as the ultimate expression of reason, which was the eighteenth century Deist perspective, religion as the expression of feeling as revelation, which was the romantic perspective, religion as protoscience, religion as the affective reaction to the experience of awe-inspiring powers, religion as sacralizing society or with the rise of individualism the sacralizing of the individual, and religion as salvation in its reliance on the intervention of supernatural powers. He rejects all these one-sided perspectives and ultimately decides to rely on defining religion by what is unmistakable about it, religious actions as in its attempts to understand or control (perhaps self-control) or to beseech higher powers through rituals, liturgies, and what can be concluded from all of this regarding ways of life.

I should add a classic work dealing with such issues of social and religious evolution and how they intertwine is Prof. Robert Bellah's "Religious Evolution" found in his book *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World* (Bellah 1991). From him, we learn that "primitive" religion of the simplest tribal societies is based not on worship nor on sacrifice, but on "participation," acting out in the psychological sense. Archaic religion reflects the emergence of true cult with its complex of gods, priests, worship, sacrifice, and often divine or priest kings. Historic religions, of the sort understood through documentation and not archeology and ethnography, have had their belief systems elaborated to the extent that spiritual agency, sometimes gods but often a single God, is considered transcendental and also determinative of the natural order. This is often done through concepts of natural law. The result is a sense of required obedience, and the avoidance of its opposite, sin, which is thought of as being determinative of moral functioning, reinforced by a belief that natural law exists not only in the community but also in nature, or at least that part of nature that is controlled by the spiritual world. Religious knowledge therefore becomes necessary for attaining

"enlightenment" as in the Buddhist tradition or "salvation" as in the Christian tradition, which are in reality the core issues dealt with in Prof. Riesebrodt's book.

For Bellah, the prototype of early modern religion was the Protestant Reformation. Of course, the belief that modern man should be driven by "faith" and not by social or even individual identity eventually proved unstable, even though it was sought so desperately partly because morality given content by the context of a healthy sense of community no longer served as a viable option when communities themselves because anonymous or bureaucratized or merely unsympathetic.

Thus, pretty much all religious questions concerning the right way to live have survived as dilemmas, and the quest for definitive solutions for individual problems that require individual choices, and coordination with others who may seek different choices, remains unresolved. Religion and its competitors, antireligion, pseudo-religion, secular philosophies that seek to substitute for religion, and alternative religions each continue to seek to serve as the basis for personal identity.

Max Weber in his writings about the social effects of a number of religious traditions, developed a standard of rigor that has probably never been surpassed, though no doubt other scholars have emphasized details that he missed. But just as his political writings never really did focus on the crucial issue of how to distinguish moderate government from tyranny, so for all its details never did serve as a bulwark against the rise of Nazism, so his writings on religion never did in any basic sense make clear distinctions between various religions on how they fostered basic intellectual integrity to produce understandings, and feelings, that fostered virtuous ways of life, dependent ultimately on making distinctions between the sacred and the profane. His work produced many understandings about a religion, about many religions in fact, but few understandings of a religion, of a sort that the serious practitioner of that religion would recognize as core values and beliefs.

Even regarding understandings about a religion, there are many practical issues. Prof. Riesebrodt concludes with a discussion on the future of religion and makes clear that the increasing independence of religious functions from the functions of other social institutions, the increasing secular psychology of individuals for whom their motives have fewer religious referents, and the decreasing membership in religious institutions such as churches are all separate issues and cannot really be combined to provide one grand measure of the effects of secularization. He obviously is referring to developments in the Christian West. Each of these developments also produce their own forms of backlash, as when reduced membership in mainline churches is made up by increased membership in evangelical churches, which may or may not be the same people. As to what the net result will be, Prof. Riesebrodt does not claim to know, only that his mode of analysis is more objective than that of many others. He does not claim that we will learn final truths about religion, but that the value of the provisional truths that he claims we can learn is the best that we can do. And for him, that we can take on faith.

From this path pioneered by Max Weber, and continued by Prof. Riesebrodt, we can ask what can Sociology tell us about the institutions that guard and motivate

our deepest values, and even our basic rationality, let alone our ultimate sense of self (to the extent culture and society help determine it)? Can Sociology serve such an holistic purpose? I'd say, barely, because again if we use religion as an example, a sociologist may be able to describe the characteristic cultural practices, both secular and religious, of the practitioners of a religion, but often only the elites are aware of the deeper goals of the religion, and the other practitioners are sometimes conformists pure and simple. Not always, and true sometimes they are good citizens in the religious as well as in the political sense, which is after all the American cultural as well as democratic ideal, but it is unrealistic to assume this will be true in all times in all places.

One of the arguments for the worth of a sophisticated study of society, which Sociology claims to be, is that one who has a sophisticated knowledge of social evolution can understand the members of less sophisticated societies better than the other way around. This may be true for the best practitioners of modern scholarship about social evolution, but there are not enough of them to remove the fakers from having social influence. While there are those who claim to understand the nuances of "self-interest properly understood" (a concept made famous by Tocqueville), of how self-interest and civic patriotism can become intertwined, many societies still rely on traditional understandings provided by religion and statecraft to motivate the masses, and, yes, these understandings to the extent they have moral underpinnings have often been subverted by the greed for power of their official benefactors, their leaders.

Nevertheless, one sign of effective social and cultural evolution is that as individuals in general become more reasonable, the tyrannies of their rulers become less and less excusable. However, under stress, for example under conditions of defeat in war or of mass unemployment, or just ongoing poverty, there can easily develop common feelings of nihilism, that there can be no natural cooperation between people, no natural coordination between the individual and society, but only such stopgap measures as amoral familialism or warlike nationalism to fill in the gap.

America has a tradition of muddling through in such matters, partly because historically our leaders have usually not been quite as big scoundrels as found in some other societies, partly because we will not let them. All this derives from certain core cultural beliefs tied to our beliefs about government and about the duties of citizens, and of the usefulness of political liberty for our everyday lives.

Let us use the concepts of Isaiah Berlin on negative and positive liberty; using his lecture, originally before an Oxford audience, on "Two Concepts of Liberty" found in his book *Liberty*: *Incorporating Four Essays on Liberty* (Berlin 2002) to explore this. We are empowered by all that the economic system can provide us, and by the negative liberty of not having a too overbearing government to stand in our way, but we take for granted a base in community and family, and in the morality that undergirds this, that allows us to go forward in competition and have a base to return to, a base in family and in community and also a base in ideas and values. Thus, we still need a base in positive liberty, something that induces rational self-control in the service of moral values. We treasure our negative liberty,

the absence of dependence on arbitrary power arising from either government or the notables of the community, but partly this is because the powerful among us, and enough of the powerless as well, will share certain of the same values, will share in the values that allow us to reason well together in community about the situations that face us. This becomes the moral underpinnings for political democracy.

Thus, for political liberty to serve as a value in society, there must be cultural underpinnings for it, and ultimately, a communal understanding of its purpose, for values do not practice themselves, even though Hegel sometimes philosophized as if people were the products of cultures and not the other way around. As a corrective to this grand generalization of Hegel, which some European intellectuals think have practical consequences but I don't, I refer you again to the ideas of that eighteenth century master the Baron de Montesquieu in *The Spirit of the Laws* (Montesquieu 1989) where he describes how social realities channel what was later called by others "self-interest properly understood." According to him, republican societies (and I should add even more so democratic societies characterized by social and economic equality) when they function well are characterized by virtue, however, as societies become more differentiated and economically efficient, but also characterized by increasing social inequality, they when they function well become characterized by moderation.

Oddly enough, he thought this is especially true of aristocratic societies, so it is obvious he is describing many border areas in social evolution, of rich business-men who have moral ideals that form a base for their business dealings, so that they stand for fair competition, and as they or their descendants evolve into aristocrats and start to emphasize values based more on spending money to benefit society than on merely raising the standard of living, in other words when they or their descendants gain power by becoming notables (and sometimes merely top bureaucrats) in government, they retain the values that can be described as reflecting "moderation" even in their ambition. And for the Baron, the monarch as the bureaucrat-in-chief takes advantage of this ambition among his subordinates to rule over a bureaucracy that is driven by feelings of honor, that feeling that prestige will not be automatic unless it is deserved, which in America means it is earned rather than inherited.

Nevertheless, America has traditionally feared that such aristocrats are too few and far between, which is why we have much less faith in the virtues of a bureaucratized society, certainly one led by a king, that did the Baron de Montesquieu. We do, however, take advantage of some of the gains coming from social evolution, the way our business-oriented middle class retains from an earlier stage of society some aristocratic virtues (admiration for honorable achievement and for practical wisdom that leaders must exhibit). Meanwhile, societies where social mobility starts to decline sometimes retard their march to decadence by their leaders continuing to admire for their common sense and humility (that serves to counteract narcissism) their working-class and middle-class ancestors.

Unfortunately, in some ways, we in the West have not surpassed our under-standings of the practical aspects of social evolution, and certainly of political

evolution, of our eighteenth century forebears. Sociology is doing its best and is nibbling on the edges of the great wealth of facts about social change that arises all around us, not least about the effects of globalization in producing more expanded world markets, and perhaps even the beginnings of world government. But as to producing an holistic knowledge of the varieties of social possibilities, the classics are called classics for a reason, and I consider the work of the Baron de Montesquieu, and Max Weber, and even of C. Wright Mills to be classics, even with all their limitations derived from their own limited cultural perspectives.

Increasingly, over time in the modern era starting in the eighteenth century in Western Europe and their colonies, people have begun to believe that our own natural ability to return the institutions serving our human nature to their roots are quite limited. There are many of course who assume that since they never see "natural" human nature or just emotionality of the sort once more obviously seen in simpler societies, that it does not exist, or at least we can act as if it does not. The postmodernists in general seem to believe so.

Thus, many of them assume that almost all aspects of human nature are equally artificial and socially constructed, and being the creations of politics can be changed easily by politics. In that sense, they are like Marxists who believe in socializing the means of consumption through use of the welfare state, though they have given up on socializing the means of production. They also have given up on criticizing "pop" culture and the virtual reality provided by the entertainment industry, which makes them different from the existentialists and modernists who preceded them as a cultural movement, the first was a philosophical movement to a large extent, the other a literary movement, though they had overlapping interests and occurred historically at about the same time. Meanwhile, the right-wing fundamentalists (especially the religious fundamentalists) hunger to serve natural law and have themselves so often forgotten the wisdom and the conditions of their ancestors that they often no longer know how to do so.

The whole concept of national character which relates to the above discussion is obviously a generalization, where what is meant by national character is a stand-in for primarily four influences that intersect: (1) cultural boundaries that for ease of study are studied according to national boundaries to which they obviously do not conform exactly, and some subsets of this; (2) the influence of elite-promulgated cultural traditions and their pressures for conformity which reflect communication patterns within national boundaries; (3) to a lesser extent, because of great cross-border influences at this level, non-elite cultural influences in bounded geographical areas and their pressures for conformity; and (4) the cultural effects of historical events and traditions which are greatly correlated with national politics. Also there are backlash effects, and effects starting with personality demands that end up having effects on culture.

The complexities of describing the variability of personality traits in a population are well described in such books as Robert LeVine, *Culture*, *Behavior*, *and Personality* (LeVine 1982) and Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Culture and Personality*, 2nd ed. (Wallace, 1970). It has become clear from these and other books on culture and personality that culture is not merely identical to a typical personality

constantly repeated among individuals throughout a society, though some early anthropologists interested in this area like Ruth Benedict had a bias toward describing culture in that way (Benedict 2006—originally published in 1934), it is not personality being the imprint of culture on personalities within a culture area, a kind of molding them into shape, but is the complex interaction of some elements of culture on some aspects of some people's personalities, and vice versa. The best kind of generalization is about some kind of modal personality (in effect a "typical" personality) but even this is a kind of statistical generalization that covers up a distribution of personality and cultural traits that may not even be stable over time, or the average may remain the same but the distribution of traits may differ over time. Even if in theory this variability is predictable, it does not mean we have the practical means to do so in anything more than a general sense.

Regarding books that combine history with psychoanalysis, I recommend Zevedei Barbu, *Problems of Historical Psychology* (Barbu 1960), and Saul Friedlander, *History and Psychoanalysis* (Friedlander 1978). You may also be interested in E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Dodds 1962). These books date back to the 1960s and 1970s and represent a period of intellectual consolidation since they consolidated the intellectual accomplishments in this area from the previous 50 years or so, and avoided the trivial ideological debates and fanaticism that so disfigured that same period and in the worst cases that justified two world wars; if anything they tried to explain similar fanaticism historically.

Later, intellectual work in the area of psychoanalysis and history from the 1980s on is relevant to this book, but there is a resurgence of a great deal of ideological posturing so that much of this work is a continuation and sometimes a retrogression from the standards of the best of the earlier work. Nevertheless, you may be interested in looking at the work of Michel Foucault (Foucault 1976) and R. D. Laing (Laing 1983), which I find interesting but historically dated by their trendiness and their ideologically driven agendas. R. D. Laing is enthralled by the existentialism of his era and Michel Foucault is enthralled by the deconstructionism that found a home in the intellectual circles of Paris that made his fame.

None of this work, neither from the earlier nor from the later era has exactly the same theme as this book, with its emphasis on authoritarian and narcissistic personalities reflecting the pressures (but are not identical with, nor are they merely molded by) collectivistic and individualistic societies. However, I do recommend two books from the 1970s, Rupert Wilkinson, *The Broken Rebel*: *A Study in Culture*, *Politics*, *and Authoritarian Culture* (Wilkinson 1972) and Joachim Israel, *Alienation From Marx to Modern Sociology*: *A Macrosociological Analysis* (Israel 1971).

Regarding the evolution of the field of psychiatry, of interest to scholars of the study of personality, I recommend Leston Havens, *Approaches to the Mind*: *Movement of the Psychiatric Schools from Sects to Science* (Havens 1987). A work from recent years that I recommend is Eva Illouz, *Cold Intimacies*: *The Making of Emotional Capitalism* (Illouz 2007). I should add the field of Critical Theory (Jay 1996), as developed by the Frankfurt School that overlaps somewhat with the topics dealt with in this book, I believe would have been more successful in attempting to be relevant to the problems of the average person if the work of

Erich Fromm (see Fromm 1994—originally published in 1941) with his emphasis on psychology and personal character had been more appreciated by members of that School who instead treated him as a rival.

The issue of how character reflects both sociological processes of conformity and psychological processes of individually initiated action (or merely the reaction of acting on habit) can be best described by illustration. Imagine a kingdom where the royal court starts to live in the lap of luxury so as to overawe the population at large who will put them on a pedestal and so will not rebel against them, or even act on their particular frustrations with their rulers. But if the children of the royal court become used to living in the lap of luxury, and by being spoiled become dependent on this lifestyle to relieve their own psychological tensions, so that they do not even consider how this lifestyle will be interpreted or reacted to by the population at large, this behavior will be habitual and psychological. Thus, a pattern of behavior can be sociological in origin, reflecting concerns of how it will affect others or merely out of social conformity, or psychological in origin, reflecting personal psychological (not social psychological) concerns, and sometimes both. Therefore, leaders are sometimes driven by their own psychological obsessions, the way sociopaths often seek to become gang leaders, but followers are more often simple conformists, the way gang members sometimes grow up in environments where violence, often initiated by sociopaths, has become the social norm, so they consider it socially acceptable to seek to join a gang for protection and status, at least in their community.

Social science should have things to say to inform debate within and between all these camps, and using all these forms of analysis. No doubt some of our present scholars in the social sciences might be considered standing on the shoulders of giants. Yet scholars are rarely the leaders of society, and probably for good reasons, impracticality being one of them. For many of our political and cultural leaders, however, they have another problem, there is so much to know, and they often have too little interest in getting it right. For them, holistic scholarship on the nature of society, somewhat in the tradition of critical theory but hopefully more pragmatic should still be something of value. This is especially because of its possible pragmatic consequences. Hopefully, this book will be at least somewhat useful for that purpose.

1.1 The Argument so Far: What We Can Learn About Social Evolution and Personal Character

The next section of this book will be on **Democracy and Character** and will essentially illustrate the overall argument of this book by giving examples, in the first chapter on the functional prerequisites for a democratic society, in the chapter that follows on how unworthy leaders often manipulate thoughtless followers by claiming qualities of character that are really illusionary (appealing to fantasy

rather than an understanding of reality) and how this relates to social decadence, in the chapter that follows that illustrates the effects of modern society on the possibilities for achieving personal happiness through various forms of personal intimacy, and in the concluding chapter that compares political nationalism with juvenile delinquency in order to highlight the way healthy social institutions can take a wrong turn and evolve in an unhealthy way.

Obviously, all these examples of functioning social order have ethical connotations, so the section that follows on **Pragmatism and Character** illustrates how social institutions impact the ethical functioning of a society, in the first chapter, it illustrates what Americans mean when they claim that their culture is effective and moral because it encourages experimentation and resulting influence on society in a pragmatic manner, with the chapter following that showing the relation between the institution of the law and the protection of personal freedom. The section after that on **The Evolution of Democratic Character and Culture** will illustrate some of the effects of cultural institutions that function both pragmatically and morally in its chapters on "Limited Alternatives and Personal Identity: The Relation Between Freedom and Personal Responsibility," then on "America as a Post-Feudal Society, or How to Relate to the Islamic World," and finally on "Personal Versus Impersonal Forms of Exploitation."

The final **Conclusion** section illustrates some practical issues that reflect the overall argument of the book. It starts with a discussion on the nature of political democracy, then a chapter that provides a general framework for analyzing the nature of authoritarianism and narcissism which is relevant for understanding the cultural underpinnings of democratic societies, then a chapter on the personality requisites, and also the effects on personality, of living in a democratic society in comparison with living in a non-democratic society, and then a summary section on social evolution and character in its most general sense.

1.2 The Overall Argument of This Book

In general, the argument of this book is based on a schema of social evolution that I have developed that I consider to be in the tradition of Max Weber. I distinguish between pre-feudal societies (what Max Weber called patrimonial societies) where social loyalties have evolved out of those of the extended family, feudal societies, which started off as larger social groupings where loyalties in some ways were based on and also in some ways substituted for familial loyalties (the king is father to his people). These feudal societies compared to patrimonial societies have bureaucratic tendencies and evolve into greater and greater use of bureaucratic structures over time. Post-feudal societies, of which America is a prime example, limit the range of influence of bureaucratic ways of structuring society and use bureaucratic techniques reflexively to limit the influences of social hierarchy. They are an institutionalization of checks and balances in society. Thus, post-feudal societies are more bureaucratic in some ways (they use the formality of law rather

than the informality of custom, they also limit political authority procedurally by holding elections), but are less bureaucratic in other ways (the limits to bureaucratic reach over society is built into the constitutional framework of government in order to preserve liberty by limiting the scope of bureaucratic authority).

Obviously, there are many mixed cases, and I consider the practical effects of these various sources of social order to be crucial. I would like to emphasize here the dilemmas caused by social evolution, since not all things are possible in all societies. There are post-feudal societies where the traditions of loyalty to (and identification with) one's leaders (a rather authoritarian way to reduce anxiety) are stronger than the values of self-interest, and where the values of self-interest (perhaps interpreted as social class loyalties) are stronger than moralistic values of the civic republican sort that tend to drop out as a realistic source of social values once a society became even moderately diverse and anonymous. At that point, it becomes understood that the society becoming unified through personal relationships in anything more than a minimal sense is unfeasible. It was then that self-interest, somewhat impersonal benevolence as a moral determinant of personal ambition, and maximization of utility as a kind of utilitarian calculus for judging the value of economic growth all gained in importance as modern societies became more anonymous and more bureaucratized.

However, in many modernizing traditional societies where there is a longing for communal intimacy that is now disappearing, this reality of *gesellschaft* results in subservience to bureaucratic elites counterbalanced by a romantic longing to escape it to a longed for (as opposed to a living reality of) *gemeinschaft* which is what produces the classical extreme "authoritarian personality." This tendency is traditionally weak in America because traditionally a belief that such communal closeness can be revived on any mass scale is considered an impossibility, as opposed to small groups of virtuous people who can at best serve as an example to the "sinners" that surround them who someday may wish to emulate them, but probably not yet, one of the major lessons of the Protestant Reformation (particularly in its Calvinist form) in its American context.

One way to look at the evolution of social solidarity in pre-feudal (patrimonial), feudal, and post-feudal societies is to explore what people share emotionally and to learn how this affects and is affected by the creation of social institutions. The practical effects of this analysis are reflected in the broad range of examples I provide that ultimately produce an understanding of what living in a democratic society offers from a culture and personality standpoint, and for that matter what living in an undemocratic society offers, both in the present and in a sense in those precursors to modern democratic and undemocratic societies that still have an influence, both as remnants of the past and sometimes as surviving ways of living that remain in existence even in the present.

At least as a summary, let me mention in terms of modal personality types that arise during these typical kinds of social interactions, hysterical personalities of the sort based on "fitting-in" and even desiring "to fit in and be loved" are common in pre-feudal (patrimonial) societies, paranoia is not uncommon in feudal societies because of the class tensions and ongoing conflicts of interests resulting in fears of

exploitation of both an economic and sometimes an emotional (demeaning of social inferiors by the powerful) sort, and because of relatively large social distance between people in post-feudal societies, narcissism among the socially powerful and successful, and in extreme circumstances schizophrenia among the powerless and unsuccessful (more commonly, there are less severe personality developments of a neurotic or of a character disorder sort) is a real danger. I am not, however, claiming that these modal personalities, admittedly a hypothesis on my part, exist in the same exact proportions in all the relevant societies. Admittedly, the hysterical are probably a greater proportion of the society in pre-feudal (patrimonial) societies than are the paranoid in feudal societies, and than are the schizophrenic in post-feudal societies. Yet, the actual developments at any time should be dealt with by empirical, or more likely given the predilections of scholars, historical, analysis.

The stages of individual personality development postulated by such scholars as Erik Erikson, developing the strengths of hopefulness, self-control, diligence, intimacy, and then eventually a sense of purpose in life, another way of looking at it is to call it developing hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, care, and then wisdom in old age (see Lowe 1972) can usefully be studied for comparative purposes by also looking at the social opportunities offered by various kinds of society, and how these options and their effects on personality change through social evolution. So, let us begin.

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Part I
Democracy and Character

Chapter 2
Understanding Democracy as a Prerequisite for Spreading Democracy

Some of the differences between narcissistic and authoritarian societies, that is to say societies that foster narcissistic and authoritarian personalities, respectively, will be made obvious once we realize that ever since America got involved in World War I as the first of a series of wars to end all wars, we have faced domestic disillusionment because of our messy failures at encouraging democracy around the globe. If anything, nations seem to be accepting political democracy because they are ready to do so, not because America is ready to push them to do so.

But why? Why do we in America so strongly believe in the virtues of our political system, but so often fail to convince others? Partly this may be because we too are unclear on the concept; in fact, how our political culture differs from so many other political cultures around the world. For example, because of the peculiarities of the British settlement of America, moral revival as a cultural goal had already started in Britain and was particularly prominent among those who settled in the British colonies of America. Thus, limited government is a political goal in America because the desire for government to create social order is not a particularly strong social goal; it has already been achieved by the people themselves and is taken for granted. This is unlike the situation of many other societies who are tempted to authoritarian government just because social order is not taken for granted among them.

Here, I will be building on the work of Max Weber, that famous German lawyer/economist founder of sociology, known for writing the book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Weber 2001), who had some influence on the writing of the German Weimar Republic Constitution. He of course was not a bulwark against the rise of neither Communism nor Nazism, and much of his post-World War II fame came because of the discrediting of these intellectual rivals for explaining social and political evolution. He did not have the common touch, and he was not very good at communicating with the masses, nor was he very good at coming up with practical solutions for broad social problems, or if he came up with them how to sell these solutions politically, a defect for someone who wished for authoritarianism to evolve into something more noble, something even democratic.

Nevertheless, in an historical sense, there is something to be learned from someone who knew as much about history, and economics and sociology and law, as he did.

To start with, America laid the groundwork for mass political participation when the Protestant Reformation in Britain, which later went to even greater extremes in its American colonies, produced a sense of moral revival among average citizens in the colonies. This coupled with the increased sense of personal independence and economic power that came from frontier opportunities to start over produced many average citizens who took their moral and civic responsibilities seriously.

This was not so much the case in much of the world until quite recently. Even in Europe which is now democratic, the tradition until quite recently was not democratic. The Roman Empire and the Christian church which rose near its end were clearly governed on an aristocratic basis, which set an example for the European societies that succeeded them. The mass of people in the Roman Empire, and in many cases afterward, because of poverty, lack of political influence, and sometimes just by having a "don't care" attitude, were expected for the most part to seek enjoyment from a "bread and circuses" existence. The aristocracy claimed the right to rule them because self-control and rationality were considered rare and unusual attainments which the aristocracy believed in general only they had achieved. In return, the mass of people to a large extent believed this also.

It was expected that for many of them, happiness would not be family life, nor the pride and dignity that come from living a life of moral conscience. Many of them believed, and if they did not their leaders believed for them, that escapism and vice (hopefully venial and not heinous sins) would be very strong, perhaps the only, sources of happiness available to them, only that sometimes they would carry this too far and the elites would have to crack down.

Think likewise of America's present-day slums, and the sources of happiness so common in them, and this is in a society which does not believe that slum conditions and ways of life are ordained by God. Even though we are officially a democracy, their way of life is for the most part quite unlike the way of life of their country's leaders. In the same way for many of the poor over the ages, their everyday life was not a poorer version of the lives of their leaders, which is the American ideal even when not practiced, but instead was expected to be in many ways quite the opposite.

It was not that the rich were expected to be automatically reasonable and rational. It was that they were expected to have a choice and sometimes pressured to act on that choice by their leaders, depending on their time and place in history. The poor were considered to a large extent too far gone to be expected to have any kind of choice. The poor could and would be controlled if they got too far out of line. But to be trusted to do the right thing? That was not the expectation of their leaders. That was why the sense of sin taught by religion was so often enforced by an elite that was obsessed by the sins of the poor and very rarely by their own. They used religion to create social order and to justify their own right to rule and only occasionally to judge their own venial and sometimes heinous sins.

America evolved as a post-feudal society because of its unique origins. When the poor came to our shores in order to have opportunities missing from their

homelands, and in the process began to feel that they could have a moral dignity of their own, this resulted in the conclusion that perhaps, our leaders should be monitored for their own sins and not just to watch over the sins of poor people.

Of course, it took a long time for even Western Europe to reach that point of evolution, not only social evolution, but also moral evolution. Pre-industrial days there, until quite recently actually, always had the potential for elite intervention in the lives of the poor, to control them for the benefit of the state, but for the most part elites refrained from this unless they felt that it was absolutely necessary. That was why, oddly enough, governments in much of Europe grew more authoritarian rather than less as their societies became more complicated and required more social order, until quite recently actually when the direction of control reversed itself to some extent.

The elites lived off whatever rents or taxes or feudal dues could be cadged from the peasantry, and compared to these working stiffs, their leaders lived like the idle rich do now, getting involved in government, and religion, and charity, and warmongering if it suited them, for they had the leisure to do it all. They also had the leisure to seek to live lives of pleasure, if that was what suited them, though one reason they were engaged in public service was that they knew lives of idle pleasure alone would prove ultimately unpleasurable. Nevertheless, if the leaders sought to live lives of mostly pleasure, they were not about to deny this privilege to those they led. Only that those they led were not expected to have much of an alternative to this bread and circuses existence. So while the rich could gain some pride for their accomplishments for the common good, the poor for the most part could not.

As a matter of fact, by expecting that many of the common people would be tempted to constantly live for the moment and thus live lives of constant impulsiveness, which would eventually cause them to become surprised when they learned that constant vice is actually unpleasurable, the aristocracy created a self-fulfilling prophecy. Now, when they claimed that the common people were not worthy of providing input into government, in other words were not worthy of living in a democracy, it was partly because they created circumstances where the common people were encouraged to seek escapism and thus were encouraged to fail at much else.

Even in those societies such as Germany which did go through an Industrial Revolution, and so which lost the easygoing sensuality of earlier times, the result was not the development of a tradition of self-control as much as the development of a tradition of bureaucratic, other-control, resulting in a bureaucratically controlled authoritarian society. America on the other hand even before the Industrial Revolution had a tradition of self-control dating back to the Protestant Reformation which allowed industrialization when it occurred to be thought of as a burden voluntarily chosen, at least at the beginning. Whatever authoritarian submission to authority was characteristic of America even in its early days, it was counterbalanced by the legitimacy of thinking in terms of individual conscience and individual acquiescence to social loyalty (which if not quite narcissistic yet, was the precursor to full-blown individualism).

In Germany and in other places, industrialization became forced upon them by British industry, destroying by their cheap but well-made products the old-time handicraft industries, and so just as in many other areas of life, social change was thought to be forced upon people and was not felt to be freely chosen to any great degree. This of course only reinforced feelings of subservience and of fatalism among the mass of people, which are strong precursors to authoritarian personalities. Though America constantly interprets social change as being the result of freely chosen individual decisions, sort of like interpreting a glass to be half full, for many other societies, social change is often interpreted as being just more of what they had plenty of in the past, being controlled by others. For such people, market forces are not automatically interpreted to be a good thing.

In much of Northern Europe, for example, industrialization was thought of as something forced upon the common people by elites, and therefore, the mass of people often thought of extreme self-control as a burden forced upon them in order to make others rich. Whatever fear of the master existed in pre-industrial times, it was buffered by the inefficiency and easygoing nature of those times, but in modern times, such control was taken over and extended by the bureaucratic controls that are so predominant in the modern age.

In many highly industrialized societies, unlike America, there was no period of individual independence dating back to frontier times to remind people that independence of action and of thought was their birthright. They had no strong tradition that they could feel safe in following their own moral consciences (a kind of midpoint between authoritarianism and narcissism) because then they could reason together with their fellow citizens to choose the conditions of their subservience to higher powers, be it God or the state. This moral tradition, which served to justify political democracy later on, existed in America from its beginning and in many other places does not exist very strongly even now.

In fact, Western Europe to this day is probably more efficient in many areas of life, for example in effective mass transit and in keeping higher education affordable for those most likely to benefit from it, than America is. Of course, this is not because their conditions of life are determined from the bottom up in democratic fashion, but quite the reverse. Europe to this day is the product of social engineering, and the mass of people in terms of politics get to choose between a number of relatively (by American standards) collectivistic schemes, each a bit of social engineering where social order will be imposed from the top down. The mass of people get the social order they want, such as affordable health care, and the social order which elites want like jobs for themselves. In America, we get the freedom we want, like freedom from supporting a state-sponsored religion and the freedom which elites want for themselves, such as making large profits, not by working for the state, but by providing products that the state could provide more efficiently through economies of scale, but refuses to do so. There is also the benefit that in a sense, the very lack of social order in America traditionally keeps our unemployment rates below European levels, though how long this will last is debatable.

Nevertheless, America has become very good at muddling through, that very good and old British tradition. You also might say America is known now for its short-term solutions, for good and for ill. In fact, we have come up with an interesting way for creating massive numbers of jobs, though its effectiveness seems to be diminishing over time. These have the added benefit of not requiring much government competency in overseeing the process. We have learned that lack of social order creates jobs. It is the very inefficiency of our educational systems that causes people to spend so many years in educational institutions and creates so many jobs for teachers, even though many people after they leave higher education hardly ever open up a book. It is the very inefficiency of mass transit that produces the conditions for a robust auto industry, even though many of these companies are now foreign-owned. It is so many poorly written laws, and so many frivolous lawsuits, that produce a great demand for lawyers. This is Europe and Japan's typical complaint about America that America is not an orderly society. No doubt America has its own complaints about them.

To get back to the different cultural attitudes toward industrialization, the loss of the more easygoing lifestyles of previous eras, when not counterbalanced by a strong, puritanical conscience (the source for good and for ill of America's tradition of moral conscientiousness as a cultural prerequisite for good citizenship), has produced in the industrialized portions of Europe, even when the standard of living is high, a good deal of neuroticism, often combined with hysteria, and a good work ethic, but also a tunnel vision that often sees no real purpose in life. This sets them up to be tools for the plans of their leaders. The history of industrialization in Germany unfortunately met this pattern, though they have moved back from the brink of mass hysteria which led to two unnecessary world wars. Unfortunately, America has had an increasing tendency to start wars in the meantime, which might reflect an increasing tendency toward mass hysteria here, after a period of time when this was relatively uncommon.

Thus, a tendency toward hysteria, sometimes mass hysteria, under the pressures of social change is one not uncommon result of this state of affairs involving social change in some nations. Partly this is the result of clinging to social order in a rather unthinking manner because it is thought only intellectuals and the aristocrats who get their ideas from them should have their plans listened to. To some Americans' surprise, in much of the world, it is not the marketplace, either of ideas or of commodities, that is sought as the source of social order, but if communal decision-making cannot produce social order, then social order is sought from bureaucracies that claim to serve the community, while often ending up being its rulers. In the same manner, kings often started out being the first among equals, but not for long.

It is not really a big surprise that Hitler was voted into power democratically, because the mass of citizens in Germany for whom Democracy was not much more than a new plaything did not pay much attention to what he offered or what his Communist opponents offered for that matter. He made them feel good, torch-lit parades, and all that. They were not very thoughtful, those who voted for his party, but neither were the German elite who handed him the dictatorship on a

silver platter, and consciously refrained from enforcing any checks and balances upon his rule, as long as they kept their own jobs in return. The Roman Emperors who became dictatorial tyrants under the guise of a Republic would not have been surprised. Only those average German citizens and those members of the elite, both of whom were more mediocre than they realized, who expected little more than that the German state should provide them in the future with bread and circuses were surprised when things turned out so badly.

Yet with the rule of American elites greatly criticized in recent years, and admittedly the German elite did not do such a bad job in the nineteenth century until their own privileges came under attack from Marxists which is when they snapped, the question remains: Why has the moral example of America become so weak in inspiring other nations in even more recent years?

Perhaps, it has a little to do with our hypocrisies. We to this day have not had another president like Abraham Lincoln who could articulate why democracy required not only schemes to raise the standard of living of the masses, but also to raise their moral dignity as well. Instead, our advice has been seen by much of the world as incompetent if not self-serving.

One example is the way America after World War I had nothing comparable with the post-World War II Marshall Plan to help rebuild Europe, partly because America had no interest in encouraging lack of tariff barriers between states in those pre-European Union days. And so Europe's economic problems discredited all free-market economies, including the one we stood for.

For that matter you would think with years of criticism of the Soviet Union, we would have had some practical advice on how to prevent the successor states of the Soviet Union from becoming the pawns of the same kinds of apparatchiks that ran them in Communist days. No such luck. For that matter you would think during the Cold War, we would have put our actions where our mouths were and supported the Hungarian rebels against Soviet tyranny. No, that was too scary. Overthrowing governments in Guatemala, Iran, and Chile, simply because it was easier there than in Eastern Europe, rather than because it was required by political morality, earned our opprobrium around the world as hypocrites.

America does not seem to provide enough good advice anymore, as if we have forgotten a great deal of our own cultural values, let alone how to apply them to other circumstances. America did not do a good job of inspiring democracy in Europe after World War I, but Western Europe on its own was inspired to create democracy there after World War II. In fact, European democracy is still aristocratic and bureaucratic by American standards, though not as much as it used to be. No doubt there are people who would say in some ways (but only in some ways) it now has a more competent leadership class than we have, though I doubt the majority of Americans would agree. Partly this depends on what one means by "competent" since Europe still has a bias toward paternalism and government for the people, and America still has a bias toward maintaining liberty and deferring to the will of the people, that is, to say government by the people (on those occasions when the public gets aroused against a ruling group of politicians and replaces them).

True, the bread and circuses attitude is still common enough among average Europeans. That is why Europe has the phenomenon of soccer hooligans who go to sports matches to get their sadomasochistic jollies. They chant racist slogans throughout the game, for example, as if the purpose for modern sport (invented in Britain for the most part) has been reinterpreted for darker, more hysterical, more sadistic purposes. In fact, soccer hooliganism has declined in influence in Britain which has a rather experimental attitude toward its cultural inventions, while it has a stronger influence in much of Central and Eastern Europe where authoritarian loyalties serve to stabilize identity diffusion, so that mere loyalty to ways of doing things makes it somewhat harder for people there to admit that their cultural experiments are not working.

Thus, fascistic attitudes live on in Europe, and we still do not have a clue on how to combat them. More hysterical and authoritarian people than are common in America, though they exist there too, have taken America's institution of entertainment, quite necessary in our rather puritanical culture where people do not much enjoy each other's company anymore without this crutch, and have returned it to its bread and circuses roots. For that matter, American pornography probably has a much more destructive effect on societies where sensuality is more central to people's personal identities and thus for whom erotic obsessions and perversions are a more serious danger. This is unlike among us where for now all this is still merely a source of entertainment, though it may be changing for the younger generation and not for the better.

Yet as long as we do not care how our institutions are translated into other cultures with other values and other ways of doing things, as long as we do not have much of a concept of which of our values derived from our own original "natural law" tradition can be demanded from all cultures, and which values cannot, and as long as so many of us do not even remember our own core values anymore except through a glass darkly, so that Americans' moral reproofs are just as muddled and hypocritical among foreign cultures as among ourselves, we will have a hard road ahead of us. It will be difficult for America to teach others about the cultural prerequisites of democracy, when we barely remember them ourselves.

In a sense, the problems of nation-building exist in all nations, rich and poor alike. Only the severity of the problems, the costs of failure particularly, differ. One way to look at the standards for government, including democratic government, is to look at the following functions of government:

1. Representativeness of government (in terms of representing the will of the people, or at least understanding their problems).
2. Efficacy of government.
3. Accountability of government (can the people control or at least influence them after they gain power, especially if they do a bad job?).
4. Relevance of government (is government relevant both in terms of problem-solving but also in terms of personal identity?).
5. Relevance of political parties (is there a tradition that whoever wins 51% of the votes can destroy or at least ignore the interests of their rivals, or is factional

conflict limited by a spirit of compromise and cooperation between political rivals?).

6. The social and cultural qualities of the overall national community (for example, is there a tradition of distrust and manipulation between the leaders and the led?).

One of the reasons "nation-building" arouses so much public debate from all sides of the political spectrum is that there is no clear consensus on whether there really is a consistent evolutionary framework to social and political change, which can be encouraged or even understood by outsiders, let alone serving to allow them to monitor other people's situations. One of the reasons Max Weber, that great German sociologist of the early part of the twentieth century, who in effect helped create that field out of techniques derived from law, history, and economics, became famous was for his ambition to develop a detailed explanation of social change (and implicitly social evolution), not for his success. In fact, he was not successful, though he came closer than almost anyone else. Perhaps, to explain social evolution in such detail is beyond the abilities of any individual scholar and even any single field of scholarship.

Nevertheless, explanations of causality in social science have their place, as a goal if nothing else. Max Weber aimed to provide explanations of causality of the sort common to both law and economics, where judgments of the fit between means and ends assume that all the options can be known beforehand, by the observing scholar, and presumably by the actor. Emotional sources of motivation were to a large extent treated by him as residual factors that cannot be predicted beforehand, and so must be used for ad hoc explanations, using the method of *verstehen* (empathetic understanding). Such emotionally involved motivations as duty, fear, custom, and self-interest both can be understood as standardized for cultures and individuals and also can be understood as leaving room for idiosyncratic manifestations of the personality.

Taking into account such complexities allows "scientific" social science to get away from "one size fits all" explanations of social change. Thus, there are differences between revolutions strongly influenced by previous attacks on traditional culture (the Islamic Revolution in Iran), by weakening of economic opportunities often caused by increases in population (common to many revolutions), by the need to protect middle-class wealth from excessive or unfair taxation (American and French Revolutions), by the desire of upper-middle-class people to have the economic opportunities now hogged by a hereditary upper class (French Revolution), by the desire to have a say in government (American Revolution and the British Revolution of 1688), by the desire to bypass a period of middle-class economic growth because there is little middle class to begin with (Russian and Chinese Communist Revolutions), and revolutions that combine protection of traditional values, desire for increased economic opportunities, particularly for the middle class, and a desire to partake in government (American Revolution).

The individualism which is so striking in American culture, but which can evolve into narcissism, encourages faith in individual decisions in a market

fashion, including voting in elections, and less faith in the ability for communal pressure to be brought to bear on politicians between elections. This is one reason more communitarian, that is, to say collectivistic societies place elections less on a pedestal and place more emphasis on ongoing social pressure between elections and so place more emphasis on "legitimate" and "illegitimate" influence peddling between elections than is common in America, though even in those societies this may be true more in theory than in practice.

No doubt relatively individualistic societies (e.g., America) and relatively communitarian societies (e.g., much of the rest of the world) can learn from each other because after all their ideal, the golden mean between extremes, is often the same. It is just their starting points, and their understandings – substituteunderstandings for senses of what is feasible and what is not, and what kinds of hypocrisies to tolerate and what not to tolerate, is what differs.

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Chapter 3
The Faking of Charisma and Decadence: Cultural Decay Through the Ages

The downside to bureaucratization of society has always been that some bureaucrats really are competent and worthy of their positions of authority over others, and some just fake it. So bureaucratized societies are both filled with competent specialists and incompetent fakers in various proportions. In fact, what was peculiar about the 13 British colonies who rebelled against the mother country, who became in time the United States of America, was that we had leaders with the cultural accomplishments and competencies so admired in the mother country of their leaders, but without most of their defects, the baggage they carried for having to put up with the corruption endemic to eighteenth century European monarchies.

What they had to put with in government, for example, but which the new, fresh, frontier-driven society of what later became America hoped they would not have to put up with, was professional politicians and patronage politics. In fact, in politics and in the private sector, both the monarchies of Europe were driven by image management, by people who got their positions mostly through social connections, with the monarch most of all, and all these deficiencies became multiplied by the development of hereditary aristocracy.

Monarchy which had originally developed for the sake of convenience, having a hereditary leader at the top so that the state would not have to deal with the complexities of politics, a person who was considered likely to be respectable and from a good family, the product of a good upbringing and a good education, and in any case was only expected to get involved with emergencies while most everything else was handled at the local level, soon produced a political system filled with disappointments. If monarchs, as typically happened, became disappointed with their children, think how the mass of people felt who soon were going to be ruled by them. It is no wonder traditional government in all these monarchies was to avoid getting the central government involved in local affairs if they could help it at all. Nevertheless, as society became more complex, this involvement became unavoidable.

This ideal, and monarchy was an ideal at one time, did not last. Even with little to do the monarchs, those models of politeness and ritual who it was thought would be the most likely to avoid embarrassing the nation, instead did it time and time again, and even with little to do other than to seek personal pleasure they got

into mischief. Trying to run a nation when they were barely competent to run their own households, these monarchs, worse than many members of our own wealthy classes who increasingly are not models of family values either, became models of fakery, not of leadership. Spare the rod and spoil the child, something always preached by these leaders to their followers, was something these aristocrats too little practiced among themselves.

This leads of course to the question: Do many leaders gain their power by offering fake solutions? That is why charisma of leaders can be earned before an understanding public and faked before an ignorant and escapist one. The examples in modern history abound.

That also leads us to the problem that everyday morality, unlike heinous crimes, is not easily enforced upon the powerful in bureaucratic organizations. To the extent the powerful in these organizations take their moral duties seriously, it is usually because they developed moral concerns in the outside world of communities where relations are egalitarian, moral, and for which intimate communication and deep personal concern are a given, rather than in the world of anonymous, bureaucratic organizations that are mostly concerned with economic productivity and the bureaucrat's own advancement. It is those traditional communities that are dying out and are being replaced by new kinds of communities that act as service stations to supply workers and goods to economic organizations, but are little concerned with developing strong interpersonal connections, that is to say strong, intimate communities, in return. Again, how does this environment, or in the case of intimate personal connections lack of one, lead to increasing the power of true charismatic leaders (in the early religious sense which is the source of the term), and how does this environment enable all the charismatic fakers, the false prophets, of the modern world to function?

For example, both Europe and America with their traditions of secular leaders have at least in the Middle East had some tough sledding recently. In America, in the political world, leaders are often lawyers (it is the only profession where running for political office significantly adds to one's later marketability), and it is they who aim to set the moral tone of society, again through politics rather than through religion. This is not because there is no tradition of secular law in the Middle East. There very much is a tradition of such law there. But tribal people who tend to take their grievances into their own hands through blood feuds, and religious leaders ("charismatics" in the traditional sense), are much more core institutions for the production of moral revival in the Middle East than has historically been the case in the West, at least for the last 200 years.

Here, I will make a point about the place of freedom in the cultural construction of communities. There are times in history when the leaders of communities and even at times their followers take an active interest in understanding new cultural options, for example political or religious, that are being introduced into their communities. But it is common that what will occur in later generations is that they will merely follow these traditions as matters of mere loyalty. That is to say, loyalty to a political or religious tradition both understood and deeply felt at earlier times in history may later on evolve to involving as much thought, no more and no less, than loyalty to the neighborhood sports team. It is also true some communities

never experience the thoughtfulness required for taking on a political or religious conviction with full understanding of what is involved. Some communities have converted to new traditions by force, and some communities have obviously been converted to new traditions for reasons of prestige, often involving status consciousness among elites, who usually get to retain their right to rule, or to provide escapism for the poor, both groups often trying to appear "modern" without fully understanding what they are getting into.

In a similar manner, in the political realm, large elements of the American population know what the consequences of following the American Constitution are. But the same cannot be said of those foreign populations whose leaders, and then in turn their followers, copy the American Constitution because it has prestige, not because it, and the underlying cultural assumptions common among Americans of the values of liberty, economic independence, and individual moral responsibility that support it are understood very well.

One way to describe the range of ways in which some rather complex modern societies have become integrated both socially and politically is to describe the Islamic societies of the Middle East as being pre-feudal, Europe as being feudal (in inheritance, though much less so now than it was 200 years ago), and America as being post-feudal. Obviously, this analysis made much more sense 200 years ago, but these tendencies still have continuing influence. Pre-feudal societies are integrated on the basis of freedom to continuously make new social alliances. Feudal societies are also organized on the basis of ongoing social alliances, but these have stabilized and have become in many cases rather bureaucratized. Instead of leaders being culturally expected to constantly renew their ongoing social relationships, in feudal societies not only are there hierarchies of social loyalties that institutionalize inequalities of power, but hierarchical power to a large extent has become stabilized by hereditary loyalties, in the modern world hereditary class loyalties rather than hereditary family loyalties.

In pre-feudal societies, local communal loyalties are considered to be in many ways primary in importance, and non-tyrannical leaders are those who leave the liberties of local communities intact and without interference. Feudal societies have much more complete lines of control from the top down. Post-feudal societies of which America is a prime example try to institutionalize through federalism what powers the central government has, and what liberties remain in the hands of local authorities, local communities, and of course individuals. Thus, post-feudal societies in some ways try to institutionalize bureaucratically (structurally) the liberties that pre-feudal societies try to enforce through culture and quite often through religious culture.

To reiterate, in pre-feudal societies, honor among leaders is enforced culturally through adherence to communal values. This requires societies small enough and intimate enough so that the leaders and the lead can interact socially. When such communal norms fail, there often are no bureaucratic mechanisms of the sort enshrined in the checks and balances of the American Constitution to take up the slack.

However, in post-feudal societies, the opposite extreme occurs. The bureaucratic mechanisms for dethroning tyrants are sufficient for dealing with heinous crimes (when societies have not deteriorated into complete tyrannies) which is the claim to fame for the American political institution of impeachment, but even this mechanism is used sparingly to avoid social disruption. In fact, many serious as well as not so serious abuses of the public trust, in all kinds of professions both public (governmental) and private, remain unpunished.

This is because the professions tend to be loathe to monitor and punish their own except for the most grievous cases of incompetence and maliciousness. The reason is a combination of the anonymity of modern society, much information about even gross malpractice is lost or at least is not common knowledge, the cost to the relatively powerless to bring charges against the powerful when they are the victims is often more than they can bear, and the reality is that professionals tend to stick together out of a sense of self-protection. Fear of malicious attacks from the potential "mob" of average citizens (sometimes this is a realistic fear) makes them prefer to foist the burden of proof upon their accusers.

Many, many years ago, mechanisms of communal shaming enforced communal morals upon leaders in America. This was part of the civic republican tradition that was so influential in the political culture that led to the American Revolution. They basically felt that the British aristocracy was hypocrites and had betrayed the values of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 in Britain, so that the American leadership was the true upholders of the tradition of "British gentlemen" which was actually a much more moralistic tradition than found among the Continental European aristocracy at that time. Partly this was to avoid the tendencies toward rebelliousness among the American working class in a still-frontier society, partly because of the puritanism and pietism that was a remnant of the Protestant Reformation, still influential among almost everyone in America whether explicitly religious or not.

But more recently, American society has become so anonymous that only extreme case of malfeasance, the kind amenable to impeachment of politicians and judges or firing of the chief executives of corporations, has proven amenable to the enforcement mechanisms of these large bureaucracies. Less severe cases of "low morals" are not usually enforceable under typical bureaucratic mechanisms which accept hierarchies of authority and power that often treat leaders like European monarchs were treated in their heyday, as "above the law." When such leaders do not arrive in bureaucracies already conditioned to accept moral responsibility by reason of their communal upbringing and current communal loyalties, bureaucratic cultures almost never provide a substitute source for the development of moral conscience.

Bureaucratized, even rather feudal, societies can be rather well run, the leaders turning dangerous only when their own statuses are threatened. That was why the leadership class of Germany was not known as being particularly immoral in the nineteenth century; they proved dangerous to popular liberties only when their own power in society was threatened by democratic movements in the nineteenth century and socialist movements in the twentieth century.

Though the ideal of a balance between the powers of the center and the periphery of societies is in many ways similar in the post-feudal society of America and the pre-feudal societies of the Middle East, their enforcement mechanisms are quite different. The societies of the Middle East place more emphasis on honor being enforced by culture and especially religious culture in local community and not having a bureaucratic back-up plan when this fails. America relies on the bureaucratic mechanisms of secular law as the main enforcement mechanisms for counteracting tendencies toward tyranny (not tendencies toward lack of honor) among leaders, and other than this increasingly lacks any defense in depth of communal honor or often even of public as well as personal morality. This is because increasingly there is no commonly held sense of community, communication between equals (rather than subordinates playing up to their superiors in bureaucracies), or sympathy between intimates, all those things that enforce a sense of honor (rather than a concern for prestige) among leaders, or for that matter among peers.

The classic example of the failure of a sense of community to enforce honor in America is the way the original tradition in America right after the American Revolution was the British ideal, not the practice which is why the British leadership class was considered hypocrites in the colonies by many, that the political leaders should be amateurs who would use their wealth in a self-sacrificing manner to gain honor by going into politics temporarily, deal with the issues that concerned them, and then get out. The ideal thus was to have amateur politicians but professional civil servants (to the extent continuity in office was necessary to produce technical expertise). The development of professional politicians often produced in its wake rather amateurish civil servants (since political patronage was often their major qualification) which is an example of how the ability of the community to enforce honor among its political representatives became subverted over time in America. In Europe which is even more bureaucratic than America, many politicians are not merely lawyers, and thus wheeler-dealers as they are in America, but are themselves ex-civil servants which is one reason they are so protective of civil service bureaucracies, and why reform of these same civil service bureaucracies is so difficult in Europe.

With all this discussion of leadership in pre-feudal, feudal (or in the modern version, bureaucratized), and post-feudal (like in America, based on checks and balances in society rather than simple bureaucratic control from the top down) societies, it is appropriate now to discuss the place of leadership in modern society. The basis of authority in pre-feudal societies tends to be customary, which nevertheless tends to allow a certain amount of variation. Feudal societies have their version of customary authority, but as they evolve and become more and more bureaucratic instrumental rationality and legal authority to rule (rather than to cajole agreement among near-equals as in pre-feudal societies) came to the fore. Post-feudal societies because they have checks and balances between central command structures and local, somewhat independent communities and their associated authority structures, show the most variability in authority structures and in bases for the legitimacy of authority. Since so much authority in post-feudal

societies must be earned, be it politically or by producing services in the economic marketplace, and because political democracy especially encourages outsiders to seek the acclaim of leadership, charismatic authority (which often had a purely religious source as in religious "prophets" in pre-feudal societies) has a good deal of importance in post-feudal societies. Because such societies are often lacking clearly defined standards, for example religious standards, for evaluating the claims of self-proclaimed leaders and social zealots, the standards for their charisma are often much more ambiguous than in pre-feudal and feudal societies. Increasingly, they are "celebrities" and in that sense creations of the mass media. Sometimes those who appear so often in the mass media without having any noticeable skill or accomplishments are merely "known for being known." Let us look at this historically, at the rise and fall in Western culture of a number of varieties of "prestigious" leaders.

The rise of Christianity in the late Roman Empire (Fox 1988) was coextensive with the rise to prominence of celibate priests and especially celibate monks to positions of leadership not only in the Church, but by extension over secular society. Their power to rule reflected in part the extremely weak family values, especially among the upper class, of late pagan Roman society, so that the celibate Christian priesthood claimed moral virtues, especially a high degree of self-control that their competitors for cultural influence lacked. Nevertheless, by the high Middle Ages and certainly by the Renaissance, the right to control the mores of secular society by the Catholic Church was severely contested by secular elites. Many of them increasingly rejected the entire lifestyle of the celibate priesthood and increasingly lived a life of hedonism and to a certain extent gained prestige from the population at large for doing so, who admired them for doing what they wished they could do, while the celibate priesthood lost prestige at the same time. This left monks, for instance, a quite marginal and somewhat irrelevant place in society, as moral exemplars and certainly as leaders.

By the time of the Protestant Reformation, this hedonistic lifestyle of the secular upper class was itself increasingly rejected by more middle-class, business-oriented groups who wished to return to the more somber values of the earlier Church, but without returning the celibate priesthood to power. Instead, a moderate emphasis on self-control became a celebrated secular virtue among this business class, but without much respect for putting a celibate priesthood on a pedestal as in the late Roman Empire, or putting a hedonistic secular elite on a pedestal as in the early Renaissance period, particularly in the Mediterranean heartland of European culture. The fact that this business class learned from their spiritual advisors that early Christian values were much more serious and somber than the Catholic Church who had made peace with the secular elites of the Renaissance would admit, and this class now felt that a return to these early values was necessary, only made it easier for followers of the Reformation to claim they were returning the Christian Church closer to its roots.

We can study further these changes in context by looking at a useful source of information on charisma in history, Leo Braudy, *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and Its History* (Braudy 1986). From this book, one can answer questions relating to

charisma and the selling of charisma at the present time which often involves the mass media. Thus, why were "bad boys" like the famous American singer/actor Frank Sinatra so much more interesting to the modern entertainment media than "good boys" like the actor Paul Newman? Because good qualities of character are well suited for real-life relationships with neighbors, relatives, and friends, but the entertainment media like people whose lives are dramatic so that the audience can be entertained by rushes of emotion. The audience wants to have its cake and eat it too, to believe a celebrity is just like them, but has many more dramatic adventures in their real lives, and this entertains the audience with appropriate emotional reactions to these adventures that they learn about from the mass media. The audience gets to enjoy being self-righteous and judgmental, in addition to being voyeurs of the adventures of these celebrities, since they do not really have to be accurate in their judgments.

It is also true one reason acting has become more naturalistic than it was in the eighteenth century, besides the fact early-stage acting had to physically project its dialogue to its audience with great effort is that now the audience wants more fully to participate in the illusion because it is more and more common to expect dramatic vehicles to substitute for the lack of social fulfillment in one's real life. Thus, there is an increasing obsession with knowing about the private lives of actors so that their private personalities and their public theatrical roles in a sense merge with each other. This is what makes them so much more interesting than the personalities of real-life people, their ability to constantly take on and take off social roles. It is also why young people who get their cues on how to act out their ideals, not from community tradition handed down from generation to generation, but from entertainment vehicles, so often start out idealistic, and after living as adults in the real world become cynical when they find out life is not the way it is in the movies. This is especially true of romantic life.

It is probably also true as a cultural matter that American culture with its Protestant, somewhat puritanical, roots that encourage emotional self-discipline in order to be a more effective worker also proves conducive to living through the mass media because this anonymous, rather unemotional everyday life is not quite satisfying. However, this same culture also takes for granted the dangers of taking the stories of the mass media too seriously (that core puritanical value of suspicion of the motives of people who try to manipulate us). Other cultures that have less expectation of emotional self-control as their cultural norm, and at the same time are more deferential to the authority of the famous, than is true in America (possibly because until now the culture of media manipulation and the faking of charisma were less developed in those societies), are probably even more vulnerable to media manipulation than we are in America.

Philip Rieff was probably America's most important modern writer on the nature of charisma and thus offers us useful insights into the faking of charisma by manipulative leaders and those "celebrities" who are the creations of the mass media. Philip Rieff is the contrast to Sigmund Freud and Michel Foucault in their attempt to treat morality as a kind of medical hygiene, but in the case of Rieff less so in the bodily sense though that is important too, but more in the psychological

sense if it is understood that psychological here means regarding the state of the sense of self, regarding it in fact in ways analogous to the way religious thinkers conceptualize the state of the soul. In other words, Rieff recognized that medical principles of hygiene, that is, proper behavior in furtherance of healthy states of mind and body, must be realistic about what the world allows, what can realistically be achieved, and what it is reasonable to attempt to try to achieve.

Given that many cultural institutions aim to manipulate people by selling products to them that do not work, work badly, or break down soon after purchase, that many "helping" professions do not help so much as create jobs for themselves by selling to their clients' fantasies and appeals to wishful thinking, and that leaders in general often produce for their followers lies, spectacles, and all the panoply of bread and circuses, so as to distract them from all that is missing from their lives, what Philip Rieff offers is a promulgation of ethics. He approaches these ethics less from biological sources, though this is not totally lacking, but more from religious sources. He ultimately is a defender of the warnings of the Jewish God, that is to say the traditions of these warnings, against those who believe there is no ultimate order to life, or that order is totally opaque, which would justify angry vindictiveness and rebellion against traditional morality, or mere oblivious self-centeredness and avoidance of traditional moral warnings.

One way to summarize Prof. Rieff's position is that he distinguishes between interdictory authority which tells people what not to do, transgressive authority which accepts escapism, the kind of authority which government practices when it authorizes bread and circuses for the masses, and remissive authority which authorizes both in its proper place, you might say which accepts exceptions to the rules of the sort that makes hedonistic pleasure thoughtful rather than mindless. Much like the philosopher Charles Taylor in *A Secular Age* (Taylor 2007), Prof. Rieff *is an embattled modernist who opposes post-modernism because he feels it has become too ironic, supporting the escapist potentials of low culture at the expense of the truth-seeking and value-creating, separating the sacred from the profane, potentials of high cultu*re.

One perspective on such escapist potentials can be seen in Eva Illouz, *Saving the Modern Soul: Therapy, Emotions, and the Culture of Self-Help* (Illouz 2008) which has much to say about pop psychology. Prof. Illouz starts out with the premise that psychological therapy is partly in demand because it claims to be the solution to problems that originate in broader social processes that cannot be dealt with directly very easily, so that psychological therapy is easier to do. These processes include "bureaucratization, narcissism, the construction of a false self, the control of modern lives by the state, the collapse of cultural and moral hierarchies, the intense privatization of life caused by capitalist social organization, the emptiness of the modern self severed from communal relationships, large-scale surveillance, the expansion of state power and state legitimation, and 'risk society' and the cultivation of the self's vulnerability" (Illouz 2008, p. 1–2).

She mentions it was only a matter of time before Freud's emphasis on development of instinctual needs through stages of personal (and interpersonal) development became simplified into culturally based wish-fulfillment, as advice

literature fell away from Freud's template and commonly encouraged wishful thinking and what Freud would have considered simplistic solutions. For example, she mentions that telling one's problem, not in privacy as in the Freudian technique but in public to an audience as in self-help groups, increasingly has become a popular American pastime, not only as a therapeutic technique but also as an entertainment vehicle. Inferring that one's personality traits can be blamed on bad parenting or childhood traumas offers narcissistic pleasures from the audience even if not literally true. In fact, these are increasingly the sources of self-esteem in modern narcissistic American society,

Here, Prof. Rieff agrees that endlessly acting-out one's angst, a dumbing-down of the psychological perspective, is not the same thing as being rational about what can be done about one's life, or for that matter, what meaningfulness can be added to one's life when moral values are sought to add to one's long-term perspective on dealing with life's issues, rather than aiming endlessly for immediate pleasure, or something very similar, endlessly feeling sorry for oneself in an orgy of self-pity. *That is why Prof. Rieff contrasts true charisma, as opposed to fake charisma, as that social institution where leaders teach values that ultimately add to the proper functioning of society, that integrates the elements of the personality, and that coordinates between the two.* He very much became disillusioned with the institution of therapy because of its potential for being dumbed-down into excusing self-centeredness and narcissism, rather than overcoming it. In fact, Prof. Rieff feared that increasingly cultural elites now seek to appeal to blind hedonism and blind rebelliousness from the masses, to entertain them, but not to reveal to them truths that will make their lives better. His most fully developed explication of his position is found in a book of his writings published after his death entitled *Charisma*: *The Gift of Grace and How It Has Been Taken Away from Us* (Rieff 2007).

What has developed in America is an overall social ideology that has combined nineteenth century American notions of self-help with simplified psychological notions of self-actualization that result as Prof. Illouz points out in the displacement of Freud's notion of psychological determinism (where instinct in the id and simple social conformity in the superego are only with difficulty reined in by the rationality of the ego), which became replaced in its later Americanized version of ego psychology by the belief that the self is predominantly ruled by the ego, and the id and the superego are easily reined in the service of self-actualization.

Freud's views on instinctual determinism seem nowadays rather extreme, and they probably were even then. But self-actualization is not necessarily easy, and this is the ultimate lesson of the writings of Philip Rieff. For Rieff, character must be exercised, or it will grow flabby, and the means of exercise requires knowledge of values that are rarely innate to science, but derive in a sense from the highest ranks of culture, and in another sense from existential reality. For Prof. Rieff, that sense of place for moral order has become displaced by narcissism and moral disorder.

Modern America is in fact an unusual place in the sense that frontier conditions allowed the average American to attain both economic independence, rather than

subservience to an elite, and the ability to maintain individual dignity in a moral sense. The latter was the result of maintaining an honest perspective on the moral character of oneself and one's leaders, as opposed to kowtowing to immoral leaders because of an ingrained sense of subservience, that source of pride for Americans and for shame for members of many authoritarian societies.

With the ending of the social and economic frontier in America, a return of a European-style class system may be in the offing in America. Likewise, Europe seems to be developing tendencies toward mass escapism fostered by the entertainment industries and the mass media, something America has been a pioneer in, without having the counterbalancing factor that we in America traditionally knew the limitations of this way of life, though we may now be forgetting it. We in America recognize, traditionally at least though the future many not be so sure, that entertainment is for purposes of emotional release, since our anonymous society and our highly structured and bureaucratized workplaces foster emotional repression. Other cultures without this tradition of puritanism may end up treating the entertainment industries as a source, a rather artificial source, of personal identity, so that the mass culture pioneered in America may be more destructive for these other cultures than for America itself.

Thus, the "hot" cultures (they encourage expression of one's emotions) of the Mediterranean area and the Middle East tend to accept irrationality in the sense of perpetual emotionality as the price for social closeness; the "cold" cultures of northern Europe of which America is an offshoot (they encourage repression of one's emotions) accept social distance as the price for avoidance of arguments, the kind caused by egotism and narcissism. Obviously, a balance between expression of one's emotions, often driven by narcissism, and repression of one's emotions that produces social peace but only by driving a good deal of irrationality underground is one measure of a "just" and "good" society, but it is a very hard balance to achieve. Nevertheless, that is why not "nationalism" but "moral virtue" for individuals, a hoped-for balance between emotional expression and emotional repression is the ultimate goal of American political culture, reflecting the eighteenth century Age of Reason roots of our culture, is itself a secular version of originally religious values.

Prof. Rieff's work is also a secular version of originally religious values. Even religious values have their variations, which is illustrated in Rémi Brague's book *The Law of God*: *The Philosophical History of an Idea* (Brague 2007). He illustrates how the ancient Greeks developed the ideal of natural law, but since the philosophers had little faith in mythology as a source of divine revelations, these precursors of modern science needed many inferences from many intermediaries to tease out what that natural law was. A rather Platonic approach of meditation on nature rather than understanding it was one result, at least for elites, and another was the opposite extreme of encouraging popular superstition and treating kings as gods in order to appeal to popular credulity and gullibility. Christianity ended up trying to fulfill the promises of the Hebrew Bible by greatly emphasizing intermediaries also, starting with Christ, but since he did not give much detail except for emphasizing a will to love and humility to the point of self-abasement, the

details of moral law ended up being filled in by these very intermediaries, starting with Paul and then with the panoply of the leaders of the Christian Church.

The Hebrew traditions themselves, which started with a good deal of detail, both the prescription of rules that became law and the exemplifications of virtues through ritual, eventually became the starting point for much interpretation on the goals of healthy community with all their psychological and moral effects. All of this worked best in Jewish communities where people understood each other well, which provided context for all these goals and their governing rules, and not so well when these communities declined or became more opaque and anonymous. Islam also became law-governed and ritual-governed in a somewhat similar way, but as the bearers of what they believed to be the last great divine revelation, it has suffered from a certain rigidity, or at least so outsiders often believe, as they started out with many of the values of Bedouin tribal culture but soon developed a great empire. With so many specific prescriptions and the loss to a certain extent of that primeval community that provided context for these prescriptions, dealing with new circumstances has sometimes been problematic for them.

Prof. Rieff did not aim to solve these complexities of the sociology of religion, though he did admire the Jewish ideal of opposing idolatry which given modern circumstances means working toward dynamic (self-rectifying) and realistic societies. Though his practical emphasis was similar to the Catholic one of emphasizing the virtues of having cultural standards as interdictions, to provide a barrier against self-indulgence and narcissism, yet he knew there was a time and place for remissions as well, so that he admired self-humility (that intellectual virtue) more than mere forgiveness of sin (though it has its place), and the search for knowledge more than self-pity, that holding-pen for angst that so often provides an opening for escapist and unrealistic leaders, people who have charisma without deserving it. What he opposed was transgressions, that is, escapism for its own sake, and worse.

What he would approve of, I suppose, is a witticism attributed to Leo Lowenthal, that member of the Frankfurt School of Sociology so identified with critical theory, who later taught at the University of California, Berkeley, that nowadays mass culture is psychoanalysis in reverse. Instead of encouraging the development of individual consciousness, it encourages immaturity and conformity. What the end result will be, what will end up becoming post-post-modernism, nobody can say, because as of now nobody knows.

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Chapter 4
Modernity and Intimacy

The history of human progress is a history of gaining control over our blind, animal urges, urges often tampered with for the worse by the early stages of civilizations. This has much in common with the "domesticating" aspects of animal husbandry, which allows the kinds of elites who rule over both animals and humans to interfere with and manipulate the instincts of those they control. Progress, however, is a slow substitution of patterns of power by patterns of respect. It does not have to be, though it has too often been the case, that so much of history consists of priests becoming more neurotic and kings more tyrannical.

Yet it is possible to mistake mutual narcissism for respect, which is one way in which people fool themselves, especially in personal relationships. Thus, it is true that the dance of courting has often hidden brute motives of greed to get what the other offers while minimizing what one offers in return. Yet the more "civilized" courting often has reflected the pompous parading of the rich and powerful, who no longer need each other except as an audience, and without their "interesting" lives would fall back on the kinds of dilemmas and manipulations that the poor have always been party to. Family as the ultimate basis of the community as the ultimate basis of the nation thus can produce a nation that is built on a very weak base, or not.

In fact, the poor often learn to minimize the effects of this dog-eat-dog environment by developing cultures of cooperativeness that the rich do not even dream of doing. In fact, the narcissism of the rich produces an absolute dependence on the enjoyment of their wealth that if anything encourages them to manipulate, not sympathize with, others, the self-righteousness of their charitable displays notwithstanding.

Certain paradoxes seem to be endemic to the search for social and psychological equilibrium, what the politicians call the search for social order. Take the history of the family, for instance, and the paradoxes that abound. Because the status consciousness seems to be inseparable from the sociability of the population of the Mediterranean area, what we outsiders call pressures for arranged marriages in traditional communities have much to do with avoiding social embarrassment at misalliances. Parents sometimes even encourage "elopements" in order to explain

marriages, which though properly romantic, do not produce status for the family, while in Northern Europe, the emphasis on "rationality" is a counterpart to individualism, and this produces people who can be quite status conscious in their choice of mates even without parental pressure. Thus, even in elopements, the emphasis on "romance" can sometimes be more contrived than real, and the rational "romances" of individualists can be just as self-serving as the storied "arranged" marriages which these people officially reject, yet sometimes practice on their own. For those who want more information on the history of the family, I recommend a book by James Casey called, not surprisingly, *The History of the Family* (Casey 1989).

Nevertheless, there is something to be said for studying such paradoxes of social change, especially as a corrective to those who think that social change always occurs in a straight line. One book that inspires this essay is by a cultured Oxford don, Theodore Zeldin, *An Intimate History of Humanity* (Zeldin 1994). Though he deals with some of the subjects outlined above, his civilized approach to such matters leaves out many brute facts often felt best left ignored in polite conversation, for that is what his book in many ways reminds me of, a well-rounded cocktail party with quips and asides, showing off one's wide reading and even personal experiences if they can be kept impersonal and not too embarrassing. He has his own sense of irony, but his sense of winners and losers in history may leave room for debate.

Though he does, certainly by implication, denigrate the "conquest" theory of love as the result of a Darwinian struggle, still for him flirting is not the fakery on the way to the real thing as the unsubtle common people often think, but for him probably, it is the real thing. Yet joint and mutual exploration, now as much as it was in the past, is often joint and mutual exploration of the power and privileges of, well, the rich and powerful, or at least those who aspire to that status. What is mutual respect for those whose lives are real, not interesting, or at least not interesting in the unreal, faddish, artificial sense, but only interesting to those they concern just because they *are* real?

In his section, "How respect has become more desirable than power" Prof. Zeldin points out that male chimpanzees seem to take a rather tactical approach to personal relationships, having neither permanent friends nor enemies, while female chimpanzees distinguish friend and foe more sharply, having a closer circle of intimates and one or two absolute enemies. The implication is we are like this too, and the greater objectivity of males has its costs, as does the greater subjectivity of females, though in reality, males are not only objective and females are not only subjective.

When and where people become objective (read: authoritarian as in one must take orders because the environment says you have no choice) and subjective (read: narcissistic as in one wants to because one feels like it and that is that) among humans differs from time to time and place to place, and the same kinds of variations occur among groups of humans as expressed in their cultures. Cultural ideals as something in abstract are often something very different from the growth

of cultural ideals as practices. Cultural ideals in abstract are often more food for the entertainment industries than anything else.

That is why the rich and powerful, whose self-images are so often fed by their public images, often deep down have as much cause for insecurity and despair as the rest of us, but also have something else the rest of us lack, a greater opportunity to be fakes, not that the poor and the middle class do not try. Also social evolution does take away some freedom through the decline of small-scale, intimate community, and its evolution to more impersonal, often more bureaucratized, association.

Yet, what is taken away by ecology can be returned by character, by knowledge of what must be done to retrieve what is lost. Then, human nature will be fulfilled not by faddish aping of the latest cultural fashions, but by understanding of things more fundamental, what modern existentialist intellectuals grope for, and what some traditional people, not all, know almost instinctively—the good, the true, and the beautiful, not in theory, but as practice.

I will get back to some of Theodore Zeldin's insights, but first, let us get some history straight. In fact, the institutions of romantic love and romantic melancholy (perhaps better described as feeling sorry for oneself on a continuing basis) are both examples of culturally patterned optimism and pessimism. Of course, culture is no substitute for reality, and the ultimate question still remains, can we be really happy, not hope to be happy, not pretend to be happy to impress the neighbors, not hope for killing time and calling it happiness, but really be happy?

According to the German sociologist, Niklas Luhmann, in his book Love *as Passion: The Codification of Intimacy* (Luhmann 1986), the idealization as opposed to the practice of love is a culturally constituted process. In Europe, during the Middle Ages, courtly love was an idealized state of feeling, but had few practical effects as it was so often practiced outside of marriage. It was a kind of adoration of a member of the opposite sex, I suppose somewhat like the Catholic adoration of the Madonna which also rose to prominence during that time. It was not a very practical means for creating social alliances leading to marriage.

It was no more practical to abandon all one's social allies and run off to join some stranger regardless of how that stranger fit into one's social network, than it is for a person during a time of war, just because he has some unhappiness with that particular war, to turn traitor and join the other side. As a matter of fact, such a traditional society, or in this case group of societies, had little conception of meeting unusually distinctive individuals, and though it made sense to those people that a whole society could become improved, for example by everyone becoming religious, there was not much hope for commonly finding individuals who seemed head and shoulders above their peers. Thus, finding a lover who was utterly unique and appropriate to oneself in a way nobody else was would have been considered very unrealistic. People were treated as types, and a type of person such as a member of a certain family or religion must exemplify the virtues of that group, but nobody expected to find someone utterly unique and thus romantically suitable for that very reason. It is no surprise these were authoritarian societies.

Romantic love was treated as an irrational passion that was enjoyable, but was isolated from contaminating the more useful social relationships.

By the time of the 17th century, according to Luhmann, there was a certain intellectualization of society through increased reading habits and of course publishing to meet this demand, and romantic love was no longer reduced to mere adoration from afar. It was described in literature, and a kind of code of communication for it became possible, especially among the upper classes. Still, this code of gallantry was a little more useful for courting than the courtliness of the Middle Ages, but it was not much more useful. Marriages still involved social alliances, not finding perfect people.

By the 18th century, the impracticality of a love which resulted in etiquette, in fantasy, but not in much that could be applied to marriages, resulted in an emphasis on friendship in marriage, a kind of moderation of the earlier code of gallantry for domestic use, as well as among the upper classes, particularly in France, an admiration of frivolity as a means to preserve one's freedom of action at all costs. Yet by the 19th century, love as passion once again returned as a cultural ideal to challenge love as friendship, or more exactly combined with friendship in an idealized view of marriage.

By the 20th century, and especially in more recent times, we can now imagine all kinds of intimate relationships using literary allusions as guidelines, every possibility on a continuum from loyalty (the core of family life) to commitment (common interests in friendship) to passion (with its core of sexuality, as well as emotional longing), but though individuals still fantasize, they cannot be sure what kinds of intimate relationships are probable with cultural standards, and thus options, being in such a state of flux. One may long for an extraordinary love partner but one will probably meet a rather typical one. Thus, increasing individualism in society produces more social variety, yet one hopes that meeting a soul mate has a greater probability than blind chance, yet one fears that the odds are no better than that.

Even during the 19th century, when marriage was idealized as combining both passion, because it originated in "falling in love," and friendship, love was discussed in abstract, ideological terms, not in terms of modes of conversation between social types, as the gallants of the 17th century took for granted, but it became abstractly ideological much as democracy was becoming in the realm of politics. Thus, in the 18th century, the relation of leaders to the led was discussed in concrete terms, not particularly in terms of exemplifying the abstract virtue of democracy, while by the 19th century, certainly in America, democracy was indeed often discussed in such abstract terms.

The above analysis can also be used to study, not institutionalized optimism which is basically where love begins as a social institution, but to study institutionalized pessimism, that is institutionalized pessimism and methods of escaping it. These methods in fact are often the exact methods of love. For example, the aristocracies of 18th century Europe, particularly in France, who no longer had much of a place in government, having been replaced by professional bureaucrats, often used eroticism to enhance pleasure, that is to say to escape boredom, but not

to produce marriages. The same occurs now, and for similar reasons, despite the fact that the tabloid press infers great love affairs to every celebrity's idle fling. For more historical background, you may want to read Wolf Lepenies, *Melancholy and Society* (Lepenies 1992).

Judith Shklar, who wrote the Foreword to this book, makes the point that Karl Marx inferred in the working class the virtues of the aristocracy of past ages which he probably longed for, physical courage, class consciousness, and being far too independent to endure the disciplines of commerce and industry. The obligation to be cheerful and to be entertaining, that requirement of past aristocracies who no longer had a place in society except to amuse themselves and others, may be what we are starting to mistake for intimacy and romance, a mistake which the frivolous aristocracies of the 18th century were less likely to make, and if they did, the rising middle class, especially in that increasingly important art form known as the novel, was sure to remind them.

But to get back to modern life, so much of Theodore Zeldin's book, *An Intimate History of Humanity* (Zeldin 1994), is a meditation on desire from the point of view of the privileged classes, especially from that well-educated, professional segment of them, that is from the point of view of the author. The result is an expression of what might be called an updated epicureanism. He certainly harps on the virtues of an interesting life, but for him interesting is strongly tinged by intellectual adventure and the fulfillment of curiosity. This is his take on both feminism and religion, on all social movements in fact, and he essentially repeats this theme again and again in other chapters. You cannot have it all, but by developing good taste, you will develop that recognition and it will be sufficient.

In one chapter, sex is compared to cooking, and both are alike in that not quantity but quality is important, and quality has a certain gourmand association for him, based on a beautiful place-setting, good friends to talk with, and beautiful presentation. What he thinks of the meat and potatoes person, regarding both food and sex, I do not know. More abstract, or perhaps scientific attitudes toward sexual intimacy, he raises only to discard them without conclusion. Being an expert on French history, it is not a surprise that most of his examples are taken from France, and that his overall perspective is one where the French intellectual elite, of the 18th century and of today, would probably approve.

He mentions Arab love poetry and their influence on later European conceptions, especially through the themes of the idealization of women and the fusion of lovers' souls. Yet he criticizes these longings because for him, idealization was an answer to the impermanence of affection, and fusion was a romantic illusion as an answer to loneliness. Since he considers such solutions to be ephemeral, he thinks we should learn to live with the ephemeral, with relative values and not absolute values as others might say. As to the difference between relatively absolute values and absolutely relative values, which is the weight such conduct probably has in the real world, his meditations are a little help, but not as much as he might hope. This is because his examples are quite often elitist.

For him, the psychological counterpart to the rise of consumerist society is the expansion of choices. He thinks this is a good thing even for personal relationships.

The most time-worn belief, ready for the dustbin, is that couples have no one to rely on except themselves which is as unfounded as the belief that modern society condemns individuals to loneliness. Now that boys and girls are being educated together and forming friendships at school of a kind that have not existed before between the sexes, love can assume other shapes (Zeldin 1994, p. 84).

But is it the kind of friendship people other than members of the professional classes can participate in to any great extent? Between the love of the unattainable, the tragic love of the stranger, and passionate love, the love of the easily attainable and so easily devalued stranger, Zeldin places love as playfulness, love as creativity. True enough. But does he reveal to us how to achieve it, in reality as certain Arab poets concluded when they tried to reconcile their religious and their secular desires through sincerity and search for truth, or does he only reveal roads that the rest of us cannot follow? He writes about the terrors faced in past ages, and just as knowledge has to a certain extent banished fear, so to a certain extent can personal cowardice be replaced by courage. Yet, his examples tend to be people with interesting jobs.

Actually, Prof. Zeldin from chapter to chapter sometimes seems to contradict what he says in the chapter before, as he realizes that one generalization must be counteracted by its opposite. He writes that the intimate relations of men and women are improving because they are becoming more equal, and compassion is acquiring new significance, and that such attitudes of compassion are spreading to attitudes toward strangers. Then in the next chapter, he gives the example of Mohandas Ghandi, the founder of modern India, whose attempts at reconciling antagonistic people constantly worked only temporarily. He himself found it difficult to get close to people as equals, as comrades rather than in a leader/follower relation. Yet at the end of the chapter, Zeldin becomes optimistic again, writing, "Exploring the mystery of other people's thoughts and feelings is the new spiritual quest. Finding empathy is the new reward of intimacy" (Zeldin 1994, p. 27). This is an interesting counterpoint after harping on Ghandi's failures in this realm. Then, after giving ritual obeisance to equality of the sexes, and how they are trying to understand each other as never before, in the following chapter he writes about the ineffable sadness that seems to accompany sexual openness, especially for women who try to succeed in a man's world not only as equals, but as competitors with each other as well as with men.

His example is a chic Parisienne magazine publisher: "Her magazines always holds up heroes and heroines as models to her readers. But the snag is that real people never quite resemble those models, who in any case are wholly admirable only at a distance" (Zeldin 1994, p. 277). After a detour through discussion of the aesthetics of Japanese literature as expressed in their classic novels dealing with the erotic that usually served as a counterpoint to the sadness and fragility of life, he mentions a certain intellectual affinity toward pessimism. However, he then turns to ordinary people rather than intellectuals: "When they have despaired of public affairs, they have turned to private pleasures, and vice versa" (Zeldin 1994, p. 291). Yet, even when he tries to recapture the common touch, he tends to distort it through an intellectual lens.

Thus, he says gloom is dispelled by believing there is more to discover about the world, and the greatest dispeller of gloom is the consumer society. True enough, but does this epicurean approach to the human personality leave something out? In later chapters, he follows this dialectical spiral of optimism followed by pessimism by dealing with such topics as the problems of the refusal to compromise, the stress of change, the family in collapse, but always reverting to the optimism about the possibilities of the human imagination. All true, yet leaving out much of the options and drawbacks of aspects of life which do not fit a gourmand's dream, the less aristocratic aspects of life which reflect purpose and fitting in, not just adventure, he leaves out the intimacy which is long lasting because based on commitment, not just on ephemeral passion which is often fear or loneliness in disguise.

Much the same issues, and ultimately a very similar point of view, are expressed in another book from that time by another professor, Pepper Schwartz's *Love Between Equals* (Schwartz 1994). She also admires a kind of romantic relationship rooted in friendship, yet the kind of friendship she describes is much the same kind of epicurean adventure (to the extent that American Yuppie—Young Urban Professional workaholics—can have epicurean adventures) as that described by Prof. Zeldin.

Much like Zeldin's book, Pepper Schwartz's book relates points of view that are true but somewhat irrelevant to the mass of people. It reminds me of what would be the response if one asked a Mexican peon why he did not live the life of a hacienda owner. "Circumstances don't allow it!"

She like so many academics discovers what most everybody knows already, the emphasis on equality in personal relationships which is already so important in American culture. Her view of "traditional" American marital relationships as involving strict emotional division of labor was more true of Bismarck's Germany than modern America. Yes, some women, and some men also, get excited by their careers and get a portion of their identities away from the home, but most working-class people do not have careers. They also do not endlessly entertain each other off the job. That Prof. Schwartz believes that men and women's wants and needs are so comparable shows a certain tendency to believe in the naturalness of a relatively androgynous society where men and women are greatly alike.

As to what these essentially alike men and women want are essentially the Yuppie (Young Urban Professional) desires for materialism, hedonism, and narcissistic satisfaction, and getting their social identities in the process, often through their workplaces, unless they approach life like "artists" which has its own drawbacks. All these values can certainly exist, but they are essentially cultural values, reflecting pretty much an extreme version of the Protestant Ethic now cut off from its own roots, and in conflict with certain aspects of human nature which do not find fulfillment through competition, workplace achievement, "art," and the wearing down of characteristic sexual differences and their replacement by androgeny.

Much advice on marriage nowadays in fact idealizes friendship more than it does marriage, and in essence says a marriage based on friendship will be a lot of

fun, which is basically true, but leaves out a lot. Teenagers are constantly surprised when they leave high school and lose most of their friends, who are out of sight, out of mind. They discover so many of their friendships were essentially narcissistic playthings, which were there to enable friends to share pleasures, but there was never any intention to sacrifice for each other. Thus, the tensions of family life seemed to pale in comparison to the pleasures of teenage camaraderie, especially as parents remind teenagers about truths and responsibilities that they do not want to hear. The big surprise comes later when the family bond remains strong, and the friendships prove weak. Idealization of the companionate marriage is not wrong, it just does not provide context in order to determine its probabilities for success.

Much advice about how to seek the pleasures of intimacy nowadays is similar to advice on how to practice work skills, followed by the reward of consumption of commodities. This is different from the traditional advice of if one finds true love, that is trust, communication, and concern for each other resulting in comfortableness and partnership skills, with a little practice intimacy will fall naturally into place. Instead, there is advice that assumes the desire for and the benefits of a variety of sensual techniques and a variety of partners which can easily result in using these techniques to avoid intimacy and closeness, not to initiating and extending it.

Practitioners of such ideologies can be described often as being "thrill junkies" and "control freaks" and their attitudes toward emotional closeness and intimacy are similar to those of people who partake in such institutionalized methods for attaining and controlling pleasure as anorexia, who do not let go and emotionally enjoy their food but are obsessed with controlling their relation to food in order to obsess over what really concerns them which is not the food but self-esteem issues and issues of body-image, and gambling, those who wish to escape from the emotional demands of rationally planning their futures but instead enjoy the controlled rituals of facing the vagaries of fate in gambling as an emotional substitute for the scary disorderliness and/or the bureaucratized and boring orderliness of their everyday life.

In that sense, the techniques of addictions, using unhealthy means toward attaining natural ends, these ends in fact often being the relieving of anxieties and the fulfillment of obsessions and compulsions relating to fears of failure and self-esteem issues, are often rooted in past real failures. These anxieties in turn relate to failures to achieve even more primary natural ends such as a fulfilling place in the social order.

That is why sexual fetishes often have an addictive quality to them, as their relief of anxiety relating to fears of failure, fears of rejection by others, and obsessions and compulsions relating to past fears and failures, all add to the attractiveness of these techniques, but true intimacy and emotional fulfillment is often a secondary, often even a nonexistent, benefit of them. A book that describes the way modern American culture somewhat supports the aggressive, ambitious personality to the point of mania, and its often resulting fall into depression in the cyclical process of manic-depression see Emily Martin, *Bipolar Expeditions: Mania and Depression in American Culture* (Martin 2007).

In fact, it is no surprise that because of the environment of the family that is so powerful at an early age, but which can be somewhat overcome when one forms a new love relationship and a new family as an adult, that some children react to parental acceptance or its lack. They do so by seeking out social situations where they have power over their lives and perhaps over others, similar to or reacting against their situation as children, thus occasionally reacting against their childhood experience and seeking the opposite. Likewise, they may be self-esteem oriented and seek others' approval, may be self-righteous and seek others' respect, and may have grown up in a loving environment and take for granted the healthiness of affection from others, or may seek out what they lacked as children, or may give up entirely or may not believe such a possibility of mutual affection as being even possible. From such complexities of personal experience and personal values is personal character made.

At an earlier period of history, the dilemmas faced by marriage partners of conflicting loyalties were between previously held personal relationships, particularly loyalties to one's family, and to the new marriage partner who somehow must now fit in. Now, since personal relationships of all sorts are often weak, the conflict is between loyalty to this new personal relationship and loyalty to a mass of impersonal relationships which often have little room for deep feeling and loyalty. As mentioned previously, one solution to the dilemma of marriage in the modern era is to make marriage more like these instrumental relationships that surround it.

Once passion in marriage had meant combining the loyalty of family with the interest of friendship, but with an intensity fueled by longing and difference that created a passion greater than what existed in these precursors that had been so important in childhood. The modern fascination with marriage as friendship may end up sacrificing all of this for marriage as living like college roommates, people who live together and talk about what is most important to them, and it is not each other.

Somehow, I think marriage should still be a transcending of narcissistic boundaries, not merely providing an audience in order to intensify them. The marriages of traditional societies were rarely so simple as being merely between business partners; the marriages of modern society will not be any better if they merely fluctuate between business partnerships and marrying in order to live like movie stars, like they do in their movies, not in their real lives.

Sociology of culture is about the institutions and their products that produce the intermediate levels of society in between the personal relationships characteristic of small social groups such as close friendships or even family life, where emotional response flows naturally, and the giant institutions that essentially rule a nation where immediate emotional reactions are very rare. These intermediate institutions are those such as religious institutions, educational institutions, and the institutions of the entertainment world. I should add culture for anthropology is more inherently psychological, the result of psychological drives and of needs that are essentially existential, needs for a "meaningful life" expressed to a large extent as emotional responses to the world such as anxiety or its avoidance, love, and all

the complex forms of anger, fear, and joy which fill out an infant's life as is, but are never sufficient by themselves as is to fill out an adult's life.

In the modern world, institutions for recreation provide the emotional response in second-order form that is so often lacking as direct emotional response in the cold, bureaucratic or anonymous spaces of modern society. Part of the extreme bureaucratization of modern societies is the development of whole institutions devoted to the recreational aspects of fantasy, so that it is difficult to evaluate the presence of romance as a real presence in people's lives when so much of romance is expressed in fantasizing about it through entertainment vehicles, as well as adoration of the private lives of celebrities who star in those entertainment vehicles. The kinds of hypocrisies made ridiculous in Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote,* with his mocking of the Spanish chivalry of that age that was less practiced than fantasized about, lives on.

In fact, historically, one can observe the way institutions that strongly influence a society, partly by the way they provide oversight over emotional expression, can reach a point of actually governing that society. Let me remind you of what served as a primal dilemma at the beginning of what later became modern Western society, which took place toward the end of the Roman Empire when the celibate Christian priesthood not only increasingly became the primary literate class, but they increasingly functioned to a large extent as the governing bureaucrats of the Empire, and this was even more true in the little Germanic kingdoms that replaced the Empire. In fact, it can be said they gained prestige for their self-control because so much of the rest of the population and much of the ruling class were defined by them, and much of the population thought so of themselves, as being lustful, impulsive, jealous, lazy, and in general as "sinners" who needed controlling from their betters. This dilemma of which social class, or which functional social group such as the leaders or the led, are most likely to be "sinners" has remained an issue in all the subsequent cultures that make up this civilization up to this day.

By the high Middle Ages, there had developed a secular elite who had not only begun to marginalize the celibate priesthood politically, but they themselves had developed a kind of counterculture, a major component being the belief that access to sensual pleasures including adulteries primarily through access to lower-class women was not only something they desired and enjoyed, but also something which like their wealth they deserved and were entitled to, despite violating Christian morality, as being almost legitimate. For such attitudes, read Giovanni Boccaccio's *The Decamerson* from 1353 which is filled with stories of adulteries among married people, for whom the actual instigators are often hypocritical priests. At the very least escapist fiction, and the fantasies people used to relax, had become very strange at that period in history among the educated classes.

With the coming of the Protestant Reformation, particularly middle-class business groups once again took pride in their self-control and their ability to defer gratification and plan for future success, while they increasingly denigrated the sensuality and lack of self-control among the almost totally hereditary upper class with their inherited wealth. Yet though they emphasized a return to traditional Christian virtues, they did not desire a return to power by a celibate priesthood to

rule over them. They sought more freedom than before to make their own deci-
sions and the priesthood became ever more marginalized in their ability to rule
over them even in Catholic lands, though this process of losing their social power
occurred more slowly in such very conservative Catholic lands as Spain. The end
result was that they lost much of their power which they had gained when they
rose to power at the end of the Roman Empire to fill in the gaps in social control
left by the decline in morals and morale, and just plain social efficiency, in that
decaying empire.

Rome's republican government fell because it could not deal with class conflict
and the increasing polarization of society between the rich and the poor, and
imperial government was the result which stabilized the society but which also
resulted in the demoralization of large elements of both the ruling class and the
poor. Eventually, much of Roman classical upper-class culture survived, for
example, its stoic ideals, but only in Christian form with its promises of religious
salvation and especially through religious enforcement of these ideals, at least over
the common people since enforcement of these values over the highest members of
the aristocracy remained perpetually a problem in Roman and later in European
political life.

Modern American culture in fact is inspired by the rebellion against upper-class
malfeasance, and especially hypocrisy that was an inspiration for both the Prot-
estant Reformation and for the Catholic Counter-Reformation that dealt with many
of these same criticisms by cleaning house. That is why traditionally America has
feared going down the same path and making the same mistakes of the Roman
Republic, its ancient predecessor.

This leads us now to modernity and intimacy in the present, and what can be
learned. To get from politics, and back to personal relationships, two recent
illustrations of this are William R. Jankowiak, ed., *Intimacies: Love and Sex
Across Cultures* (Jankowiak 2008) and Derek Layder, *Intimacy and Power: The
Dynamics of Personal Relationships in Modern Society* (Layder 2009). Both books
serve to illustrate the differences between love as passion (partly sexually based,
partly the finding of a soul mate with common values, interests, and comple-
mentary arousal patterns so that they find each other stimulating, intellectually and
in other ways), love as primarily friendship (common shared interests and the
loyalty of partnership), and love as fear (the fear of being alone, the fear that starts
with jealousy of others so that there is a fear that there will be not only failure but
humiliation, and the fear of economic desperation and the lack of a partner to ease
some of this burden), and of course combinations of all of these.

Comparing America and more traditional cultures as in Prof. Jankowiak's book,
one learns that Prof. Jankowiak believes they are more similar than they are
different, that in all cultures humans tend to be emotionally monogamous, even
when not sexually monogamous. This edited book through essays on sex and its
cultural background in various cultures illustrates his thesis that there is conflict
between romantic/passionate love, comfort/attachment love, he tends to mention
how the first type can evolve into the second, and sex as physical attraction.
Regarding these varieties of interpersonal and sexual attraction he notes,

"Every culture must decide whether to synthesize, separate, blend, discount, stress, or ignore one or the other" (Jankowiak 2008, p. 2). Prof. Jankowiak disagrees with those scholars who believe that passionate love is asexual idealization. Instead, just as in much literature on the psychology of happiness, he emphasizes that sexual feelings must be extended by cultural values that cause these feelings to be renewed, otherwise these feelings will reach an adaptation level and become taken for granted.

The essays that follow do not lend themselves to overall theorizing on the effects of modernization on this process of taking sexual love for granted in various kinds of relationships, except that they provide lots of examples, though not as part of any evolutionary framework. In an essay on sex life among two tribal groups in Africa, what is striking is that these African peasants have much more frequency of sexual intercourse with their wives than Americans do, and this is partly explained by the desire to have many children. Also it is noted that in these polygamous relationships the cowives have their own sleeping quarters and often their own homes, so that the American custom of sharing the marital bed as a sign of emotional intimacy is not followed. We learn from another essay that the Lithuanian ideology of love is basically the same as in the West as a whole, except that it is accepted as being somewhat fantasy-based, less automatically turning into companionate love than in the typical American ideology on the subject. In an essay on the Lahu of Southwest China, romantic passion there is considered important as a private matter in courting and marriage, but it is not expressed publicly because it would conflict with notions of communal solidarity. The essays on organized eroticism that end this book, particularly on sex workers in the Dominican Republic for whom there is a definite economic strategy to seek liaisons with tourists perhaps leading to marriage, though often achieving much less than that including outright prostitution, and an essay on American "swingers" who are engaged in spouse exchange at parties, all prove that there are many varieties of manipulation, and of making compromises in order to produce "more options."

In the case of "swingers" are they gaining greater "variety" or are they merely recycling their anxieties, the way drug addicts and sexual fetishists rationalize that they cannot get pleasures in normal ways so that this is the best they can do? These are the kinds of ultimate questions that people in the real world must face, but for which these essays with their limited data sets cannot provide definitive answers, but merely illustrations of the varieties of sexual relationships that exist under various circumstances.

In another book, Derek Layder, *Intimacy and Power: The Dynamics of Personal Relationships in Modern Society* (Layder 2009), his book provides an alternative to such books as Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy* (Giddens 1992) and Ulrich Beck and Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim, *The Normal Chaos of Love* (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995), both of which claim that traditional marriages were there to produce familial alliances, and friendships were pretty much weak too compared to family loyalties, but now "pure relationships" negotiated between equals are increasingly the norm. For example, the Becks

comment on the difficulty of coordinating two distinct career paths (notice the emphasis is on middle-class "careers" not working-class "jobs") which makes "pure relationships" valuable but problematic. Of course, for both books, commitment and trust makes "pure relationships" worthwhile.

Much of this book is Layder's recounting of various critics of what he agrees to be an overly romantic account by some others of perfect autonomy and endless bargaining (as opposed to loving concern and a certain amount of self-sacrifice) balanced by his criticisms of the opposite extreme, accounts of relationships that evolve into staleness or clinging out of fear of lack of alternatives as being the norm. Instead, Prof. Layder develops a typology that distinguishes between dynamic, episodic, and semi-detached relationships, these cluster together in being relatively satisfactory, and pretense, manipulative, and oppressive relationships, these cluster together as being relatively unsatisfactory. What increases over time in these unsatisfactory relationships are lack of disclosure, commitment, trust, and sincerity. It is also true that clinging that derives from fear of lack of alternatives is the traditional criticism of *gemeinschaft* (community) and the lack of security, and of course, trust that comes from endless bargaining is the traditional criticism of *gesellschaft* (association).

Ultimately, this is a very good self-help and "improve your relationships" book, certainly not psychobabble, but not with a whole lot of social context of the sort why certain people grow up the way they do, or retain as a result of their positions in society the power they maintain, resulting even in the inner sanctum of the family in "games people play." He particularly emphasizes energy-draining and energizing games (producing fair-deal agreements and compromises).

He describes on the positive side mutual seduction games that meet the need for love, acceptance and approval, identity-affirming games that meet the need for recognition of individuality, empathy games that meet the need for being understood, altruistic games that protect the mutual bond, and mutually supportive games that protect the balance of independence and dependence (Layder 2009, p. 133). At the end of the book in a chapter on "Intimacy and Power," he criticizes the perspective of Anthony Giddens that perpetual account-keeping in relationships, what Giddens calls "self-reflexivity" is necessarily a good thing. Layde reminds us that constant self-monitoring can be self-obsessive. Though he does not use the term narcissism, his overall description of the pathologies of being self-obsessive fits narcissism quite well. Therefore, a book that fully complements Layard's is Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (Lasch 1991). That book and Eric Berne, *Games People Play: The Basic Handbook of Transactional Analysis* (Berne 1996), originally published in 1964, show that even in the world of postmodernity and trendy theorists, at least in terms of popular social analysis that stands the test of time, the more things change, the more they remain the same.

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Chapter 5
How Nationalism is Similar to Juvenile Delinquency

There is much in the human experience that can be described as falling under the category of natural (or healthy) ends being served by unnatural (or unhealthy) means. Addiction to drugs is an obvious example of this.

Juvenile delinquency is another example. It evolves out of teenage socializing that takes a destructive turn, perhaps eventually leading to criminal enterprises, but originally serving other needs, in particular, extreme obsessions with status-consciousness and maintenance of self-esteem through bullying others.

A parallel phenomenon in many ways is excessive nationalism. It arises often not out of enjoyment of one's social obligations, but quite the opposite, feeling a sense of social weakness and threat to one's social ties. These may be real threats, such as economic rivalries with other ethnic groups, or imagined threats, particularly projecting upon outsiders one's own attitudes and one's own moral weaknesses, as if to displace one's own sense of guilt or one's own ambivalence and even disloyalty, or merely attacking others whose lack of the same attitudes and of the same ideologies as one's own reminds one that there are other options. The loss of a sense of community (*gemeinschaft*) and its replacement by an impersonal sense of association (*gesellschaft*) increase these psychological tensions.

For some people, this is an intolerable feeling. A short way to describe such defense mechanisms is to say undesired affects can be dealt with by direct behavior (e.g., confession), by coping strategy (e.g., selective inattention such as by focusing on something else), or by relying on a defense (e.g., denying an act occurred). This description of the place of defense mechanisms within the broad range of affect (and in general personality) processes is described in more detail by Prof. Drew Westen in his book on self and society (Westen 1985, p. 22–96).

Such psychological defensiveness has political effects such as seen in the cultural requirements for American-style democracy, based on both moralistic ideals and lack of strong social solidarity, producing a particular version of *gesellschaft*. This can be compared to the cultural requirements for more authoritarian, often originally *gemeinschaft*-based societies, where over time the reasons for the rules are sometimes lost and replaced by clinging for reasons of sought emotional security.

In general, Freud discussed the motivational properties of instincts as made up of their source (in internal bodily stimulation), their impetus (the degree of effort exerted which represents the intensity of the need), their aim (essentially to abolish the experienced tension, be it sexual drive or feelings of fear or of generalized anxiety), and their object (the person or thing in the environment that serves to satisfy the aim of the instinct, be it through sexual release or through the emotional satisfactions that come from personal appreciation by valued others, or by achieved intellectual understanding, or just by social interaction) (see Freud 1949, p. 109–140). A way of looking at culture as being composed of substitute affects can also be found in Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*: "Life, as we find it, is too hard for us; it brings too many pains, disappointments and impossible tasks. In order to bear it we cannot dispense with palliative measures… There are perhaps three such measures: powerful deflections which cause us to make light of our misery, substitutive satisfactions, which diminish it, and intoxicating substances which makes us insensitive to it" (Freud 1961, p. 22).

Notice that Westen's mechanisms of defense are cognitive strategies, direct behavior (which requires knowledge of the outside world at least in terms of orienting oneself to that world), coping strategies, and psychological defenses, all of which are predominantly cognitively based, while Freud's list of substitute satisfactions is based on finding alternative sources of emotional relief, not finding different ways of organizing the personality, but differing sources of immediate emotional relief. No wonder counselors emphasize more cognitive reorganizations of the personality in order to improve "rationality," while psychiatrists often emphasize an immediate change in one's emotional state, for example, through relief of anxiety by administration of drugs.

Both are means of access to the personality, and both can lead to reorganization of the personality system by coming in at different entry points. Freud's work reflects a period in intellectual history when it was common to emphasize the artificiality of the constraints of civilization, for good and for ill, while later writers, both in psychiatry and in other fields, tended to emphasize cognitive issues related to, in general, the self orienting itself toward a meaningful life, a rather existential point of view. A more recent writer who wrote on neurosis and even more severe states as a kind of failed ability to be heroic (and I assume rational) in the face of the challenges of existential reality and the anxiety it brings out was Ernest Becker (Becker 1973).

In fact, the very terms, motherland and fatherland which are characteristic of societies where nationalism (Gellner 1983; Greenfield 2003; Smith 1993) is the method for inculcating social cohesiveness, as well as ensuring loyalty to authority (Greenstein 1965; Hoover 2004; Reicher and Hopkins 2001), are misnomers, since lands are composed of dirt and rocks with some water and a few buildings, they are in no way like mothers and fathers. In a true family, feelings of loyalty are returned so that the feelings are mutual; in a sense, loyalties are both natural and healthy. The nation on the other hand is composed mainly of strangers to each other.

To treat the nation as if it is, an extension of family is an understandable development out of previous social conditions, the growth out of *gemeinschaft*

(community) into *gesellschaft* (association). Sometimes this takes the form of pathological psychological states that reflect obsessive–compulsive and paranoid tendencies. The *authoritarian personality* (Duckitt 1989; Sanford 1973; Stone et al. 1993; Wilkinson 1972) is one result of this process of unhealthy psychological development taken to an extreme degree, as is its opposite, the *narcissistic personality* (Lasch 1991), extreme self-centeredness with few social loyalties. The worst of both worlds is unfortunately a possibility, extremely narcissistic leaders ruling over very authoritarian followers.

The extreme versions of this (the less extreme versions are found in many hierarchical societies) have been common in countries with both fascist and Communist governments, in fact, in all modern states that have had totalitarian governments. Whether or not in the past any societies have been ruled by virtuous tyrants, the modern world has seen very little of this. See Patricia Crone's *Pre-Industrial Societies: Anatomy of the Pre-Modern World* for a good introduction to the pre-modern world, including the world of politics (Crone 2003).

C.S. Lewis's *The Four Loves* (Lewis 1960) is as useful a source as any for learning the kinds of basic social relationships that form *gemeinschaft*. C.S. Lewis starts with a psychological distinction between pleasure which meets a need, in fact fulfills that need, and then results in a state of affective neutrality, and pleasure that I interpret as having a strong cognitive component and in a sense "colors" one's reactions to the world and produces an ongoing mood state that is somewhat independent of one's physical environment. It is this last state that can truly be called "happiness" as opposed to the first state which is best described as being just "pleasure." C.S. Lewis makes the same distinction between need-pleasures and pleasures of appreciation, with their resulting elaboration in need love and gift love. The latter is based on appreciating the other, not a dependency as much as a fulfillment through giving, which C.S. Lewis takes to its religious extreme as if the truest fulfillment of a sense of appreciation is a religious feeling of worship, which leaves the question what is it that is worthy of worship? The nation-state is often treated almost like an object of worship. In fact, there are people who mix nationalism with religion as if feelings of loyalty to a community are meant to reinforce feelings of religious loyalty and vice versa.

But back to C.S. Lewis, he starts with affection which is the least discriminating of loves. "But almost anyone can become an object of affection; the ugly, the stupid, even the exasperating" (Lewis 1960, p. 54). This is the case of family love which starts off at being unconditional but is constantly reinforced by other motives, such as the fulfillment of raising the next generation, identifying with the next generation as if it is an extension of oneself and offering the opportunity for fulfillment of moral duties. Affection for a pet dog is real too, but it has fewer links than affection for one's child. Pets can, however, be treated like children, especially when there are no children around. Part of the fulfillment of affection is the feeling of being needed, which is so important for parents.

Friendship, unlike affection (or eros for that matter), does not develop out of an utterly predictable relationship where being at the right place at the right time is all that is needed (the source of family loyalties) because though there is a biological

component as the source of emotion (even more true of eros), it is even more true that there is a kind of existential feeling of fulfilling basic human needs for companionship. Thus, friendship meets needs that are inherently more choosy and cognitive (eros has an element of being choosy, but this is counterbalanced by having a driven quality which is the opposite of being choosy, as if fulfilling a biological imperative). Friendship has a strong cognitive component, and it seems to me C.S. Lewis thinks of it as being our counterpart to divine love, through being affection taken to a much higher level but with fewer biological imperatives than eros has.

For Lewis, friendship arises out of companionship (like among fellow workers) but deepens because individuals find they have more in common with certain people than with others. "Friendship arises out of mere companionship when two or more of the companions discover that they have in common some insight or interest or even taste which the others do not share and which, that moment, each believed to be his own unique treasure (or burden)" (Lewis 1960, p. 96). Friendship can produce deafness to outside opinion that can result in dangerous cabals as well as the basis for communal solidarity through the cross-cutting ties of many groups of friends that through the common friendships end up uniting the community as a whole.

Eros for C.S. Lewis is an appreciation of another person but is motivated by desire, not by mere sociability like one's liking one's neighbor which is a matter of affection, nor by common interests like workmates "talking shop."

Such motivated idealization can prove ultimately worthwhile (and realistic and rational) or not. That is why most societies appreciate eros, but not as if it is ultimately its own reward. That is because it does not always work out, and marriage, for example, typically includes eros, perhaps at its origin and certainly as an important element, but not its only element. In fact, marriages differ among each other because of what differing personalities bring to them to produce social bonds and also differ by the cultures which pressure them to emphasize certain elements rather than others, according to the proportions of affection, friendship, and eros that constitute them.

Finally, C.S. Lewis includes charity as a kind of love, a self-sacrificing, idealistic kind of love which is his way of describing love of humanity, the ultimate for religious fulfillment kind of love, which I should add exists as an element in the other kinds of personal relationships as well. However, if charity dominated the feelings of neighborliness or friendship or even mutual erotic attraction, it would be a very non-down-to-earth kind of relationship and social bonding, possibly the ultimate fulfillment of saints, but an exercise in self-delusion or wishful thinking for anyone else. That is why the ultimate fulfillment for this kind of love is religious or for secular attempts to find the equivalent to religion (which raises the whole other issue of worshipping false gods, which is why making sacred what is not sacred arises as a moral issue at all). In a sense, charity is like a Platonic form, the ideal version of an idea, now removed from many of its earthly ties, including its many sources of emotional benefits as well as costs.

Since the emotional bases for the various kinds of "love" that constitute *gemeinschaft* (community) is now in place, we can now go on to discuss social relationships that are a lot less loving. And now I would like to make a plea for research into some of the social and cultural incentives for and against unethical behavior in society (Sidanius and Pratto 1999).

For example, there is no end to research on how juvenile delinquents often form the basis when they grow up for further development of their careers into adult criminal activities, though adults sometimes enter these career paths late. There is also literature about political corruption, sometimes as simple as politicians taking bribes, sometimes politicians being themselves ex-criminals who have found a more lucrative, or at least safer, racket, or more likely politicians who use criminal underlings to do the dirty work that they and their colleagues do not want to do themselves such as getting (bribing?) voters to vote for them or suppressing opposition voters. But a truly holistic analysis of whatstructural elements in terms of social roles in a particular society allow criminality to flourish ornot, what cultural values and practices create or merely allow the expression of criminal motives, and what particular bureaucratic rules, be they based in government or in business, allow for the expansion or repression of crime, all these are levels of analysis that are rarely developed in a well-coordinated fashion.

Therefore, one reason the spread of American-style democracy to other nations has been limited is because the actual rules of the game, the way these societies are organized and power is distributed both as a matter of law and as a matter of custom differs from what is found in America. Also, the cultural values of these societies tend to differ from what is found in America. It is no surprise therefore that politics in these societies tend to have different goals and different outcomes (though of course there is overlap) from what is found in America.

If one takes Central and Eastern Europe as an example, the existence of many political parties represented in parliament, as opposed to the essentially two party systems of Britain and America, and admittedly, these differences are mainly the result of culture and custom and not of law, the result is that political leaders in Central and Eastern Europe have much less reason to set political agendas in the spirit of compromise in order to expand their political base. Their political constituencies tend to have a limited ethnic or religious or social class or urban or rural base, and they know it (Wiarda 2006). They play to their base in elections, often with rather ideological election platforms by American and British standards, and to the extent there are compromises it is done by elites in parliament after the election is over.

As to the general cultural values of a society that justifies, and influences motivations, for such a state of affairs, I refer to a paper by George J. McCall, "Juvenile Delinquency in Germany, South Africa, and America: Explorations in National Character" found in *Social Pathology in Comparative Perspective: The Nature and Psychology of Civil Society* (Braun 1995). This paper shows the beginnings of a holistic analysis, based on structural and cultural influences, on juvenile delinquency, and a similar kind of analysis can be made for other kinds of unethical activity, including political corruption.

Prof. McCall makes clear in comparing the cultures of Germany and America, with ramifications for differences as well as commonalities in juvenile delinquency, and the same holds true for political corruption that many writers on national character claim that it is not that Germany is out of line with advanced industrial societies, but that it is America (Braun 1995, p. 121). American society, because of the underlying influence of "low-church Protestantism" in the original American culture that has left its imprint on the overall culture to this day, has a core cultural tradition that originally encouraged individuals to never give full existential loyalty to anything other than God, and this now produces the ability to at least try out preliminary social relationships with many kinds of people. These relationships may be considered emotionally shallow and superficial by people from certain other cultures, but it is sufficient to produce ease in work relationships between acquaintances, and similar ease in political settings between acquaintances. The writings of Seymour Martin Lipset often deal with this issue of American exceptionalism (Lipset 1997, 2003).

In fact, the overlap between *gemeinschaft* (communal) sociability patterns and *gesellschaft* (association) sociability patterns differs in various cultures. In the United States, even formal organizations tend to not value social formality and stiff adherence to many rules to a great extent, which is why "friendliness" and small talk of the kind practiced by acquaintances are valued to grease social interactions, while in the more intimate settings of communities, there are limits to how much social closeness is considered acceptable or even tolerable (similar points are made as part of a general analysis of individualism and collectivism from a psychological perspective in Triandis 1995).

Loyalty on the basis of adherence to commonly accepted moral standards, the kind of loyalty originally most commonly found among believing members of a church, is a commonly held American cultural standard for many social environments. In fact, Americans often find it hard to appreciate other cultures where morality takes a back seat to loyalty for its own sake (often providing security in an unsafe or aggressively competitive world).

Americans can certainly appreciate hypocrisy, and it is common enough in America too, but they find it hard to appreciate cultures that they see as openly encouraging amorality, usually putting loyalty on a pedestal as being more important than morality. This self-righteousness, as opposed to the snobbishness of cultural elites who are the true rulers of authoritarian societies and also as opposed to the militant parochialism of traditional peasantries, is the legacy to America of "low-church Protestantism." Even America's racists have traditionally sought religious justifications for their racism, rather than justification from amoral secular philosophies of life of the fascist or Communist sort which consciously put loyalty to the state, or to some other group, as a substitute for loyalty to God.

In many areas of Central and Eastern Europe, but probably most developed in Germany, there is a great split between *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* standards for sociability, unlike in America where individualism (individual initiative) weakens social bonding in *gemeinschaft* settings but strengthens it in *gesellschaft* settings. In Central and Eastern Europe, *gemeinschaft* tends to have great claims on loyalty,

sometimes overriding universalistic standards of morality, while *gesellschaft* tends to exist in social environments so impersonal and functional (and hierarchical in a bureaucratic sense) that all kinds of problems from lack of psychological expressiveness result. This reality of *gesellschaft* that results in subservience counterbalanced by a romantic longing to escape it to a longed-for (as opposed to a living reality of) *gemeinschaft* is what produces the classical extreme "authoritarian personality."

In America and in France, to the extent that government takes the initiative to foster the revival of a sense of community, and as long as there are frontier opportunities in America which are considered an option of last resort for individuals coming together on their own to form their own communities, the standards used are the universalistic ones of moralistic revival. But traditionally in Germany, and in most of Eastern Europe, to the extent that government feels obligated to foster the revival of a sense of community, this revival is based on fostering *gemeinschaft* loyalties, the kinds that are inherent in certain historical communities but that leave out others from "recognized society" (Mann 2005; Misztal 1996; Seligman 2000; Weintraub and Kumar 1997).

In these relatively authoritarian societies, communities are founded on such intense loyalties (partly because it is felt that no other groups will be available because people do not move easily from group to group) that even functional groups such as traditional aristocracies or ideological groups such as those composed of Marxist militants feel a sense of absolute loyalty to each other (they have to, they have no one else they culturally are allowed to expect absolute loyalty from) and thus are immensely motivated to differentiate between valued "insiders" and stigmatized "outsiders." In a sense, the standards of the natural loyalties of families, where there is solidarity throughout one's whole life and there is reciprocity so that loyalty is both earned and rewarded, are extended to other more diffuse and anonymous social groupings. It is then hoped that these communities can function much like extended families, and the state can function much like an intimate, convivial community. Thus, the feelings characteristic of pre-feudal (patrimonial) societies carry over and survive for a long time as longings in feudal societies, even as they become more and more bureaucratic. It is the claim to fame of post-feudal societies with their emphasis on checks and balances in society that such hopes can be somewhat fulfilled.

The puritanism of American culture, the sense of sin you might call it, is its absolute rejection of wishful thinking about longed-for human relationships. The community is not the same thing as an extended family, and the state is not a large version of a convivial community, and any longing for what is an impossibility is considered fraught with danger.

However, since social phenomena are so often prone to ambiguity and thus to interpretation, which is why a glass can be interpreted as being half empty or half full, many societies prone to cultural and economic stagnation have resigned themselves to emphasizing the virtues of a leadership class of the wellborn and aristocratic (because they are already rich, they do not need to steal which does not mean they would not), the kind of people who overestimate the value of their

romantic interpretations of the lives of all of the common people that they do not associate with. This is a major source of the romantic populism so common in the politics historically of Germany and Eastern Europe (Gellner 1996).

Of course, the danger of democratic leadership, something Americans do not ordinarily like to talk about, is that in other than small, intimate societies, people may run for office not to serve the public good but merely as another way of making a living. Under such conditions, a sense of honor (that basis for leadership in a *gemeinschaft*) in serving the public good can become very weak. That is why traditional societies wonder how Americans can trust the honor of their leaders in such an anonymous society. At one time, a puritanical loyalty to God, or a cultural remnant of that, was an important source of such honor in America. As to what the future will bring, that is difficult to say.

The next step beyond this of course is the possibility of people entering politics to subvert the public good in order to maximize their economic advantages, so that politics becomes an outlet for criminal activities. That is why modernizing traditional societies often become disillusioned with democracy if they find that when they are no longer ruled by a traditional aristocratic class, that their new leaders are no better, and to the extent they are prone to both greed and criminal conspiracies, perhaps even worse (Kornai and Rose-Ackerman 2004; Rose-Ackerman 1999). That is why the conditions that produce juvenile delinquency, weakening of family and communal loyalties, and strengthening of social groups devoted to self-aggrandizement and sometimes to mere bullying are often also the conditions that produce political machines.

However, culture does help give a direction to this process. Juvenile delinquency, like crime in general, is a major problem in America, but it reflects a certain amount of free choice in choosing what criminal gangs to join, so that hereditary loyalties and ethnic solidarity are not automatically strengthened since juvenile gangs of similar ethnicity often fight each other. Also, these juvenile gangs are rarely coopted by radical political movements since juvenile delinquents in America tend to be just as non-ideological as other Americans. However, in Central and Eastern Europe, juvenile delinquency often does strengthen ethnic solidarity, since it is such a strong value to begin with, and there is greater danger of juvenile gangs being coopted by radical political movements because loyalty to ideological causes is a greater value in authoritarian societies than in loosely integrated, relatively non-ideological societies like in America.

To illustrate, George McCall mentions regarding Germany an emphasis there on substantive solutions for social conflict rather than procedural rules that allow conflict to proceed as well as an emphasis on "private virtues" rather than "public virtues" (also see Lewin 1936). Public virtues resemble those of sportsmanship and fair play and emphasize not burdening others with one's inner person. Private virtues are more inward looking reflecting the individual's self-sufficient standards which are not kept inside in order not to burden others (the American ideal), but instead an audience which will appreciate such expressions is sought (Braun 1995, p. 120).

This audience I should add is either the kind of audience that an "artist" prefers, the kind that will appreciate these profound expressions and put the artist on a pedestal, or an audience which is absolutely loyal because of hereditary loyalties, or as close as one can get to this as in the friends and neighbors of childhood that are not chosen so much as are an accident of fate. Nationalism is the result of leaders who have the egotism of artists but expect a kind of hereditary loyalty from members of the same ethnic group, or ideological group, or religious group, or any group which leaders think they can not so much earn loyalty from people as demand it. Thus, Prof. McCall makes the point: "Kurt Lewin's (1936) classic comparison likewise suggests that Americans readily make accessible the peripheral aspects of their personalities (but rarely the central aspects), whereas Germans publicly show greater social distance but in private relationships afford greater access to central aspects of their personalities" (Braun 1995, p. 120).

Unfortunately, these central aspects are often hidden for good reason, for they reflect the emotionally driven irrationality that often takes the forms of hysteria, paranoia, or perhaps just jealousy. Under conditions of equality of social status, one's friends can induce individuals to "calm down and be more rational." Under conditions of great social inequality, irrational leaders get to rule and control the lives of their followers.

The end result of all of this is that authoritarian societies rely on substantive rules for dealing with conflict (based on enforcing the customs and rules of "in groups" for the most part). To the extent that these societies have religious values that aim toward universalistic morality, these often have an other worldly, mystical religious quality, making the saints who practice these values worthy of praise, but often not conducive to everyday morality (other than that practiced between *gemeinschaft* intimates such as in the family).

That was why pre-Communist Russia and pre-Nazi Germany produced great works of art about suffering humanity and saintly individuals who sought to rise above their surroundings through their own genius or saintliness, but a poor history of elites who fostered the practice of everyday morality incumbent on members of all social classes. The latter is in fact the American ideal (and not only in America), and its loss will show the final evolution into a class-ridden society in America.

Admittedly, the existence of frontier conditions (in a social and economic sense if not necessarily in a physical sense) in America buffers the social strains of American society, giving many opportunities to start over, and so makes unnecessary the rigid social controls found in societies where social hierarchy is not only a given but permanent. The opportunities for achievement in America not only provide an alternative to the pleasures of social closeness (opportunities which are somewhat lacking in America because of the anonymity of society and cultural values that have become congruent with this). In the more authoritarian societies of Central and Eastern Europe, achievement motivation as a cultural value is considered something that can never substitute for full emotional expressiveness with people who can never reject you (*gemeinschaft* comrades), and so revealing

even amoral or immoral fantasies is considered a price they are willing to pay if the alternative is forever keeping their feelings hidden.

Of course, socializing outside the *gemeinschaft* does require exactly this. The two extremes of extreme emotional repression in *gesellschaft* settings and the often great expression of irrationality (the result of frustration and stress in many cases) in *gemeinschaft* settings does not easily produce a morally engaged emotional expressiveness. That is why a functioning gemeinschaft needs a few gesellschaft virtues to function well, and the same holds true for a functioning *gesellschaft* requiring a few *gemeinschaft* virtues. The latter is the American ideal, though the practice of course can be lacking, depending on particular circumstances and particular people.

Just as Americans admire democracy so much that they practice limited government so as not to put too much stress on it, Americans admire a certain virtuous character, the expression of healthy motives in morally appropriate contexts, but it is easier to merely be economically rational and put off producing a just society for another day. That is why they historically have reacted so fervently to immoral aggression on the world stage. It offers the opportunity for expressing feelings of self-righteousness that are ordinarily hidden so as not to take the place of everyday economic rationality. After all, self-righteousness does not pay one's bills.

Given the cultural ideals of Central and Eastern Europe, the two alternatives of holding their emotions in severely or expressing their emotions often in a highly irrational manner, the American ideal of giving people the freedom to express themselves based on puritanical self-control in the furtherance of universalistic values can appear quite dangerous. In these kinds of authoritarian societies, it is very difficult for them to conceptualize a golden mean that combines *gemeinschaft and gesellschaft* social virtues in a way other than the way they do already, which is why historically they consider the American way of combining these virtues as a rejection of their own way.

Of course, in a true *gemeinschaft*, the intimates who have known you, perhaps for your whole life, and know many of your quirks, can tell you off when you get too irrational. Face-to-face confrontation is the final method of settlement for conflict in *gemeinschaft* communities. Unfortunately, modernizing *gemeinschaft* communities often retain the ideal of emotional expressiveness but lose the checks and balances of intimates to tell people that they are wrong. Obviously, the return of checks and balances in bureaucratic form is what makes post-feudal societies into successful *gesellschafts*. A distorted *gemeinschaft* based on fantasies of social closeness rather than on the realities of working out problems is the result of a *gemeinschaft* failing to modernize correctly, of being in reality more like a delusional *gesellschaft*, which I suppose is the American critique of modernizing authoritarian societies that fail in a moral sense. The traditional European critique of American modernization is that America's families and local communities (our *gemeinschaft*) are not intimate enough (sometimes more according to their theory than their practice), and our central bureaucracies are not efficient enough.

A true *gesellschaft* is so oriented toward instrumental rationality that emotional repression can become a permanent condition among much of the population,

which prevents arguments from ever arising hopefully (that ideal of American business and German civil society). But if arguments do arise, the means to express oneself emotionally and rationally (as opposed to hysterically) is often discovered to have been lost.

The split personality common to modernizing authoritarian societies, where the tensions and lack of fulfillment of *gesellschaft* society are expressed through irrational emotionality when one returns to one's *gemeinschaft* community and is allowed to act out one's frustration, is a dangerous solution. The intellectuals of Central and Eastern Europe have often dreamed of transforming communities into having the characteristics of extended families, and the state as the extension of the local community, but have never really succeeded except as an outlet for radical politics that later proved to be based on wishful thinking.

Of course, the goals of many of the American intellectual class have not fared so well either. In theory, the *gemeinschaft* characteristics of the family, the intermediate characteristics of the local community, and the *gesellschaft* characteristics of the state should allow each social center to function at maximum efficiency, but in practice, *gesellschaft* characteristics affect all these social environments nowadays, in some ways especially in America.

This is not totally a bad thing, and extremes of *gesellschaft* characteristics in the broader world and dreams of *gemeinschaft* that allow for perfect emotional expression (but in practice allowing irrational emotions to roam free) are truly the coexistence of two extremes, which in many ways are lacking in true traditional authoritarian societies, and is something America, which in some ways is a rather archaic society culturally following the ideals of eighteenth century Europe and especially Britain, has always hoped to avoid, at least as an ideal. Yet this desire to avoid excessive bureaucratic anonymity and excessive irrational communal conviviality sometimes produces a golden mean, but even in America where it is our ideal often it does not.

At the very least, a fallback position based on rather puritanical Protestant traditions means that self-control is perpetually maintained, which preserves virtue, but not especially enjoyment. Even this cultural position has proven unstable and is being replaced nowadays by narcissistic (as opposed to the previously moralistic) individualism. So the emphasis on individual achievement as the end-all of life in American culture, derived from once puritanical Protestant traditions, as living for the future becomes a permanent condition only compensated for by spending money, means that true emotional expression (which even in irrational form in authoritarian societies is still considered "authenticity") has become for many people a lost art in the kind of *gesellschaft* society that America is.

Irrational outcries are often the authoritarian world's version of entertainment and are dangerous when the *gemeinschaft* world of intimates who would understand one's quirks is disappearing. As a result, such societies become even more dangerous because though more basic levels of the personality are tapped into, they are only given fiction-driven, wishful-thinking-based outlets. Leaders of modernizing authoritarian societies are often too ideological to realize that all of this is in fact what is happening.

That is why traditionally Americans growing up in a rather puritanical culture (weaker now but its remnants in culture still exist) know that entertainment is just a source of recreation, of recuperation from the rest of life and is for tension release, and it is not an alternative lifestyle. Other, less puritanical and more literal-minded cultures may not realize this, so that the addictive effects of mass entertainment may be more dangerous to them than in America because of their lack of our background cultural assumptions.

This brings us to the issue of political irrationality (I would call it), others would call it just political extremism in the ex-Communist states of Eastern Europe, those areas which, for example, often have anti-Semitism without Jews. To just touch upon this subject, I am relying on a article in the vol. 236, February 19 and 26, 2007 issue of the American journal *The New Republic* entitled "Popular Front" by Prof. Jacques Rupnik of the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris, adapted from an essay originally published by the Institut für Wissenschaften vom Menschen in Vienna, Austria. This article recounts recent bottlenecks in the development of liberal democracy and its challenge by nationalistic populism.

For example, Bulgaria's then recent presidential election pitted an ex-Communist who eventually won against what Rupnik calls a protofascist who said he hates Turks, Gypsies, and Jews. In fact, Rupnik states: "If democracy means popular legitimacy and constitutionalism, then the populists accept the former and reject the latter—that is they distrust the idea that constitutional norms should trump traditional values and majority sentiment" (Rupnik 2007, p. 13). It is not that cultural conservatism and antielitism are not common political themes around the world, including in America. It is that modernizing authoritarian societies like those in Eastern Europe often have a significant portion of the electorate who are impatient with the procedural rules which allow for democracy to proceed. As Rupnik puts it: "The common pattern here is one of acute polarization: Eastern Europe's populists do not act as if they face a political opponent (or ethnic, religious, or sexual minority) with whom they can negotiate but rather an enemy whom they must destroy" (Rupnik 2007, p. 13).

In general, the extreme version of the "authoritarian personality" is one that combines submissiveness, obvious problems of self-esteem that are probably a direct result of this submissiveness and not just mere coincidence, certain obvious tendencies toward cognitive mistakes that can be described as stereotyping certain classes of socially disfavored people, and two other factors both of which contain attitudinal and motivational elements (that is to say morbid and prurient interests), paranoid judgments of those they consider political and cultural rivals, and absorption in sexual fantasies, often tied into stereotyping of others, of a definite sado-masochistic sort. See *Dynamics of Character: Self-Regulation in Psychopathology* (Shapiro 2000).

Regarding narcissism, most societies of any bureaucratic complexity produce leaders who are relatively narcissistic (unlike tribal democracies where most everyone are equal in status in the sense of sharing their poverty) and followers who are relatively authoritarian. In America, this is also true but because of a favorable political and economic environment, the working class are still usually

more authoritarian than their leaders, but regarding most areas of life (not in all areas) are more narcissistic than the working class of most other societies.

Obviously, just as Americans are narcissistic about the typical goals they expect to achieve, other societies may have faith in the attainability of other goals and thus have a self-centered narcissistic expectation of perhaps achieving these other goals. Such other goals can conceivably be religious martyrdom, social closeness with neighbors, trust in an extended family, social and economic stability (though without prospects for a higher standard of living), etc. (Volkan 1988).

It is this relatively narcissistic culture which permeates all social classes in America, though the middle class are still relatively less narcissistic than the rich who so often feel they have almost nothing to lose, and the poor likewise but for an opposite reason, which distinguishes America from so many other societies, but also from the culture of its own more puritanical past. Again, the leaders are often more narcissistic, particularly in an arrogant kind of way, than much of the rest of society, though perhaps matched in the degree of narcissism by the very poor though not for the same goals, the very poor being often very bitterly escapist in their simple pleasures.

On average, however, this narcissistic tinge to American society, and in other similar societies such as increasingly the societies of Western Europe, to an important extent arises out of the narcissistic tinge to the culture of adolescents which nowadays they are typically very slow to outgrow. Of course, the lifestyles of adolescents, and less so their motivations for adhering to these lifestyles much of which comes from mere conformity and peer pressure, are to a large extent the products of "youth culture" (much of which of course is marketed to youth by adults). In many ways, nowadays youth cannot perceive of adult responsibilities and achievements except through the deforming lens of youth culture, partly because it seems preferable to the older versions of adult culture, which they are less and less taught nowadays or experience compared to the generations before the 1960s. Many of them live by adolescent attitudes far into adulthood which is one reason the natural narcissism which is to be expected in a rich country like America is biased by adolescent goals and adolescent interpretations (the cognitive side) and adolescent ways of feeling (the emotional side).

In relatively authoritarian societies, nevertheless the powerful are often more narcissistic and on more subjects than in general the elites in America, for even the powerful in America often find that career achievement and then consumption of commodities are the main ongoing sources of narcissistic satisfaction open to them. In some ways, this is democratic, because it means the opportunities to humiliate others personally are limited, the downside of more intimate societies, though it is true it often takes a while for American teenagers to learn the American value that everyone should have sufficient dignity, and therefore, no one should be humiliated to their face.

In those authoritarian societies which nevertheless value closeness between people, opportunities for such humiliations are more common. It is even possible to have the worst of all worlds, where a society that values social distance nevertheless offers elites the power to bridge that distance to humiliate those they

consider to be rivals or even social inferiors when it suits their own purposes, either strategically or because it makes them feel better. Nazis used to do such things, and neo-Nazis still do. Soccer hooligans are in some ways the modern version of this.

To conclude how social pathology reflects the nature of the society in which it occurs, that is to say the effects of social structures of power and influence and cultural understandings of values and goals, juvenile delinquency is a good indicator not only of how children act out their hatreds and their lack of solidarity with their environment resulting in a contrived social solidarity with fellow delinquents, but also show patterns also followed by adult criminals and also followed by practitioners of political corruption (Goodson 2003). Though America traditionally has higher crime rates than Europe, so that even the present lull in rising crime rates in America probably has much to do with the high proportion of the population that is incarcerated compared to Europe, crime is in many ways in America a matter of individual desire and opportunity and less so social conformity.

That is why though there is much juvenile crime and many youth gangs in America, and they are heavily concentrated among the poor and ethnic minorities that are both poor and somewhat alienated from the population at large; for the most part, there are not simple patterns of certain ethnic youth gangs always being loyal to other young gangs of the same ethnicity and rivals to youth gangs of other ethnicities. This does sometimes occur, but the patterns are not consistent throughout the nation, since there is no consistent national tradition of "nationalism" that makes all patterns of youth gang aggression consistent throughout America.

I would hypothesize things are different in Eastern Europe, so it would be interesting to discover whether there is variability in loyalties and antagonisms in various sections of Eastern European societies, or whether there is lack of variation, so that, for example, the level of antagonism toward Roma (Gypsies) is about the same throughout Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania, or whether it varies by region.

For that matter, because of the political system of multiple political parties throughout continental Europe, politicians tend to pay attention to their base and are sometimes tempted to make extremist statements because they have relatively weak interest in elements of the population outside their base. Political compromises tend to be done in the parliament as part of building political coalitions among parties there, while voters are expected to express their party loyalties (as an extension of their social loyalties) and not to have much of an opinion on the eventual compromises that arise in parliament. An even more dangerous phenomenon, more commonly practiced among more extremist parties, is when these parties believe getting a temporary electoral majority allows them to run roughshod over their political opponents, to in effect try to destroy them. Increasing political militancy in America and decreasing cooperation between the two major political parties (Democrats and Republicans), in fact, are evidence that American politics is becoming more like that of Europe, which probably reflects the redeveloping of an European-style class system here.

Thus, in a sense, extreme nationalism is like soccer hooliganism (Foer 2004). In Europe, there is a culture of extreme soccer partisans who go out of their way to beat up, in a sense go to war, against the fans of opposing teams. Since all teams are territorially based, these hatreds are much like the traditional rivalries and hatreds between nations. In America, there is sports-based violence between fans, but it is almost entirely on an ad hoc basis.

In general, America likes democracy so much that we do not want to stress it too much by expecting too much social orderliness created by the government. Instead, we rely on social order created by economic markets and by the actions of local communities. Americans are just used to less social order provided by the state and more freedom, that which they benefit from, like freedom from paying for a state-supported religion, and that which elites benefit from like the way many economic opportunities open up for their businesses as long as there is no attempt for the government to provide identical services more cheaply. In Europe, there is more of an obsession with the state producing social order, so that there is order which the mass of people want, like good mass transportation and cheap higher education, and order which mainly the elites want such as jobs for themselves.

It is also true that culturally America seems to be evolving out of its traditions of moralistic individualism toward a more narcissistic individualism, while Europe seems to be evolving out of its traditions of moralistic authoritarianism to a more narcissistic authoritarianism, that is to say one where loyalty to authority (a kind of weak-willed, cowardly narcissism) substitutes for trying to understand and act in the spirit of moralistic social rules, and meanwhile, authority gets to practice its narcissism with much more full force. One interesting book that reflects an early tradition of relating political psychology to issues of personality that still has relevance to all of this is *Revitalizing Political Psychology: The Legacy of Harold D. Lasswell* (Ascher and Hirschfelder-Ascher 2003).

Though moralistic individualism and moralistic authoritarianism start their analyses of social problems at different points, their conclusions on social responsibility of individuals often are very similar. However, extremes of narcissism and authoritarianism also often end up with similar results. Societies of excessive narcissism will often produce such cutthroat competition that the result will be winner-take-all economics and rule by elites. Societies of excessive authoritarianism often produce such extreme passivity regarding their elites that the elites, and soccer hooligans if they could, will end up ruling society for their own benefit. In other words, collectivistic and individualistic societies can start at different points but can evolve to become more alike, in either a good or bad way, depending on whether there are checks and balances in the society, and in the individual personality, or not. Without adequate checks and balances in society, the result is often tyranny.

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Part II
Pragmatism and Character

Chapter 6
Pragmatism as the Basis of American Culture in an Individualistic Society

Pragmatism as a philosophy of life in some ways is an accomplishment of cultural evolution, though the earliest societies could survive well their lack of scientific understanding, since even though they lacked the methods of continuous improvement that comes from application of the scientific method, in an informal sense, they were usually well-adapted to their physical environments. Nevertheless, their understandings often took on a mythological form that comforted them perhaps, though in other cases it just increased their anxiety, but at least the anxiety had an object, unrealistic though it may have been. Thus, in a sense, but not what we would consider a sophisticated sense, they were pragmatic.

They usually did not usually have a profound understanding of nature, the kind that comes from the scientific method. Also, their dependence on mythological stories often weakened their moral sense, as superstition was encouraged, and this often involved placating mythological beings, whose stories, most of us in the modern world now consider to be fictional. As to where these stories came from, that is much like asking why are there so many stories floating around in modern culture and in the minds of present-day people? We are just storytelling creatures; it comforts us.

But to a certain extent, and certainly not totally, we are increasingly concerned because of cultural evolution to at least attempt to distinguish between what we know to be real and what we know to be false, and we have developed technical abilities to aid us in this quest. Thus, we have improved in some ways in our pragmatism over time (at least specialized fields of scholarship have done so in their areas of expertise) which is not to deny in some ways the very technicality of our modern civilization, and the extreme emphasis on specialization of knowledge and on bureaucratic division of labor may have diminished our pragmatism in other ways, particularly in the informal ways in which we lead our lives. That is why people in other cultures sometimes criticize American culture, even our fabled pragmatism, as if our pragmatism serves only economic and not communal (including moralistic) purposes. We like to think that our moral sense has improved because of cultural evolution at least partly because our understanding of the world is less impeded by mythological stories that explain the nature of the

world inadequately. However, admittedly in other ways, the very impersonality and bureaucratization of our everyday lives put new pressures on our moral sense, particularly by fostering a sense of unconcern for a social world which we increasingly perceive to be filled with strangers.

Nevertheless, as the fruit of one path of cultural evolution, the national philosophy of America, to the extent in such an antitheoretical nation as America we can be said to have one, is pragmatism. What this means is that Americans are not particularly authoritarian, they do not take orders simply to fit in, which means when they do so and are reminded of this they tend to become ashamed, which does not prevent them from continuing to do so, but it causes them to stop and think for a moment. This itself is a great accomplishment for ordinarily we are, like so many people around the world, in a headlong rush to get where we are going, but are usually unaware of what we will find when we get there.

Instead, we are interested in real accomplishment and real happiness for that matter, not doing one's duty. Yet having a society where people feel a sense of responsibility is necessary for achieving the common good, because pragmatism can easily degenerate into mere hedonism, or when people are in a funky mood, nihilism and despair from not attaining any kind of goal other than a simple and obvious one. It is no surprise that the very poor so often define happiness as being merely more of what they have now. For example, the boredom of pornography, and of drunkenness, alternates then with the compulsions of people who need these things for the reason that they are trying to escape from something even more devastating, despair. While very poor people are often socially isolated, living in communities filled with loveless people looking for attention, the very rich often tend to act as if they have nothing to lose, not because they have nothing, but because so many feel they cannot lose.

Here are two groups filled with people who feel they have nothing to lose but for opposite reasons, and even if some of them avoid such extremes, and this is even more true of the middle class, the alternative to hedonism is increasingly not the middle, but just the opposite extreme. Increasingly in America, and also in some other societies, the cultural tradition of the golden mean is weakening because the social reality on which to base this golden mean is becoming more unreal to individuals for whom their social duty is limited to what their bureaucratic position in the society expects of them. Thus, the population becomes divided into workaholics and hedonists just because many people do not know how to combine the two anymore in harmony.

It is this lack of worthwhile goals, this tendency toward ideological extremes, sometimes partaking of hedonism and sometimes of asceticism but less often in between, which parallels the declining influence of middle-class values on American life and which is reflected in the weakening of pragmatism as the public philosophy of life in America. In fact, philosophies of life based on either hedonism or asceticism, but not a combination of the two, flow from the increasing tendency of people to feel they must essentially "go it alone" just because there are few people on which they feel they can rely. Narcissism and anonymity seem to go hand in hand in modern America and in other similar "postmodern" societies.

Even our fabled tolerance often takes the form of double standards, merely excusing behavior we can do nothing about. The end result of the increasing bureaucratization and yet anonymity of society are that pragmatism is less and less tied to social values, and increasingly tied to minding one's own business, and not making waves. As to whether the rich and powerful are pragmatic, they get credit for being rich and powerful and so are forgiven their faults which are no longer considered faults in many cases, while the poor are also forgiven their faults. They are not helped out of poverty to any great extent, they are just forgiven their faults. While tolerance as a virtue skyrockets in prominence, most of the others disappear in importance from our lives.

In fact, democracy in a nation such as America is even more important than in nations which have a tradition of an honor-bound elite. This is just because our elite, like the rest of us or at least many of us at least some of the time, is materialistic, ambitious, often narcissistic, and not particularly concerned with public honor and what that honor should serve, the public good (the *res publica* from which the word republic derives).

The loss of a pragmatic sense of values, values that both stand for something and actually do work, is dangerous enough for the mass of people, but is especially dangerous when it determines the ruling philosophies of the leadership classes. A nation ruled by an elite governed by their own self-interest should not be surprised when they serve their own interests first and not of the people that elected them. True, traditional societies often have elites whose sense of honor is expressed more in rhetoric than in practice. We in America avoid such hypocrisy by often expecting little from our leaders. Thus, a common American defense in the nineteenth century of machine politics when told to European visitors was that we would rather have civil servants that we despised than have civil servants that despised us and thus our low expectations and one reason for our emphasis on limited government.

That was why eighteenth century political discussions, the kinds that occurred both in Europe and in America around the time of the American Revolution, were very political and not particularly philosophical. They were about how to control leaders who might grow tyrannical, how to control the mob who might soak the rich, and how to control the rich who might soak the poor, and leaders of both groups who might go into government to soak the rest of us. This emphasis on concrete goals and on concrete obstacles to these goals, obstacles that often were interpreted as obstacles to the fulfillment of our own better natures, which was just another way of referring to the ancient notion of sin, was what they worried about most of all, and the pragmatic solution they sought to control such dangers in public life involved how to recognize and how to resist tyranny.

In this same tradition, I habitually tell professors that what is important is not to analyze theories of pragmatism, but to be pragmatic. Nevertheless, the habit is hard to break. Let us start with a book by an important professor providing an analysis of what it means to be pragmatic, which is no guarantee of the work being itself useful, that is to say pragmatic. The book is the late Richard Rorty's *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America* (Rorty 1998). This book,

a kind of "practical" application of his earlier writings, in effect develops a theory of pragmatism, of supporting problem-solving as a goal, yet practices the same old philosophizing. My critique of his work can also serve as a critique of much similar abstract European-style philosophizing.

Much of nineteenth century European philosophy was answering religious questions through philosophical means. While previous generations usually had a few leaps of faith followed by many empirical understandings of how to achieve means for these given ends, the growth of anonymity and sheer intellectual exhaustion produced a solution to identity crises by using many, many leaps of faith.

It is a critique of this tradition which Rorty seems to follow while calling it pragmatism. He wants to be pragmatic not about the means of life, but about the ends. True, he is even-handed about discussing the alternative point of view that, endless experimentation with lifestyles may be just that, endless experimentation. Yet good professor that he is, he acknowledges the alternative point of view, but then ignores it and goes blithely down the path of self-exploration, using Walt Whitman and John Dewey as his models. He is opposed to all those authoritarians who claim to tell us what God wants us to do. Yet even worshippers of nature as opposed to a God behind nature, still do not think anything goes. Rorty just ignores any discussion of what in the eighteenth century could be called the nature of human nature and goes immediately to leftist politics. Otherwise, he has little use for a sense of sin, and he admits it.

Richard Rorty's book in some ways reminds me of a legal brief because he is engaging in debate with his rivals, but he is not dealing to any great extent with issues of concern not to fellow academics, but to those the academics claim to speak for, the population at large. Like most such works of advocacy, he is specific and clear when he wants to be, and vague and ambiguous when there seems to be no benefit in debating directly those he considers to be his intellectual opponents. Thus, he totally ignores what I consider to be the eighteenth century foundations of American political culture, with its fear of human weakness, and its distrust of all classes of society for that very reason.

The opponents he picks are both the extreme 1960s radicals, now being replaced by who knows what, who even when ensconced in academia are interested in overturning the System except for those very parts which they themselves control and for whom "conservative" is too mild an adjective to describe the way they seek to hold on to power, and the extreme technocrats and professional philistines who are represented in his last essay in a diatribe against analytic philosophy and postmodern excesses in English departments, though he also throws in a criticism of sociology for good measure. For him, sociology started out in tandem with movements for social reform but ended up with careerists training students to clothe statistics in jargon, and the same will probably happen if English departments turn into departments of cultural studies that train their students to clothe their resentments in proper jargon, but not much else.

He is opposed to extreme radicals and extreme technocrats, and combinations of the two in the purveyors of Theory on campus who often provide very simple

insights in very complicated jargon-filled form. Instead, he suggests an alliance between academics and government and unions of the sort that existed prior to the 1960s, in particular during the Progressive Era at the beginning of the twentieth century in America and then later during the 1930s. I would not say it would not benefit society, it might or might not, depending on how it is done.

In fact, in order to show the usefulness of this kind of alliance, he ends up attacking positions much more radical than his own, particularly the thesis that that any alliance with the powers in society is inevitably corrupting because it is an alliance with elites. He takes great pains to make the argument that the movers and shakers he applauds, the leftist intellectuals and their government and private sector patrons, are often less corrupt than the masses they represent.

That may well be true in many cases, but he does not illustrate these cases, or give many examples of any sort to back up his claims. His argument is at the level of values and identity crises, which forming the kinds of alliances he suggests will allow leftist intellectuals to influence policy in a way mere resentment and long-ings for utopia from the safety of university campuses will not. That for him is the essence of pragmatism, to influence society, hopefully through politics. He does not go into any detail about what policies, what programs, and what issues these would be saviors of society should espouse.

Legal briefs often have a studied ambiguity about them, giving facts that have an innate relation to other facts, but this relation is ignored, because the advocates and often the court do not want to go there. They try to solve a problem, not to solve all problems. The two problems Richard Rorty seems to want to solve are the removal of intellectuals from the sources of social power, and the problem this causes, the exacerbating of their identity crises as they feel compelled to drone on about their search for utopias or their need to find solutions to their personal angst instead of doing something practical about changing society.

This is all true and pragmatically useful as far as he goes. I give him that. But he leaves out the kinds of issues that Christopher Lasch so often raised in his writings (see Lasch 1991; Lasch 1995), so at best the two of them do not so much contradict each other as complement each other that the working class do not merely exist as the elites seek to define them, and they are certainly not on the road to gaining power simply because their representatives have finally decided to gain power for themselves. Whatever issues women now face with the help of leftist academic movements, they tend not to involve Yuppie (young, urban professional) obses-sions with careers since most women, like most men, are not professionals and do not have careers. Whatever problems faced by people languishing in America's slums, they are problems that must be resolved there if they are to be resolved at all. The social mobility of a number of them into the professional classes will not be enough to help the vast majority of them.

As a matter of fact, Rorty deals little if at all with the reasons for both the arrogance and the failures of Marxist movements for social renewal in the last 100 years. In particular, they suffered from a split between social and personal morality, so that they were quick to develop schemes for social engineering, so that everyone they thought would become rich and would have no need to sin in

the future, but gave remarkably little incentive to practice even basic personal morality in the present: certainly at the level of those leaders who achieved control over whole countries.

Richard Rorty concentrates all his fire on the angst-ridden university classes and no doubt saves them from both suicide and revolutionary euphoria. But while consoling the feelings of those who would wish to rule us, he does not spend hardly any time to tell us what specifically they would do to justify their rule.

He obviously still wants to be pragmatic, however, and he has an opportunity to do so in *Philosophy and Social Hope* (Rorty 1999), a collection of his writings. What is most noticeable about this book is that he is still being philosophical and that is not very useful for being pragmatic which tends to require knowledge about many particular things within very particular contexts, not a few general propositions. That is also why logic is good for formalizing theories to get rid of inconsistencies and to help to devise definitive experiments to test theories, but not to get the facts from which theories can be developed in the first place.

Richard Rorty discusses the insidiousness of special pleading among both the academic left and the academic right in both above-mentioned books by him, but in general, not much in particular. In fact, he describes a pragmatism that is more like existentialism than like what most people refer to as pragmatism which has little to do with the ultimate ends of life. Like Jean-Paul Sartre, he believes people make their own ends, so he refuses to see if there is a source of ends in nature or in a God behind nature. This belief for him, like for Sartre, is less a contingent belief than a full-blown ideology that refuses to consider questions of human nature. Thus, he refuses to ask the questions "Are certain beliefs true?" but only "Are certain beliefs useful?" He even says that the truthfulness of whether the sun revolves around the earth or the earth revolves around the sun is irrelevant, only useful for certain consequences such as improving the basis for space flight.

That "knowing the truth" appeals to our vanity about ourselves, our very goals for living, seems to be pretty irrelevant to him, for whatever goals he postulates as composing the good life, "knowing the truth" seems to be way down on his list. Implicitly, he is denying there is a human nature, so that there is anything to know the truth about, and ultimately, there seems to be a radical atheism at work, similar to what was found in Jean-Paul Sartre's work, to justify this belief in the radical contingency of human nature.

Just as we do not remember the Soviet Union as a source of practical advice on labor–management relations, but as a government that had busybody attitudes toward telling people about whether God exists or not (their answer was no), Prof. Rorty ultimately wants to tell us that pretty much anything is possible in human nature since there is no ultimate source of this human nature outside of whatever we want it to be. This is as much an act of faith as the belief in whether God exists or not and is ultimately unprovable. Of course for him, pragmatism is not proving this belief, but acting as if it is true. What he seems to be doing is repeating in his epistemology the results of the culture wars on campus. On campus not only is "God wills it" not an argument, but when people talk about the orderliness of

human nature, many of their opponents walk away, since the only order they recognize is the order imposed by society.

At his best, Rorty's moral argument boils down to an argument for casuistry, for judging moral issues on a case-by-case basis, and not worrying about justifying each decision by reference to universalistic principles which are often not appropriate because the complexity of the case involves conflicts among a number of principles, a kind of utilitarian calculus as it were, resulting in a maximization of utility. If you are interested in this issue, the most well-known modern introduction to casuistry is Albert R. Jonsen and Stephen Toulmin, *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning* (Jonsen and Toulmin 1990).

There is nothing profound in his discovery about moral complexity, and while he is attacking ideologists he does not like, he ignores the existence of rationalization and hypocrisy which has always been the bane of casuistry in the first place. This is one reason universalistic principles are used to test for hypocrisy, not to deny the complexity of moral decisions. Thus ultimately, Richard Rorty is convincing on what most of us know already, the existence of hard problems and moral complexity, and is much less useful in providing pragmatic detail for solving such problems.

In this, his path is very similar to that followed by John-Paul Sartre in the 1950s, who told us we were free to make moral choices, and was not a real big help after that. Both thought it was quite impressive to discover that people do not have an outlet for Godlike omniscience, but were less impressive when it came to fine-grained analyses such as regarding whether there is nevertheless a human nature as well as laws of nature, and for taking science seriously. By Rorty insisting that reason is more like promulgating religious dogma than like the process of scientific analysis, he may not be openly advocating irrationalism (if you feel good, do it), but he does not produce many arguments against it.

Like Marxists, for whom social evolution became an atheistic version of divine will, Rorty seems to have taken from John Dewey a similar respect for social evolution, though he does not claim to forecast the end result. However, also like among many Marxists, by discounting the methods for moral analysis found among his adversaries, he weakens the kind of intellectual dialogue found among people who argue over means for common ends. His goals tend to be treated as ends that reflect that "one is the kind of person one is" rather than means–ends chains of analysis. People like him who espouse values for reasons of personal interests, quirks, resolving identity crises, and ambition are less likely to be interested in winning over opponents through pragmatic analyses of means, are more likely to pack institutions with political allies, to engage in political horse-trading, to aim for power, to do all that the Marxists and others of similar ilk in the past felt represented *realpolitik*, as opposed to the cooperativeness and collegiality that was once found in certain societies and on certain college campuses, and still can be.

Richard Rorty's pragmatism of ends thus has been criticized as being nihilistic, and for good reason, for among its practitioners, it often results more in political campaigns than it does in means–ends analyses. It is not a big surprise that Richard Rorty's approach to legal pragmatism here seems to be based on undercutting the

bases for moral analysis among his intellectual opponents and then does not proceed to analyze his own moral stands because each of his moral stances is treated as an end, not a means, and does not have to be broken down any further.

Unlike the ordinary pragmatism of means, his pragmatism of ends tends to prevent discussion since all his ends are treated as being of primary worth. As to his love for democratic politics, here is an example of his elitist side, taken from "Pragmatism and Law: A Response to David Luban": "As our presidents, political parties and legislators become ever more corrupt and frivolous, we turn to the judiciary as the only political institution for which we can still feel something like awe" (Rorty 1999, p. 112).

His problem is that while he criticizes the lack of pragmatism of others, often rightly so, he is himself not all that pragmatic. But he is in good company. After all, the politics of the twentieth century had been filled with ideologues who claimed Christianity, Buddhism, *fill in the blank* is false, impractical, immoral, ergo their own philosophical system is correct. That is not an exercise in logic.

Even claiming history will prove one right is not an analysis, it is putting off an analysis, and for Rorty, pragmatism is nothing more than claiming history will prove him right. Pragmatism usually has connotations of being reasonable, cooperative, and rational as when people debate different means for common ends. Rorty's use of pragmatism as a way to avoid criticism for the ends he happens to espouse, and to justify political activism as being the primary method for coordinating disparate ends, is likewise a peculiar use of the word pragmatism.

Let us look at the philosophy of pragmatism in more detail. But first let me make an aside by comparing the value of philosophy as opposed to the value of sociology as a basis for understanding how culture functions to create values. Stephen Mennell in his book *Norbert Elias: An Introduction* (Mennell 1992) in his chapter on "Development of the Social Sciences" describes the commitment by Elias to the study of social process that combines but is also opposed to one-sided sociological theories of knowledge that emphasize individual decision-making that is only based on self-interest (so that a philosophy of extreme moral relativism, morality being only the result of contests for individual advantage, is the natural outcome) and philosophical theories of morality based on theories of knowledge (epistemology), so that concern for knowledge that is true or false irrespective of individual interests leads to mistaking epistemology for social process. The end result is a theory of knowledge much in the tradition of people like Plato, in their belief that knowledge (especially the kinds of knowledge imposed as cultural values) must in the nature of things mold individual interests and not the other way around.

Norbert Elias instead emphasizes the complex reality of individual in society which combines sociological and philosophical understandings of social process in what he hopes is their realistic (thus their pragmatic) and proper proportion. Let me build on his perspective. Individuals can have goals of a purely instrumental sort, like making money, but they also have social identifications of various purposes and intensity, such as family, friends, and community, and also purposes that can be described as "meaningful" in a philosophical (and also moral) sense,

in a way working for monetary compensation rarely is. In addition, societies and their cultures change their interpretations of reality, as "definitions of the situation" held by individuals alone and in unison in a group change.

I consider Norbert Elias's analysis of the pragmatic underpinnings of morality to be on point. Yet pragmatism as a field of scholarship tends to be stuck under the rubric of philosophy, and like most philosophy, it is better at issues of epistemology and logic, all based on unexamined premises, than on the psychology and sociology of personal relationships. There is a recent book that tries to determine what value for pragmatic decision-making can be provided by philosophies of pragmatism. It is Richard J. Bernstein, *The Pragmatic Turn* (Bernstein 2010). A more historically oriented account on some of the same themes but with less analytical depth can be found in John Patrick Diggins, *The Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority* (Diggins 1995).

Prof. Bernstein starts off in his prologue by repeating the distinction made by Charles J. Pierce, the actual initiator in America of pragmatism as a philosophy of knowledge with strong connections to the scientific method, that pragmatism is an alternative to Cartesianism which in its own day in the seventieth century was an alternative to medieval scholasticism. Pierce emphasized that Cartesianism unlike medieval scholasticism started with universal doubt, unlike scholasticism that did not question fundamentals, and Cartesianism proceeded to base epistemology on individual consciousness, not on the testimony of sages. Pierce's critique of Cartesianism resulted in his claim that (1) we have no power of introspection, but only of reasoning from external facts; (2) we have no intuition; (3) we cannot think without signs; and (4) we have no knowledge that cannot take the form of ideas. Prof. Bernstein emphasizes that such modern thinkers as Heidegger with his emphasis on ideas embodied in actions, and Wittgenstein with his emphasis on actions embodied in ways of life, are in their own way pragmatic, or at least sought to be. He mentions that even Jürgen Habermas reflects this pragmatic trend with his "…shift from a philosophy of consciousness or subjectivity to a communicative model of actions and reason" (Bernstein 2010, p. 24).

To summarize much of what he recounts in the rest of his book, in his essay "The Consequences of William James's Pragmatic Pluralism," Prof. Bernstein emphasizes James's influence on tolerance and experimentation in social affairs and the beginnings of multiculturalism as expressed by such intellectual disciples as Horace Kallen and W.E.B. Du Bois. His next essay on "John Dewey's Vision of Radical Democracy" is especially important for emphasizing Dewey's own emphasis on political democracy that reinvigorates the culture it derives from by in effect combining communitarianism and individualism as political goals. Dewey took an evolutionary perspective to describe the evolution of political (and ethical) values, of how at least in America individual liberty was coordinated with religious confessional freedom as the means for reinvigorating society, and by the nineteenth century economic freedom opened pathways for individual initiative so that freedom of thought and expression provided a path for cultural efflorescence (which I should add led eventually to our media-saturated civilization of today).

But Dewey always emphasized ethical critique and through it advancement in democratic communities as the means to prevent cultural stagnation.

"The democratic communities that Dewey envisioned encourage individual initiative, personal responsibilities, protection of rights, and active citizen participation" (Bernstein 2010, p. 83). He also had a psychologically rich conception of the place of intelligence in human affairs. "Intelligence is not the name of a special faculty. Rather, it designates a cluster of habits and dispositions that includes attentiveness to details, imagination, and passionate commitment. What is most essential for Dewey is the *embodiment* of intelligence in everyday practices" (Bernstein 2010, p. 85). Thus, Dewey provides an alternative in democratic theory to overethicized republicanism and empty proceduralism in his model of social cooperation.

Much of the rest of the book pontificates on the problems of modern societies regarding language and perhaps excessive self-consciousness because people to a large extent nowadays do not engage in the "naïve realism" of the ancients. They, or at least members of philosophy departments, unlike St. Augustine rarely infer that their intuitions resulting from their states of mind are based on divine inspiration, and in many ways, I believe this is for the best. Nevertheless, much of what modern philosophers write about are the vicissitudes of modern consciousness that can postulate the usefulness of standards of objective truthfulness but can find no means of evaluating the contents of self-consciousness. Thus, they are poor psychologists. Though such philosophers come up with partial and tentative explanations of what St. Augustine would have explained in more detail through "leaps of faith," ultimately these modern philosophers are merely quibbling over esoteric qualities of the "are you sure you exist?" sort. You cannot be sure, but that does not stop anyone from going on with everyday life. Yet regarding the lives of relatively non-self-conscious people who are not especially truth-seeking, who compartmentalize their prejudices and their evaluative faculties (which may give them a sense of personal identity), or like politicians through the ages who enforced religious loyalties mostly to the extent that it produced social loyalties *useful to them*, that is regarding most people who are not especially philosophical, the concerns with language and epistemology by philosophers are not all that useful pragmatically. All the distinctions about our inability to gain perfect proofs of the truth of our ideas have never been a drawback for any human endeavor from starting out. True, a good deal more self-consciousness might have been useful given all the mistakes that have been made in human history, but not the extreme emphasis on questions that without divine-like omniscience have no answers.

Ultimately, this is what the philosophers of pragmatism conclude, that the scientific method is a good model for truth-seeking, but we can never know absolute truth, and we should be satisfied with truths that we can know, including moral truths that are true not in the sense that they exist as facts in nature, they do not though for effectiveness they depend on the existence of such facts, but because knowing truths do us some good. I agree a simplistic utilitarianism can be the ultimate result of a belief in the value of pragmatism, but it does not have to be, goals can be more sophisticated, and morally valuable, than that. Such distinctions

as Bertrand Russell's between "knowledge by acquaintance" (perceived through the senses) and "knowledge by description" (using ideas logically), or Jürgen Habermas's distinction regarding the use of language for representation and for communication, are useful for complex studies of epistemology, but not for the ultimate pragmatisms of real-life decisions, and that seems to be the ultimate conclusion of philosophers of pragmatism. And for that, the average person will agree, if they can come to understand the questions these philosophers are asking and answering.

This book culminates in the last two essays on "Jürgen Habermas's Kantian Pragmatism" and "Richard Rorty's Deep Humanism." This last essay is essentially praise for the work of Prof. Bernstein's late friend for his humanitarianism which Rorty ultimately felt was worth more than endless justifications for ethics through concerns for epistemological truths based either on the nature of consciousness (not infallible) or on the nature of language (not infallible either).

In the next-to-last essay, however, Prof. Bernstein implicitly discusses the somewhat authoritarian and Kantian tradition which Prof. Habermas is part of that distinguishes between moral schemas worked out to a degree of extreme complexity, and then, I would say usually are either admired just as an intellectual construction or otherwise ignored as the real world is dealt with by *realpolitik*, or are actually put into action but by subordination of society to the ideals of certain elites. The alternative to that is the American (and also British) tradition of muddling through by experimentation that may or may not lead to building a cohesive and moral society, to the extent that political and economic markets are suitable for this. Richard Rorty advocated this, though not through the full panoply of economic and political liberalism, but selectively through advocacy for activist politics.

6.1 Some American and European Versions of Pragmatism

Prof. Bernstein illustrates this distinction, between what I would call European and American versions of pragmatism, by comparing the ideas of Prof. Habermas with the ideas of John Dewey (who was a big influence on Richard Rorty): "This is why I find Dewey's description of the pattern of inquiry—where one begins with a felt difficulty, moves to specification of a problem, advances hypotheses, then tests these hypotheses in order to resolve an indeterminate 'situation'—more illuminating than Habermas's analysis of the move from action to discourse and back to action" (Bernstein 2010, pp. 187–188). *In other words moral language, as a way to conceptualize virtue, and moral action, as a way to act in a virtuous manner, do not automatically get to learn from each other unless that itself is part of the culture.*

To reemphasize the issue of pragmatism as practiced in society, what we now consider within the realm of political possibility, and what is not possible, is quite different from the political positions of, say, the nascent American republic at the

end of the eighteenth century. Our leaders then considered themselves the true British gentlemen, as opposed to their recent colonial masters who were considered to be hypocrites. They believed in an orderly society, even a stratified one, where the elites were supposed to be protective of their honor in order to remain worthy to rule. The mass of people believed in limited government because they had already inculcated puritanical virtues and did not need government breathing down their necks, since it could not do much for them anyway. The rich were somewhat more optimistic about government regulating the poor, while the poor were more optimistic about government regulating the rich; however, both agreed that the rich were deserving of losing more when they engaged in dishonorable behavior.

Now, however, the richer classes, who may not necessarily be the honorable classes, increasingly believe in limited government, so they can enjoy their wealth in peace, while the mass of people still tend to believe in more activist government as if it is the job of government to maintain them in the style of life to which they have grown accustomed, for many of them a rather hedonistic one. The rulers are nowadays less honor-conscious, and the ruled are less proud of their independence, maintained by a sense of decorum and self-control. They are both pragmatic about their search for a materialistic nirvana and expect empathy and rationality, as opposed to narcissism, to be often hard to find.

It would seem that pragmatism as a political philosophy in America means that Americans want to be pragmatic, not that they are. America is not pragmatic because the word is bandied about, no more than the Roman Empire was virtuous just because an emperor used the word in a speech. We use the word "pragmatism" to pat ourselves on the back and to show we believe in incremental change, personal freedom, and materialism as a way of life (this also encourages narcissism as a way of life), in contrast to those in other societies who support theocracy even if it is just a secular religion, social engineering from the top down, and social control often resulting in an ascetic lifestyle though not by choice for the non-favored classes (which encourages authoritarianism for these same non-favored classes).

The medieval European kingdoms were in a sense theocracies where the king was also father of the nation, and like in a family, there were no political parties, but rule was by consensus. Yet even those kings never pushed their rule as far as the authoritarian states of the twentieth century did in their desire to try to make the state into one, big, happy family, or so they claimed.

America ever since the eighteenth century has accepted the impossibility of this, and our pragmatic compromise is to have a bureaucratic, rigid central government, and local governments that were more communal, more flexible, and more closer to the people, except that increasingly local governments are also becoming rigid and bureaucratic. They have become, as population increases and so does anonymity and bureaucracy, much like smaller versions of the federal government. As to what will bring happiness to people, in a nation where it is thought that the state cannot make people happy, only rich, that is a pragmatic question that is rarely asked. If anything, as anonymity and bureaucratization

increase, it is a question that cannot be asked, because there is no one to answer it, no one, like members of a family, who are that concerned with each other's happiness, and can communicate in depth with each other about it. That is something that is lost in America by the weakening of convivial communities (*gemeinschaft*).

And the philosophers of pragmatism with their concern for models of epistemology to ascertain the truth of ideas, or of the adequacy of language for communicating truth through language, and the revolt against this ethical, and often legal, formalism by other philosophers who call themselves pragmatists who emphasize substantive virtues, and the laws that inculcate them, all this ends up reproducing the place of ethical philosophy in human affairs pretty much where Plato and Aristotle left it: ideas that serve more like a mirror for society than a lever for changing it. Perhaps, that is why we worry about being pragmatic. We fear, as individualists, that we cannot rely on government, we cannot rely on each other, and yet we fear we cannot rely on ourselves either. What we can rely on, what kind of community can serve as the arena for the human experience in an existential sense, becomes the greatest pragmatic question of all.

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Chapter 7
Formal and Informal Uses of Law for Ensuring Political Freedom: A Short Cross-Cultural Comparison

Now is a good time to discuss law from a pragmatic perspective. Americans hope that the American legal system is a model for the rest of the world (because we pioneered in "rights talk"), also because America is a post-feudal society for which the formalities of the legal system are used to preserve the liberties of the people because we feel the informal customary controls of more traditional societies are no longer up to that task. Thus, the overall conclusion I derive from Max Weber's writings on social development, and particularly from his Sociology of Law (see Weber 1954) is his emphasis on bureaucratization and the development of formal institutions of law as the defining characteristics of modern, as opposed to traditional, societies. This is not surprising since the West, originally Western Europe, now all those societies that take their cultures and/or social institutions from Western Europe, always had a level of bureaucratization derived from the Roman Empire that surpassed those of other cultural areas. With the ending of the Roman Empire in Western Europe, the remnants of the Roman cultural tradition in bureaucracy and in law survived to eventually influence sectors of society, particularly the extended family, local communities, and eventually religious and business organizations to a degree that far surpassed the bureaucratic tendencies of all other traditional societies.

These other traditional societies essentially either survived as tribal societies, patrimonial societies based on extended families, or as feudal societies where the chief landlord, once perhaps the descendant of a tribal chieftain, now the local aristocrat, maintained power because supported by the central government as well as because of the acquiescence of the local community. Of course, the ratio of power between the central government and the local community depended on the particular local situation.

Patrimonial societies did have a tendency to develop either very localized governments, often tribal societies or city-states, or large empires, but little in-between. To the extent that these governments had bureaucratic efficiencies, it was at the level of the central government, typically based on monarchy, and even so such government tended to be to a large extent patrimonial and based on personal relationships. Local communities were ruled even more informally, and what was

missing was a middle position that introduced effective middle-level sectors of authority that could produce checks and balances comparable to those of modern American government with its division of labor between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, and between the central government and state governments.

All these tendencies were magnified in feudal societies where population densities and resulting anonymity and complexity of society was such that the ruler was no longer descended from a common ancestor, and communities themselves could rarely trace themselves as having a common family heritage, but the ruler still ruled because of personal loyalties, often justified by religion as reflecting "the will of God." In any case, their sense of hierarchy had much in common with the hierarchy and loyalties common to extended families, though the hierarchies of incipient bureaucratization were also often present and tended to increase over time.

In all these, what we would call traditional societies the middle-level rungs on the ladder of hierarchy between local community and central government existed in a state of flux. Communications between local communities and the emperor, for instance, might be socially bound up by rules of etiquette and ritual, but in contrast to Max Weber's ideal of "rationalizing" bureaucratic procedures, were handled rather informally otherwise, especially without the record-keeping and the procedural rules characteristic of modern bureaucracies.

Nevertheless, the potentials for increasing bureaucratization were present in Western Europe even during the feudal era because of Roman precedents that only increased over time as knowledge of Roman civilization, and the meanings of these precedents, were elaborated on and increased, as learning about Roman culture became an increasing part of the educational system of Western Europe.

Eventually, the precedents of Roman law, when learned, were used to buttress the legitimacy of the monarchies of Western Europe, but also to undergird a tradition of legal rights to the extent that they did not conflict with the rights of the sovereign. Eventually, these understandings of the rule of law combined with the values of Christianity, with its emphasis on encouraging moral intent, and on the values of communally-based political loyalty as a personal obligation even apart from it being a legal obligation. This latter obligation derived to a large extent from the tribal loyalties that eventually evolved into the loyalties to the kingdoms that replaced the Roman Empire upon its defeat and fall to Germanic invaders. The result of all these influences on law was the tradition of rule of law that undergirds the modern state as it has evolved in Western Europe even to this day (see Guizot 1997).

In summary, the benefit of the original, traditional, rather unbureaucratic, system of law, was that the solidarities of extended families, and communities based on a collection of such families, remained strong and vibrant. The cost was that there were few methods other than informal social pressure to make an impact on the will of the ruler, so that informal rather than formal methods of social influence were the primary means of ruling kingdoms and empires.

The ideal was either for the central government and local communities to maintain their spheres of influence, and rarely impinge on each other, or to hope that the kingdom or empire, as was usually the case, often through the enforcement mechanism of religious piety, would eventually think of itself as one big family with loyalties and responsibilities appropriate to this state of affairs.

Whether this is ever a realistic possibility is something that modern societies and traditional societies argue over, for modern societies are run solely on a bureaucratic, formal basis, based on procedures that are sometimes rational-instrumental, sometimes are value-laden and moralistic, and sometimes are formal merely as a way to push though decisions in order to simply get things done (this result of bureaucratic hierarchy which in turn can be based on communal custom or on the drive for domination by the leader can be effective or can be very ritualistic in the sense of "going through the motions"). Private life in contrast has become increasingly informal and even disorderly.

Traditional societies, however, tend to maintain their formality and order in private life and have little comprehension of a formal, bureaucratized public sphere, mostly tied to the institutions that produce economic growth and the governmental institutions that support this, with the possible exception of religion. Even for religion many traditional societies are composed of many ethnic groups with many local religions, this is certainly true of polytheistic societies, and even kingdoms and empires characterized by monotheism to the extent they are multi-ethnic tend to start off being relatively tolerant, though intolerance might increase over time in order to produce social coherence. This is usually the result of intolerance from the top down, though sometimes it is a solution to the problems of ethnic, and religious, rivalries.

An example of increasing religious intolerance coexisting with increasing bureaucratic efficiency was the way during the Middle Ages the Catholic Church preserved a tradition of intellectual expertise that served its own purposes, but also set a standard that would be useful as a model for secular bureaucracies that would develop in later generations. A rather abstract attitude toward moral analysis also remained central to this intellectual tradition, often emphasizing ritual for its own sake, and the development of theology that served as a focus for adoration and meditation more than as tool of instrumental analysis, but instrumental analysis did increasingly develop over time. All these sources of intellectual development, including positing loyalty to values based on faith, would serve as a source of critique of the moral underpinnings of secular government in later generations. For that matter, secular governments would later on turn the institutions of moral critique (derived from Christianity) and intellectual analysis in general, to a large extent preserved in the bureaucratic and legal traditions of Roman law and culture that were preserved by the Catholic Church then disseminated to the broader community, eventually against the Catholic Church. This was especially so at the time of the Protestant Reformation.

There were reasons for dissatisfaction with traditional customs and morals at that time as well as with contemporary intellectual fads that were considered justifications for amorality, that produced a call for a return to traditional virtues

(sometimes imaginary, sometimes not). After all, monarchs traditionally used very abstract religious theology to justify claims for their own sovereignty and their powers to rule, and for the right to criticize the morals of their subjects, while subjects almost never got to criticize the morals of their rulers in return. This was a lack of fairness that justified popular religious revolts from the points of view of both the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation.

Criticisms of ritualism in society (especially when used to justify "bread and circuses" escapism among the masses), as well as criticisms of intellectual ritualism that excused social decadence rather than taught how to avoid it, became common criticisms of secular governments in later times also. The felt need for such critiques reflected a certain weakness in the checks and balances of these societies, as the economic advances out of the doldrums of the Dark Ages fell prey to the dynastic wars of the twelfth century, the economic advances of the Renaissance fell prey to the religious wars of the sixteenth century, and the economic advances of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries still could not prevent the nationalistic wars of the early twentieth century. The uncertainties and tensions produced by economic advance always seem to exacerbate the irrationalities so obviously a danger in the act of governing, something which moral systems like religions sometimes work against, and sometimes hypocritically encourage.

Feudalism soon developed in Western Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire, so not familial-type loyalty but incipient contractual relationships became the basis, both economic and governmental, combined in the feudal contract as the basis for the legitimacy of governing authority. Eventually contractual arrangements became the basis for charters for cities which encouraged them to take initiative in expanding their economic activities, and in the case of England, the very bureaucratic efficiencies of the English kingdom founded by William the Conqueror in 1066 became later on used by rebels against the king who now desired to use such bureaucratic efficiencies as trial by jury against the king, as evidenced by the barons' revolt and the forcing upon King John of the signing of Magna Carta. The development of bureaucratic efficiencies and legal formality in Western Europe was thus built upon Roman law, Christian morality (also organized intellectually as a way to influence law), and feudal loyalties, developed at least partially out of the communal loyalties of Germanic tribesmen, that ended up moderating the tendencies toward all-powerful central rulers that was one legacy of the law of the late Roman Empire.

In non-Western areas, however, the tradition remained less of rights than of duties, and these duties functioned well when there were intimate communities (*gemeinschafts*) that could provide an environment for the flourishing of personal relationships, and that failed when such a social environment declined. For that matter, Western-style freedoms protected by the bureaucratic institutions of Western law flourished when some elements of intimate community-based relationships survived in order to give content to the abstract forms of Western bureaucratic procedures, and tended to fail when such content was nowhere to be found. Then, there would be a danger that the powerful rulers of these

bureaucracies that were always run in hierarchical fashion might run roughshod over the powerless. That is why it is useful for a *gesellschaft* to have some remnant of *gemeinchaft* (communal) feelings, and for a *gemeinschaft* to have some access to *gesellschaft* (bureaucratic, associational) instrumental values that result in competency. Right now, however, much of the cultural conflicts between the West and Third World countries, if we set aside economic rivalries for the moment, are between traditional societies who wish they can rely on intimate communities as the underpinnings for effective government, and Western countries who believe that this is impossible and only formal bureaucracies, incorporating Western cultural elements that put economic growth on a pedestal, and social solidarity in a secondary position, are viable.

In general, the West has more formality, and thus efficiency (though the wrong kinds of formality can result in inefficiency) in the economic sphere, but also more egotism sometimes to the point of anarchy in communal and family life than in traditional societies based on patrimonialism or even feudalism. Feudalism is somewhat transitional to modern-style governing bureaucracies that in fact can incorporate certain feudal elements such as nepotism to fill important power positions, or even to go so far as to fool the public so that they end up with figurehead rulers.

In traditional societies, the ideal and sometimes the reality tends to be the reverse of what is found in modern, bureaucratized, economically led societies. Using Weberian categories, traditional authority is based on status, on "natural" categories that have a strong hereditary element such as the authority of the father and mother in the family because it is assumed the knowledge and motivations needed to fulfill these roles will be made available among most everyone who find themselves in these positions, legal-rational authority must be earned but this is not especially difficult to learn and is mostly a matter of motivation and education so that a good number of the people who seek positions of bureaucratic authority will be suitable for these positions (in many ways the position creates the resulting ability and not the person creating the position), while charismatic authority once again involves characteristics that do not come merely from ambition and education, and involve characteristics that are in some ways inborn the way personality characteristics are. These characteristics also are rare and so resulting less in emulation (though that sometimes occurs) and more in gaining the authority to command others.

Thus, charismatic authority is personality-driven and in that sense is much like traditional authority, but instead of claiming common virtues, of the sort that makes traditional virtues easily attainable, often involves rare and unique personality traits that seek to change society more than to produce conformity to traditional ways of doing things, which leads to further bureaucratization under the direction of that charismatic leader. "Just as the idea of fate provides a common element or theme connecting the different aspects of traditional authority, so its opposite, the idea of freedom, plays a similar role in the case of legal-rational domination" (Kronman 1983).

Relating this to issues of personal identity, in patrimonial societies identities tend to come from the extended family, not the nation, and certainly not the political state. When this breaks down, people must deal with the stresses of weak personal relationships. In feudal societies, the abuses of the rich and powerful are sometimes justified by claiming their dependents live vicariously through them, or at the very least this justifies allowing the poor to practice bread and circuses escapism, with the elite retaining the right to step in when this threatens social order.

Under these conditions, it is the rich who officially learn the cultural value of living a life of moderation, which justifies their right to rule, while the masses who live vicariously through the excesses of their leaders or who themselves relieve stress through their own excesses are treated by the elite as having forfeited the right to partake in ruling society for reasons of "lack of character" which the leaders in fact in many ways encourage. It is these leaders who harp on "forgiveness of sin" for themselves and for the masses they rule over, and who discount the feasibility of "avoidance of sin" which tends to be most feasible for the kind of middle class which tends to be lacking in these societies.

When the masses lives in a bread and circuses environment, the natural ecological limits that would make moderation in behavior a natural reaction to the environment become weaker, now that excess as a way to get the mass of people to overlook their problems is actually encouraged, so long as they stay out of politics, and out of the way of the elite who act as if they have a monopoly on understanding of moderation as a source of virtue. Under those circumstances, character is treated as if it is an aristocratic attainment, not taught and to a certain extent not understood (though the potential is there) by the masses. In such societies, there are often problems for the poor who become rich, because they have never learned what happiness money can buy, and what it cannot.

In post-feudal societies such as America, individuals can now practice the moderation that was once elaborated only in aristocratic circles and now combined with the common sense of working-class people who now pay attention to the circumstances of their lives rather than merely seek escapism or deference to the rich—or not. In similar fashion, post-feudal societies like America tend to emphasize separation of church and state because their historical experience is that when the state organizes a state church, the result is not the depth of religious experience, and education, that arises in a community, but merely superficial conformity and the vanities that derives from propaganda from the state about how their religion is better than all others, all of which teaches hypocrisy and is destructive of true virtue.

In all three types of societies (patrimonial, feudal, and post-feudal), law can take forms that are substantively rational or irrational ("magical" thinking of the wishful-thinking or escapist sort, sometimes tied to religion, often tied to lack of intellectual development, or merely to lack of resources to provide for adequate investigations necessary to deal with social problems), or formally rational (as in bureaucratic procedures) or irrational (sometimes the result of the escapism and trickery fostered by "charismatic" leaders).

7.1 When Law Ceases to be Pragmatic

In general, elites tend to not be abusive toward the people they rule over unless they are under attack themselves (perhaps from the people they rule over, perhaps because of the overall state of the economy, or because of general social stress of the sort that arises with increasing population densities). It is from such self-serving circumstances that substantively and formally irrational law may be fostered by elites to hide their own defects (moral and otherwise) and their own lack of competency. It is then when law ceases to be pragmatic.

Particularly, when there are identity crises for reasons of weak family structures, the stresses of poor economies, rivalries with other societies including through war, and all the varied stresses societies are prone to, a certain theatricality can develop in the state (or under more primitive circumstances in the family or in the tribe) as leaders foster such irrationality and outright escapism to get their followers to forget their problems. Then, the goal of governing elites is to get the masses to not blame and thus revolt against their leaders, and to find scapegoats who are often innocent, but are available for personal, and in bureaucratized societies impersonal, abuse.

That is why religions can foster social solidarity and even interpersonal love, but can be used by leaders to foster the opposite. That is also why "nationalism" is so often a phenomenon of modern bureaucratized societies (sometimes with strong feudal characteristics) as if the state can give an identity when the family and the community can no longer do so. Patrimonial societies are often scenes of mass hysterias, of tribal feuds, and of religious ecstasies that in the end result in seeking out scapegoats to blame for their problems, often resulting in witchcraft accusations against social outsiders, but nationalistic wars seem to be a modern invention (with a few precursors in the past such as the expansion of empires) though serving similar psychological purposes.

In reality, we are all muddling through in all societies, and some societies no matter what are the constraints imposed by their resources and power structures, and their cultural institutions, are somewhat more successful in encouraging a golden mean of personality traits that form a healthy "typical" character structure than others. The result of such a golden mean is not only a more healthy typical character structure, but often a better matching between individual interests, and social responsibilities, a diminishing of social alienation in fact.

There are tragedies in life that are unavoidable, but there are many, many ones that reflect the inefficiencies of societies to meet the challenges that test them, and sometimes that reflect mere cruelty and man's inhumanity to man. Certainly some of this is the result of weak character structures and poor handling of social, as well as broadly environmental, stress, that can result in persecutions.

Sometimes, the informality of community socializing is all that is necessary to reset social norms and social practices and to make good what has been lost. Sometimes, the formalities of bureaucratic functioning produce specialized knowledge and specialized motivations that are what is really necessary to reset

social functioning along the correct path. Sometimes, a society functioning like a machine is what is really at fault. Sometimes, the inefficiencies of society not functioning like a machine is what prevents repair to the social fabric. Sometimes, the neuroticism produced by social engineering, what often occurs when society functions like a machine, is much too high a price to pay for correct social functioning. Sometimes, the hysterias and wishful-thinking of traditional societies produce much more damage than they prevent. It all depends, on what kind of golden mean we can achieve, and what is feasible given the circumstances.

Because of these complexities, we should not merely rely on social evolution, and illusions of Social Darwinism, to do all our thinking for us, but we should take our values seriously. Of course, for these values to succeed in governing a society, they should be pragmatic, though admittedly symbolism and ritual when done right can have pragmatic effects. Whether these values should be followed in a neurotic, self-conscious fashion, or in a hysterical, almost intuitive (but really mostly socially conformist) fashion is another question, but it cannot be avoided, as it is the problem of how to achieve the golden mean for aptitudes, abilities, and motivations that result in optimum personal character for our time.

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Part III
The Evolution of Democratic Character and Culture

Chapter 8
Limited Alternatives and Personal Identity: The Relation Between Freedom and Personal Responsibility

The pressures on individuals of socially enforced opportunity structures, as well as their immediate effects on personality in a rewards and punishments sense, together with the formation of expectations and cognitions on how to interpret one's place in the world in a rather existential sense, all of these impinge on the personality and help shape it. It is important, therefore, to understand the historical evolution of social structures that influence not only economic opportunities but social opportunities, as well as how cultural institutions such as religion and politics influence social opportunities. All of this will be done somewhat in the spirit of the work of Max Weber, but with an emphasis on psychology that goes beyond his perspective. All of this is also relevant for understanding the place of the citizen in the polity.

Thus if one can describe the evolution of ever more complex and anonymous social structures in general terms as the path of social evolution, then societies have evolved from clan and tribal societies that can be described as being pre-feudal because they are based on constantly renegotiated social alliances, to more complex societies where these renegotiations of social arrangements have settled down into rather hereditary and then later on bureaucratically based social class and political hierarchies that can be described (unless they are unusually meritocratic) as feudal societies, to post-feudal societies that have evolved beyond this so that bureaucratic structures have become so fine-tuned that they are used to produce checks and balances in society. These checks and balances are between various institutions, religions, economic groups, and political units. In some ways, post-feudal societies try to return to the complex social negotiations between social equals of pre-feudal societies, though they often do this by bureaucratic protections of rights that induce social equalities that would not otherwise be protected (e.g., equality before the law, though not necessarily equality before each other in society).

Post-feudal societies is this latest stage of social evolution, and no doubt all these stages of social evolution are ideal types, and there are many mixed cases along the way, though these mixed cases do tend to simplify and become more extreme and then rise and then fall over time as one stage passes into the next. In this last post-feudal stage, various social groupings, including social institutions,

compete with each other, or come to agreement with each other, but ultimately accept each other's liberties, rather than exist in a mere state of feudal, or especially in later, more modern, times bureaucratic, hierarchy. Yet modern societies are far from being perfectly meritocratic, and the remnants of feudal-style subordination are alive and well, particularly in organizations where the leaders get to monitor and/or boss around followers, but not the other way around.

In fact, America is in many ways less of a bureaucratic society, more concerned with protecting the diversity of local cultures against the social engineering schemes of central government, than is found, for example, in Europe. To repeat some core ideas that bears repeating, and though the following description was probably more true 200 years ago than today, the force of cultural momentum still has weight, so in many ways, Arab, and to a large extent Islamic, societies are pre-feudal, Europe is feudal or better yet described as having the remnants of feudalism in the form of bureaucracies characterized by strong hierarchical loyalties (with the personal element of loyalty receding as feudalism declines), and American society is post-feudal. The pre-feudal traditions of the Islamic world reflect hierarchical societies that are dynamic, that are constantly being built up and torn down through constant social discussion and social interaction. The feudal traditions of Europe reflected hierarchical societies that had become hereditary, and even when they evolved into somewhat meritocratic bureaucracies the sense of subordination, of inequalities of power, and of manipulation by leaders of the led have remained.

The American ideal is political democracy as opposed to a social democracy. The latter is the ideal of most tribal societies even when no longer effectively practiced, including those that are the underpinnings of so many Islamic societies. Though it is true in America relationships between social equals are idealized as ones of quiet respect, the exception is in slums and among hard-driving competitors found in the business world. Thus, the hard-driving entrepreneurial or at least ambitious rich sometimes respect as equals their clients and their competitors, but the tension is there to cause this respect to fall to the wayside under the strain of constant competition. This state of affairs remains a possibility unless other cultural values are at work such as values of sportsmanship and fair play, or ones based on religious standards of virtue, or even secular standards of good citizenship.

In all hierarchical societies, including America, relationships between social unequals tend to be ones of formal correctness, as long as people fulfill their social obligations, while those between social equals are ones of unstable equilibrium, because all kinds of conditions can push feelings over the edge into feelings of hysteria (often based on anger or fear) and/or resentment. Hysteria, however, has a rather small place in American social relations because of the British cultural tradition that America shares and in some ways accentuates even further, a tradition that emphasizes self-control, small talk that limits access to core aspects of the personality, and maintaining social distance that limits the effects of emotional arousal in social situations. Nevertheless, feelings that take the form of blaming others, cowering in fear, or just denying something has taken place, are prompted by situations that tend to be easily exacerbated by underlying anxiety, and under

the right conditions of pervasive anxiety, it can take the form of full-blown hysteria. Such anxiety is to be expected when economic circumstances are stressful (which can occur in all kinds of societies), but are especially likely when hierarchical societies produce incentives for taking advantage of others, sometimes by humiliating them to keep them in their place, who as social unequals do not have the power to fight back. That is one reason a great underlying fear in American culture is that eventually there will be a rebuilding of an European-style class system here, coming on the heels of the final ending of the social and economic frontier.

To deal with such underlying tensions that can arise in all societies, but are especially likely in societies where there are underlying social inequalities, political democracy arises that is inherently bureaucratic in the sense that government bestows certain boons upon people, for example, the right to vote and free public education, but other than these grants, it does not impinge on people's lives and neither does the mass of people have much ongoing influence on it. On the other hand, there is the Islamic ideal of social democracy (admittedly not easily achieved in societies more complex than the tribal), though not necessarily political democracy which they see as requiring a bureaucratization of society that they are uncomfortable with, communal consensus being more to their liking.

The result, which Americans often forget but other people remember, is that traditional societies and particularly tribal societies have an intermingling of political, religious, and economic influences as well as institutions such as family ties and religious loyalties that monitor and try to control these influences just because individuals as individuals have little power. That is why personal exploitation, among people who should be intimates but are not, is considered such a danger in such societies. In other words, social power comes from being part of social alliances because individuals and even families by themselves are recognized as being pretty powerless. However, government must also constantly try to justify its own power by maintaining the social alliances that are the source of its power. This means government in traditional Islamic areas are much more personal in orientation than is the American and the European norm, see Rosen (2008).

In a sense, America has limited government because individuals and families gain power in the economic marketplace for which government is mostly irrelevant. Also our tradition of limited government means we respect democracy so much that we do not want to stress it too much by putting much pressure on it. Islamic societies on the other hand define social justice primarily as having equal opportunities in the social sphere, not the political sphere, so that all people through their social networks ideally should have approximately equal opportunities for making worthwhile marriages and worthwhile economic connections. In America, however, the opportunities bestowed upon everyone by government are the only equalities, since private social life is made up of extreme inequalities of social power. Nevertheless, the economy is so productive that even with extreme differences in social power, the economy itself produces a minimal quality of life for everyone, that is, no one starves, unlike tribal societies where equality more often means equality of poverty rather than equality of wealth.

The big gulf between political equality (everyone can vote) and social inequality (but also personal independence because of the opportunities offered to individuals by the marketplace) just does not exist in tribal societies including those that underlay many Islamic societies. For them, political, religious, and economic influences should mesh with each other, and just as individuals must make and break social alliances, so most leaders always justify their rule on a continuing basis, and not only at election time.

Likewise, these people expect political, religious, and economic ideals to be expressed and coordinated with each other on a continuing basis, arrived at preferably through consensus, though the realities of mere leadership power are accepted when the alternative would be anarchy because of social conflict. *These people find it hard to conceive of political, religious, and economic institutions working separately and in uncoordinated fashion, each having their followers who make out of their loyalties a way of life, even though in America, this uncoordination is the source of a great deal of individual freedom and in many ways is the American ideal.*

This situation of a weakly integrated culture, and of society at large being mostly integrated through bureaucratic means as family and communal loyalties decay, is increasingly the state of affairs in Europe, as individualism increases there to, you might say, American levels. This brings out cultural worries there, which is one reason cultural critiques until quite recently often resulted in extreme political conflict, class conflict interpreted in a Marxist manner being one common result, more so than in America.

In fact, European societies, in addition to having many subcultures, in general can be described as producing a split in social roles and in resulting social personalities that is even more severe than is found in America. In Europe in general, and again this differs in degree in specific cultures and subcultures, there is extreme bureaucratization of public life, particularly with more interference by the state in private life and in business life than is the case in America, and a common desire for rather intimate personal relationships in private life, a desire that is often not fulfilled so that there is often a romantic longing in private life for intimacies that exist better in literature and in philosophy than in the real world. This is also one reason politics there often has a utopian and theoretical quality to it, ideals that are dreamt about rather than practiced, a source of criticism for European religion as well.

Such social evolution can easily be examined through the lens of studying the evolution of religion. For Robert Bellah (Bellah 1991), the prototype of early modern religion is the Protestant Reformation when attaining salvation became conceived of as requiring less withdrawal from the world so as to be better at being in touch with the spiritual realm, than activity in it. The mediation for gaining grace through saints or sheiks or Buddhist monks became replaced by a belief that salvation is available directly to anyone who believes, and hopefully will automatically behave, appropriately. Of course, this belief that modern man should be driven by "faith" and not by social or even individual identity (a common result of the weakening of communal solidarity, later exacerbated by the scientific method

increasingly displacing religious understandings of the world) eventually proved unstable. Eventually even in Protestant circles that were once driven by "faith" at least among some of their descendants, respect for the leadership of God somewhat diminished. A world that was perceived to be driven more by scientifically interpreted laws of nature rather than by the will of God had much to do with this, so that when God became perceived as somewhat too mysterious and distant to be understood, man started in the West by trying to copy God but later in a sense began to try to displace Him.

In an existential sense that is where religion stands today, where choices from among all the historical solutions to religious questions are available to choose from. And yet most people do not choose (whether people who do choose do so wisely or not is a separate question), which reflects the reality of processes of social conformity.

Reinhard Bendix in "Compliant Behavior and Individual Personality" (Bendix 1952) makes the point that social institutions and cultural forms do not automatically guarantee a molding of the personality, and there may be various degrees of conformity and personality dispositions, for various reasons including fear and apathy. In particular, he makes the point that psychiatrists tend to accentuate the way internal motivations (the psychoanalytic account is that they are based on instincts) follow a deterministic pattern among all people, and to elaborate on his discussion, this is true for all babies the same way they cry at similar experiences, but as children get older and certainly for adults, there are pressures for social conformity, regardless of other personality dispositions, as well as incentives ranging from monetary to physical to induce conformity. Also cultural meanings affect how situations are interpreted and what emotional reactions are considered culturally and socially appropriate.

Likewise, he makes the point sociologists assume that common patterns of conformity reveal pure conformity, not idiosyncratic personality dispositions that may produce conformity for the moment but that may disappear if countermotivations become stronger, or if opportunities to act differently arise, or if incentives to induce compliance decline. In fact, degrees of conformity reflect degrees of personality dispositions as well as differences in opportunity structures. Prof. Bendix concludes, "Hence, when we contrast one culture with another we refer to the typical psychological burdens which the demand for conformity imposes on the people. And if we attribute to these people a 'social character' or a 'national character' or a 'basic personality type,' we simply confuse the response with the stimulus and attribute to the people a conformity of response which is contrary to all observed facts" (Bendix 1952, p. 303).

Taking all of these into account, nonetheless, there are conformity processes that do more than provide temporary incentives for behavior, but instead do succeed in producing a molding of the personality by society. To show how social and cultural evolution is paralleled by evolution of modal personalities, see Wallace (1970), LeVine (1982), Ingham (1996). It is my hypothesis that pre-feudal societies are characterized typically, when people are under extreme stress, by hysteria. Feudal societies when there is extreme stress are characterized typically

by paranoia, since people are often raised because of historical traditions to admire personal loyalties, yet social evolution increasingly produces social relationships that feel somewhat impersonal and people often feel ambivalence about this because power differentials leave the less powerful open to exploitation. In general in feudal societies, people often do not trust or are ambivalent, perhaps unconsciously, about the people they are dependent on, and they often handle this by scapegoating outsiders, the same outsiders whom they are often are jealous of when they do better economically than them. If these outsiders have some degree of power over them, perhaps economically, they may scapegoat them simply because they do not trust them out of jealousy or for reason of their power over them.

In post-feudal societies, individual initiative is idealized, either in an entrepreneurial sense or by gaining meritocratic advancement in bureaucracies, yet such individualism is often practiced in bureaucratic settings surrounded by an amorphous, anonymous community where intimate social relationships are possible, but unlikely. One result is that in such societies, fulfillment on the job may not be complemented by fulfillment in private life. In any case, even success on the job is not guaranteed because the powerful may take advantage of the less powerful. This is especially true when the hierarchical authority structures of feudalism remain, but are not complemented by once more common cultural values of chivalry and concern for the weak that sometimes moderated and also justified this sense of hierarchy. And the reverse is true also, even though in present-day societies people often place a great emphasis on their family lives partly because they get so little fulfillment from their jobs, under modern social conditions of anonymity and, yes, narcissism, there is no guarantee that they will get fulfillment off the job either, which is one reason the anomie characteristic of modern, anonymous societies is so very stressful.

Community life off the job in post-feudal societies of the sort that exist now, that is to say, strongly individualistic societies of the modern sort are often characterized by social institutions that cater to individual narcissism, see Lasch (1991). Social relationships of a somewhat intimate sort, let us say friendships or even neighborliness, are possible but are not always easy to attain. Admittedly, many of the friendships or even neighborliness in relatively feudal societies have a strong component of hereditary loyalty to them, where people are loyal to the people they are born to be loyal to, which means there are people who have no relationships with friends that are as close as they have with relatives, and relationships with relatives may not be especially close either. Rather what they may have is blind loyalty tempered by somewhat repressed ambivalence and scapegoating outsiders.

Of course, this is less true of modern America that clearly post-feudal society. There increasingly the modal personality no longer requires much trust of others as much as the simple rituals (such as sports competitions and entertainment venues) that allow them to bond with others without requiring them to get too emotionally close to them, or simply to compete for tokens of prestige (i.e., to gain prestige not by being known in an intimate sense, but in order to be admired as a "celebrity").

All these characteristics of American culture and society tend to produce or at least reinforce narcissistic character traits and when taken to an extreme narcissistic personalities.

In America, and in similar societies, those who fail at fulfilling their narcissistic potentials are likely to develop a kind of unstable, rather manic-depressive personality, but since in the modern era it is increasingly not disappointments with intimates (the most likely cause for manic-depression) that is at stake, instead it often takes the form of what are now called borderline personalities, an instability in affect driven by disappointments at not achieving narcissistic tokens of success, and the social acclaim, and often social power, that comes with this, thus resulting in lack of trust in the social environment. Present-day American society seems to be very conducive for the production of borderline personalities. Yet in an almost existential sense, cultural, and economic, and bureaucratic understandings of what it is possible to achieve in modern American society produce personality structures which typically adapt to these expectations, sometimes in blind conformity, sometimes in blind rebellion, but in any case without any clear expectation of alternatives. The same holds true of course for understandings of what are available for self-fulfillment in pre-feudal, often tribally based societies (or at least inheriting that culture), and in feudal societies or the highly bureaucratic societies that are their successors.

8.1   Comparing Pre-Feudal and Post-Feudal Societies

Regarding personalities that adapt to the environment of having limited options, this is true of all societies generally, just which options there are differ. In a sense, both pre-feudal societies and feudal societies are authoritarian societies, producing modal personalities driven by loyalties as the basic source of personal identity. But pre-feudal societies structure these loyalties by values, partly determined by communal tradition and a respect for the equal dignity of all members of the community, however, defined in the cultural tradition, partly defined by religion (or sometimes superstition depending on one's interpretation of it), partly defined by a kind of individualism that respects individual initiative and individual competence, but an individualism that is more characterized by cultural duties, especially to those one is loyal to, than rights to compete in the economic marketplace, and to have an equal vote in politics. The latter type of individualism is given a higher priority in post-feudal societies.

Because pre-feudal societies do not have overarching bureaucratic authorities to settle disputes, it is easy for feuds between families and communities to heat up unless reined-in by appeal to common cultural values or mediation by religious figures. That is also why low-level warfare is so common in tribal societies. Post-feudal societies on the other hand often admire at least some of the cultural values (usually the highest values) and loyalties of pre-feudal societies, and in theory want to practice something similar or would practice them if they could, but still they often end up honoring them in the breach.

8.2 Feudal Societies

As for feudal societies, they also tend to honor the highest values of the pre-feudal societies that immediately preceded them, but for them, loyalties have stabilized and are not created anew, in the service of these values, but have become largely hereditary so that the duties to enforce these values have become less incumbent upon everyone and more the prerogative of hereditary leaders. These hereditary leaders have the right, and depending on the society the ability, to force practice of these values upon their subordinates, often through their version of bureaucratic procedures simple though they often are in the early days. But less often do followers have the ability to monitor and enforce duties upon their leaders. In that sense, post-feudal societies try to use bureaucratic rules to enforce values that pre-feudal societies could only enforce through cultural, not bureaucratic, rules. Max Weber's discussion of the sociology of law illustrates such changes through a discussion of law from tribal to modern times.

In feudal, and to a large extent all bureaucratic, societies, the only people who are concerned with holistic analyses of social reality are the leaders who engage in social engineering, those who in effect create blueprints for all of society, or at least the parts they control. These rulers of society seek to pigeon-hole everybody in what they consider to be appropriate social roles. The average person who has little or no control over his or her fate engages in fantasies of conformity or rebellion as their recompense for their inherent attitudes of fatalism.

In post-feudal societies, there is more of a middle position between individual initiative and fatalism. That is why individuals ponder actions on how to fit themselves into a marketplace of competing individuals, but their plans are less detailed than those of their leaders cum social engineers. Sometimes, their plans are just mediocre because they do not know or expect better, but this is often true of their leaders as well.

When the mass of people in such societies really do become narcissistic, there is a tendency for a kind of cultural anarchy, since now there is little concern for the social whole. Instead, there develops a proliferation of lifestyle-based affinity groups devoted to their versions of hedonism or asceticism, and often lowest common denominator communication between groups as well as between individuals and their fellow citizens. These are all characteristics of narcissistic societies.

However, in authoritarian societies, it is not unusual for leaders whose power has grown to the point that the common people no longer have much influence on them to become very narcissistic, something very common in feudal societies. This can also occur in pre-feudal or post-feudal societies when leaders are becoming as powerful as in feudal societies, though without the permanency of power needed to permanently keep down their rivals.

In America where sheer anonymity causes mutual influence to weaken, it is the mass of people who often become narcissistic, admittedly through consumerism and pleasure-seeking, not through commanding the loyalties of many others,

which is more the case for their leaders, and which is even more true for leaders in authoritarian societies with traditions of hereditary loyalties. Also this narcissism found among the mass of people in America is a relative narcissism, it is typically less than that which is found among the most narcissistic of their leaders. Nevertheless, some leaders who earned their positions of power rather than inherited them in doing so acquired a good amount of personal character, such as humility, that counteracted their inherent narcissism fostered by ambition. Typically, their power in relation to their subordinates is less than is found among narcissistic leaders in otherwise authoritarian societies who are empowered by the subservience of all those people who are subject to their will.

Regarding personal choices, most people around the world tend to be fatalistic and to act as if they have few choices. Again, that is why the common people in America are only relatively narcissistic compared to the common people in more authoritarian societies and are still often more authoritarian than their own often rather narcissistic leaders. However, the modern world in general does seem to increasingly produce narcissists in all strata of society, but even among these people who believe they have many, many choices, nowadays even those choices tend to be fantasy-driven, limited to fantasies created for them and sold by the mass media.

8.3 Forced Choice Situations

Therefore, it behooves us to study choice situations not as if all voters for a political party, all converts to a certain religion, all choosers of a certain career, all choose for the exact same, highly rational reason. In fact, many historical change processes can be described as being forced choice situations.

Some of the dramatic examples of this come from religious history. One can learn about the cultural effects of a particular religion in a community, but it is not safe to assume that religion was chosen by their ancestors to achieve these effects; they may have been forced to join by powerful leaders, or even by foreign conquerors. There is also the issue that in some cases at least, there were prestige factors involved. Once there developed a critical mass of converts, there may have been a cascading effect in the community which convinced all but the most obstinate. One thing you can be sure is that most people do not join a religion after attending a university seminar, where they are convinced by the quality of the debate.

There are even conversions which reflect dissatisfaction with the previous identity more than understanding of the new identity. Not all conversions, religious or political or otherwise, reflect a desperate seeking out of what ends up being a placebo, but some do. The same kind of situation can occur when it comes to political choices, economic choices (e.g., changing careers), and social choices including marriage. Thus, dissatisfaction with a previous identity can produce a self-induced "leap of faith" which may or may not reflect rational understanding of the costs and benefits, or in general, the consequences of this change of identity.

When such changes in identity are less rationally chosen than are driven by extreme emotional dissatisfaction, there is always the possibility of mass hysteria, possibly originating in a number of individual cases of hysteria accumulating together to form a social network. The latter example is a common means of social creation in individualistic societies conducive to market forces, as opposed to collectivistic societies where because of induced authoritarianism, social conformity is by far the strongest force governing social loyalties. Because of this, social loyalties there often result in mass hysteria, the common result of stress in that social group's culture.

In authoritarian societies, social loyalties often come first, and within social groups, there develop outlets for the psychological tensions that develop among individuals in these groups, one common outlet being to scapegoat outsiders, or occasionally to find scapegoats within one's own group. That is why paranoia is so common in societies so driven by hereditary loyalties, because tension-release is difficult within the group based on loyalty, but easy to express on outsiders.

Modernizing authoritarian societies is particularly prone to such paranoia because when there is a weakening of such loyalties, there is also often an ambivalence about these loyalties because of the growth of self-interest. Or there may develop a distrust of people one is dependent on who seem to be showing their own self-interest and therefore may be untrustworthy at the same time that one is undergoing downward social mobility and therefore are increasingly dependent on them and/or are jealous of them.

All of these produce extreme anxiety seeking an outlet, and paranoia is one such outlet. Economic uncertainties obviously also add to anxieties. Also, societies prone to social conflicts and rivalries between groups find that these groups, and quite often their leaders, encourage paranoia against outside groups just because this reinforces loyalties within the group. These tensions also occur in pre-feudal societies but they are dampened by the cultural norm of families and groups constantly reworking alliances, total obedience being perhaps to religious norms but not to social loyalties other than the "sacred" one of family loyalties.

The post-feudal, American version of this same value, taken from the West's legal tradition of "a government of laws and not of men," results in the modern West, and particularly in America, to mean loyalty to secular laws, those that set the boundaries and the rules for the lawful competitions of the marketplace, but not anymore to any inherent social groupings including those of the family. Such regulated competition in the service of self-interest also produce an organized, regulated practice of narcissism which is in some ways regulated and in some ways facilitated by society.

Increasingly, narcissism is being given freer and freer rein and markets increasingly react to keep up, at least in terms of providing products that appeal to self-centered fear and/or egotism, though sometimes instead, it is the self that adapts to the needs of the marketplace. But in Islamic societies, "a government of laws and not of men" is likely to be interpreted to mean loyalty to religious laws, but not to bureaucratic or other impersonal groupings, but to loyalty to families which is justified since this is a "sacred" loyalty sanctified by religion.

Hysteria tends to increase with social uncertainty. It is to a large extent driven by fear for whatever the reason, be it in pre-feudal societies where social solidarity reflects common cultural, and often religious, values, and there is great fear when such ties appear to be weakening because one is so dependent on them and because one identifies with these significant others. Feudal societies often have common values but also have loyalties that are not necessarily leavened by interpersonal respect and concern for fairness (chivalry sometimes exists and is sometimes put on a pedestal as an official cultural value as an excuse for authority just because it is so easily ignored by the powerful), and also, these are societies where distrust breeds paranoia. In post-feudal societies where individualism and weak social ties often go hand in hand, fear of not being able to make social bonds (loneliness especially, as well as the anomie of unfulfilling social lives) is its own source of anxiety and hysteria. However, it is usually covered up by the bought pleasures and bought experiences so craved by narcissists as they learn to channel their personalities toward what is available.

In narcissistic societies, one may identify with significant others whom one is not intimate with, such as "celebrities." This phenomenon obviously has existed throughout human history, as in the identification that leads to loyalty to the monarch in many kinds of societies. But modern society is unique in the way the mass media provide for identification with all kinds of celebrities, perhaps serving a variety of psychological needs, that one has no personal contact with.

Thus, the differences between the psychological effects on personality as societies become more and more anonymous and bureaucratic as they evolve from being pre-feudal to feudal to post-feudal are differences of degree. Identifying with leaders is a process that occurs in all these societies, but the particular circumstances differ, and in particular, no societies have such an unscientific knowledge of the natural world as the most primitive ones, and no societies are so anonymous and bureaucratic as the most modern societies, some of which are both bureaucratic and authoritarian, and some have checks and balances in the post-feudal, American political sense. In addition to the checks and balances of the legal system, America also has whole cultural industries devoted to reducing the frustrations that come from living in a modern, anonymous society, especially since these personal frustrations cannot be resolved to any great degree through politics as we now know it.

In fact, in all kinds of societies where leaders are greatly distinguished from the led, it is not unusual to find leaders who take pride in their "rationality" because they feel they run society, but who expect the mass of people to offer nothing to social order other than their loyalty to their leaders, essentially to them, which amounts to a sense of subservience. Post-feudal societies are somewhat in rebellion against this state of affairs that is characteristic of feudal societies that have grown anonymous and somewhat bureaucratic, and where the hereditary rulers have developed a sense of entitlement rather than a sense of duty.

Such change may succeed in a return to pre-feudal values of social solidarity, but enforced now mostly by efficient bureaucratic mechanisms rather than by mere cultural norms as in a small-scale society. Or post-feudal societies may merely experience very high rates of anomie (lack of common values) and social disorder,

reproducing social hierarchy but of an unstable sort so that elites compete among themselves, but the subservience of the common people remains unchanged. This is certainly not the American ideal, and it is more true of societies that are more authoritarian than America, as in Europe. But it may be becoming the American reality since with the ending of the social and economic frontier, America may be seeing the return of an European-style class system here, without necessarily recreating a common sense of chivalry among our elites, which at least some societies in Europe had at certain times in their history.

When leaders in feudal societies (hereditary leaders) or in post-feudal societies (non-hereditary leaders) believe the mass of people have little stake in society and merely wish for "bread and circuses," then these same leaders will often try to provide to them little more than the basic necessities of life, and entertainment and escapism of a carnival sort which also can lend itself in the most extreme cases to mass hysteria. In less extreme cases, particularly in post-feudal societies where social stability is lacking because society is anonymous and quickly changing, the relatively powerful among the mass of people and the very powerful among their leaders get to enjoy their own narcissistic satisfactions without necessarily sharing them with others.

Sometimes, this narcissism is expressed personally at the expense of the less powerful. But in an increasingly anonymous society purchased escapisms and the enjoyment of purchased commodities and purchased recreation is pretty much all there is, so that even narcissistic fulfillment has a rather impersonal quality to it. Nevertheless, there is always the danger that with the stabilizing of class relations in post-feudal societies, that in a sense they will start de-modernizing and the newly empowered, often hereditary, elites will start engaging in personal humiliations of those dependent upon them, or of those they consider too socially weak to be able to fight back.

This is particularly true when there is what amounts to winner-take-all economics see Frank and Cook (2005). Nevertheless, unlike in pre-feudal societies and in feudal societies (where all kinds of social relationships have become stabilized and hereditary), in post-feudal societies like America, often power over things, and treating people like things, is a more common source of narcissistic satisfaction than power over people. Sometimes, a very bad situation can develop, those who have become used to treating others like things, and can start abusing them more personally for the sadistic thrills this allows.

The simplistic carnival simulations of mass recreation become for some people the substitute for the varied pleasures of social intercourse, often for the led more than for the leaders, though some leaders like the celebrities they are do feed emotionally off their followers when they have no other intimates in social life. This in a sense explains the cultural value of non-democracy in those modernizing societies when the mass of people want it so. These tend to be societies of the rich and the poor where the poor do not expect, and to a large extent do not want, to have much responsibility to make informed decisions. They feel this is the job of social elites, and if some of this mass of people do not agree, there will be plenty of members of the elite who will use the police power of the state to change their minds.

Thus, it is little surprise that such societies can be described as the narcissistic rich ruling over the authoritarian poor, both having these personality characteristics to an extreme degree, with the middle class to the extent there is one being very passive, mostly supporting the leaders coming from the rich, occasionally under revolutionary circumstances supporting the leaders who claim to be speaking for the poor. The middle class there rarely stand for anything themselves other than making money and enjoying their materialistic lifestyles in peace.

Democracy arose in America as a rebellion against this kind of culture and the European class system that created it, taking leadership to an unusually great extent compared to other societies from the middle class, or those who grew up in middle-class circumstances, or at least remembered the middle-class circumstances of their ancestors, because the middle class and those they influenced wanted to exercise moral leadership and so help society avoid the effects of the narcissism of the rich and the simplistic escapism (when they were not just being authoritarian and subservient) of the poor. This is the fabled puritanism of American culture that the other social classes accept as their social ideal whether or not they succeed in practicing it themselves. Many other societies never experience this moral leadership of a self-righteous, and because of this somewhat virtuous, middle class, which in America is considered the cultural prerequisite for successful democracy.

However, historically, the natural progression from tribal society and its tendencies toward social democracy (most everyone is equal in their poverty) was not to American-style political democracy (but not social democracy; in fact, political democracy tries to make amends for the lack of social and economic equality in private life), but to hereditary loyalty and social inequality, and to the political culmination of this, hereditary monarchy.

These were theatrical states led by the monarch, whose life was often a round of religious symbolism, though religion in general in many ways was removed from practical ethics, which was sometimes emphasized in the religions of more intimate previous societies, and became dominated by priestly and court ritual. The result was an emphasis on purification from sin, or later in more intellectual times as forgiveness from sin, all through symbolism and ritual controlled by the active partnership of the priesthood and the monarchy. This in many ways substituted for the prevention of sin through proper relationships between equals, because that is exactly what was lacking as the class nature, and in more modern times, the bureaucratic nature of society became more pronounced.

One way to look at how social evolution facilitates attitudes toward personal responsibility is to look at how differing societies interpret the worst things that can happen in life, what in fact fosters a sense of tragedy. Terry Eagleton in *Sweet Violence: The Idea of the Tragic* describes changes in culture and in the ways societies facilitate the practice and the success of personal virtue. Admittedly, most of his examples are taken from the world of literature. He particularly emphasizes, "We have finally stumbled upon a solution to tragedy but it is known not as redemption but the absurd, a realism in which nothing stays still long enough to merit tragic status" (Eagleton 2003, p. 67).

He also makes the point "For classical realism, conflicts can be resolved; for modernism, there is still redemption, but it is barely possible; for post-modernism, there is nothing longer to be redeemed" (Eagleton 2003, p. 64). Thus, under postmodernism, there is a great fear that human beings will not be up to the task of overcoming the destructive forces around them and within them. "It is as if alienation is now so total that it cancels all the way through and leaves everything apparently as it was, having also alienated the criteria by which we could judge our condition to be abnormal" (Eagleton 2003, p. 64).

To make the same point, let me paraphrase that he distinguishes between realistic literature where there is a happy ending because this is realistically plausible, modernist literature which treats this as less likely and bemoans the randomness and inefficiency of modern society, and postmodernist literature which treats the human condition as inherently structureless so that one can rely only on transient amusement, not the fulfillment of deeper values. Undoubtedly, the history of possibilities for happiness is not so simplistically schematic that things get inevitably worse as societies evolve, nor the reverse that things get inevitably better. But it is true our desires increase and with it our disappointments, and in a religious sense belief in the overall orderliness of the universe and thus that which structures the human condition has declined. We expect more from society because we expect so much less from everything else that surrounds it, including that which ennobles and fulfills human nature.

At the same time, Prof. Eagleton does not consider the solution to this mess to be merely reaffirming the values of the past that were so hierarchical, so dependent on the claims of religion and faith in ultimate divine intervention, and secondly on a cult of heroes whose suffering would prove beneficial to society at large, in the way a series of heroic rebels against a tyrannical ruler perhaps would fail against overwhelming odds, but their example would lead to future attempts and the success of the last one would make it all worthwhile. Any society relying on such overwhelming qualities of character would quite possibly undervalue the possibilities for virtue among average people in everyday life, especially if such everyday virtue is no longer predicated on divine backing behind it, to provide success and to provide its ultimate enforcement.

Yet admittedly, the disorderliness of everyday life, of requiring an intense collaboration between people for which they are not always up to the task, produces a profound sense of angst and sheer desperation, not to mention shame at human meanness. The lack of faith in the possibilities for aristocratic virtues being able to maintain social order has let loose fear that even the common version of these virtues will be unsustainable also.

Thus, the constant emphases on the absurdity of human weakness in modern discussions of virtue (here I mean present day, not as opposed to postmodern), of the way, for example, very bad rulers such as Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler were empowered by their brazen grasping for power, and the acquiescence of their followers who abdicated the most basic human moral responsibilities in the service of what were essentially delusions. If this is not an example if idolatry in the religious sense, then I cannot think of anything better to call it.

Eagleton very much emphasizes that modern people cannot rely on tragic heroes in the aristocratic sense to try to save them, certainly to try to save them from their own weaknesses. Yet to give up hope, and aim for transient pleasures as if there is no effective claim for virtue in modern society, is not a position Eagleton, or most thoughtful people, would approve of.

There is a place for dignity and virtue in modern societies just because it is harder and harder for us to expect for classic aristocratic heroes to save us. At the same time, the gamesmanship of so many modern bureaucrats, those who constantly save their jobs by endlessly working to achieve image-management skills rather than management skills, is what makes the absurdity of so many modern social institutions so depressing. Nevertheless, similar absurdities existed in other times and places as well.

Thus, the point of view of Eagleton at least culturally (in a secular sense) recapitulates the Christian perspective that we are all surrounded by, enraptured with, are conceived in sin. But there are other points of view, and they can be perceived historically, points of view that tend to be less obsessed with the ever-present "stain" of sin, and more concerned with purification from and/or avoidance of sin.

Nevertheless, in the West so influenced by this tradition shared by Eagleton, the democratizing of the genre of tragedy has to a large extent taken the form of replacing the study of heroes with the study of victims, with emphasis on the tragic unavoidability of their fate. In modern Western literature, the authenticity of the victim's futile attempt at happiness tends to generate pathos, but no grand reconciliation, no self-insight, no expiation of sin, no righting of cosmic wrongs nor bringing the moral world back into balance, no grand finale of cosmic justice as a rule. In fact, modern heroes are often depicted as clinging to their illusions as a last attempt to be moral or idealistic, as if the only alternative is pure nihilism.

In a sense, people are trapped by the cultural alternatives offered by their societies, political and religious alternatives certainly, but other alternatives affecting ways of life as well. The opportunities to choose our own fates, the formation of affinity groups in market fashion that are so characteristic of modern post-feudal America, give some more opportunities to choose from, but these are mostly the opportunities of *gesellschaft* (association) even though the opportunities of *gemeinschaft* (community) may be preserved so that the two may be combined someday in healthy proportion. But there is no certainty of this, and the people of other cultures who criticize America are often certain that this will not happen. I think it is too early to tell who is right.

What one can learn from, however, are the psychological effects of some of the social alternatives, the hysteria which is so common in pre-feudal, often tribal, societies, the paranoia which increasingly becomes characteristic of feudal societies in decline and only the sense of bureaucratic manipulation in the service of class interests increases (here class interests and individual interests of class members tend to coincide, and if they do not their leaders will make it so). Then, there is the social and cultural environment that promotes narcissism in post-feudal societies that includes there the somewhat extreme manic-depressive tendencies

characteristic of borderline personality disorders for those who fail to attain the tokens of narcissistic achievement that are so important to gain social prestige here, used to fill up the emptiness of one's life in societies that increasingly offer few other sources for achieving happiness.

Unfortunately, these narcissistic societies often learn from and copy the bad points of American society, the rootlessness, the consumerism, the anomie, and not the good points, the relative lack of snobbishness and the ability to learn from acquaintances, as well as the emphasis on personal initiative and personal morality because it is so hard to rely on the personal concern of leaders for those people that they lead but they do not know to any great degree. All these are so because it so hard to rely on the concern of these same acquaintances except in a very limited way, and because of the succumbing to the temptations of simplistic escapism that are so accentuated by commercial interests and commercially driven culture in America.

Modern societies sometimes mistake patriotism, nationalism, and the "high" of being entertained with character-building and ultimate concern for each other and for the nature which is under our care. Primitive societies when they began to lose touch with the concrete realities around them sometimes jumped to absurd conclusions, human sacrifice, ritual orgies, and perpetual warfare being among them. For all our checks and balances among our truth-seeking endeavors in government, religion, and scholarship, the incentives for self-serving behavior are increased in some ways because the bureaucratization of society is greater.

Once the mass of people in small-scale societies faced a small leadership class, yet even this leadership class often kept out of their way. Nowadays, our specialists in our mass societies for all their specialized knowledge that surpasses that of their predecessors nevertheless have little incentive to show concern for society as a whole outside their little spheres of influence. Yet society is very dependent on all these various specialists taken together, despite the fact they often coordinate so poorly.

To get back to issues of psychology, paranoia is a danger in unraveling authoritarian societies, especially those that are based on hereditary loyalties, where order is searched for because it is being lost and scapegoating is one solution to this problem. But scapegoating is also a problem in narcissistic societies where order was never really present, and so mutual distrust has a basis in reality. Paranoia as a process of projection, blaming others for what one fears is a weakness in oneself, is obviously a serious matter when there is a predisposition to this, and is a serious danger, partly because of environmental factors that stimulate it. This is true in both modernizing authoritarian societies and failing (particularly in terms of economic growth) narcissistic societies where individuals do not successfully repress their desires but are left awash in a sea of confusion and unfulfilled desire, and as a result blaming.

Authoritarian societies often have ready-made scapegoats; individualistic, narcissistic societies must fulfill this function in a haphazard fashion, individuals being just as likely to blame themselves, or perhaps more so, than to blame others. Thus, both authoritarian and narcissistic societies can produce unconscious anger and blaming, and possibly resulting paranoia as these feelings reach the surface of

the personality and remain there when there are socially approved scapegoats as in authoritarian societies, or when these tensions, including paranoid ones, are more easily dissipated even though in a sense mass produced in narcissistic societies. Perhaps, the latter example is an illustration of the constant need in America to use humor to diffuse social tension.

Narcissistic societies go even further than authoritarian societies in producing individuals who "live in their own worlds" and though blaming exists here, even more common is manic-depression of a rather severe sort (which in many ways is what borderline personality disorder is when society produces few sources of self-esteem other than narcissistic accomplishment). That is an inability to stabilize mood and the need, beyond rather mild tendencies toward paranoia for the most part, often resorting to addictions to produce such mood stability. *However, as society stabilizes in terms of a lack of social mobility, paranoia as blaming others, in addition to depression as blaming oneself, will be likely to increase.*

If authoritarian societies (truly traditional societies, not modernizing traditional societies) are societies without change, then such societies produce among their members moderate narcissism (among the happy ones) and unipolar depression (among the unhappy ones) for options are limited, and social roles are strict, though roles tend to reflect a need for social solidarity in communal rather than bureaucratic function. Obviously from the point of view of the individual, the fit between individual and society may not be perfect and the return of the emotionally repressed in terms of hysteria is fairly common here, outbreaks of hysteria that are more easily handled by their looser social structures than is the case in our modern, bureaucratized societies where much is allowed in the privacy of life off the job, and much is ignored which is itself a problem in terms of loneliness, but except for the rich, little is forgiven in the competitive world of the workplace.

True, traditional societies had their own fears, and perhaps their own schizophrenias, usually involving fear of nature and of the spirit world, and not success at business. If they needed to be more narcissistic, to be more at home with themselves and not think of themselves as mere extensions of nature, a nature which they often feared more than understood, we need to be less narcissistic, less falling back on our fragile selves because we feel the world of nature is mechanical, like our machines, and thus dead and lifeless. Modern societies produce manic-depression and fear because social change is so prevalent, and with it social disappointments, and the order that is there is so often cold, impersonal, and inhumane, not inhumane the way human sacrifice among hysterical tribal people so often was, but inhumane nonetheless.

Modern societies produce pathologies of ambivalence, obsessions with feelings of wholeness, of fitting in or not, of being controlled or doing the controlling, which though present in traditional societies often have a whole new intensity in modern societies because the intensity of competition has been ratcheted up, an impersonal competition within bureaucracies and not the face-to-face personal competitions moderated by etiquette of traditional societies. Obviously, modern American society is not totally different from traditional societies, but the proportions of various kinds of problems have changed. Authoritarians define

themselves according to their social roles, narcissists, like many in America, have no social roles that they are strongly loyal to, and so are constantly inventing themselves, and so have problems with both authority and duty, the roles of the workplace being like an ill-fitting suit, worn but not with grace.

Obviously, the extremes of authoritarianism and narcissism can be nerve-wracking, authoritarianism when ill-fitting can produce neurosis, that is repression of feelings, their escape through hysteria, and obsession-compulsive behavior, and narcissism when ill-fitting can produce the perverse syndromes of those seeking the unattainable, as well as manic-depression (perhaps in the form of borderline personalities when social anonymity becomes all-pervasive), megalomania, and sometimes schizophrenia. The authoritarian when at peace does not suffer paranoia, the authoritarian who is not at peace, which is much of the time, often suffers from this. The narcissist as an individualist may be immune from socially obligatory scapegoating. But the faddishness of modern culture and politics produces enough diffuse paranoia and foolishness that the danger of contemporary foolishness arising from among a bunch of fanatics becoming permanent once they gain power remains a danger that traditional societies usually avoid as long as they remain outside of history, and thus to a large extent outside of politics.

Once social change enters their lives, people in traditional societies face the same problems we do, sometimes with better reserves of character, sometimes with less insight than us, insight which among us, hopefully, will prove stronger than our tendencies toward self-delusion and narcissism, and hopefully will prove to be our saving grace.

Our intellectual development at this time in history is high, but our emotional development, the goals which give a reason and a purpose and a direction for our intellectual development, is not so well developed. As the psychoanalyst, M. Guy Thompson describes the narcissist in *The Death of Desire: A Study in Psychopatholog*y:

> The man of resentment par excellence, if you disappoint him he will never feel genuine sadness or, as in the obsessive, guilt. Instead, he will be consumed by a seething anger which is occasioned by vengeful fantasies. These feelings are capable of being replaced by a melancholic depression which only serves to perpetuate his grandiosity. It is at these moments, of course, that these people get a glimpse of the profound insecurity and impotence which lives beneath their omnipotent posture (Thompson 1985, p. 57).

To go back to issues of culture and personality, John M. Ingham in *Psychological Anthropology Reconsidered* compares hysteria in primitive (and here I am not using the term disparagingly) and modern societies: "In western terms, spirit intrusion resembles conversion disorder whereas possession is more akin to fugue states, multiple personality disorder, or temporary psychosis" (Ingham 1996, p. 122). These are all dissociative states, and in primitive societies, it is normal for id, ego, and superego to be less tightly bound together than in modern societies characterized by emotional repression and the development of personalities amenable to routinized work discipline. Regarding the modern world, literature on hysteria tends to emphasize a history of emotional trauma, of the sort emphasized

in literature on post-traumatic stress disorder that emphasizes intrusive thoughts (reliving fears as a way to get a handle on them), emotional repression in relation to activities reminiscent of the traumatic experiences, and hyper-sensitivity to similar situations and aroused similar feelings.

Hysteria tends to be resolved more easily in primitive societies, since social acceptance, as well as cultural acceptance of unusual personal states of the "spirit possession" sort tend to be more attainable. The difficulties of finding social acceptance in anonymous, bureaucratized modern societies, the stresses of ever-present economic competition (against people, not so much against nature as in primitive societies), the stresses of workplace functions (meeting these standards or losing one's job), and the stresses of personal relationships (which may be more or less stressful than found in the family situations of "primitive" societies), all may lead to depression and feelings of helplessness, which has an asocial quality as if social integration is no longer an option, which seems to be rarer in primitive societies as long as family feelings are so characteristically strong. Such depression may be resolved through individual rationality and eventual reintegration into society and culture, or it may degenerate into more severe syndromes of depersonalization, self-estrangement, and lack of integration in society.

David Shapiro in *Dynamics of Character: Self-Regulation and Psychopathology* makes the point, "Psychopathology of all varieties is marked by self-estrangement. It is the inevitable consequence of the anxiety forestalling restrictions of subjective life that are intrinsic to the dynamics of psychopathology" (Shapiro 2000, p. 13). He mentions that there are close affinities in subjective experience between various kinds of passive and impulsive character, and highly emotional hysterical character. Hysterical character is characterized by an immediacy of emotional reaction and a feeling of loss of control over actions (a need to socially conform), which may or may not be accompanied by loss of control over aroused feelings. A more severe situation, and typically more common in more complex social environments on an evolutionary scale, is neurosis where feelings are typically repressed and are thus unavailable even if they would be desired if they could be acknowledged. Thus, neurosis is the psychological counterpart to the sociological process of alienation as self-estrangement. Then in even more complex social environments, there develops quite often sociopaths whose feelings are less repressed and so in a sense vaguely felt than avoided altogether by going directly into the pleasures of acting on impulse (feelings such as fear or general anxiety would be felt if there were restraints on impulsive actions, but there are not, not in a felt sense).

In conclusion, regarding social evolution, the stresses of primitive societies tend to be relieved by the driven spontaneity and hypomanic quality of hysteria, which reflects a rather unsophisticated ego, a kind of reintegration into society as it were by unsophisticated means. More complex societies when stressed often suffer from the drivenness of the compulsive, and even paranoid, personality, which reflects a rather unsophisticated superego. This often reflects a certain harshness in childhood training. But modern societies, where true intimacy and an unalienated social existence are often hard to achieve, produce the "virtual reality" of endless consumption of substitute pleasures, so that the impulsiveness of the narcissist and

even worse of the sociopath, which reflects a kind of unsophisticated id that somehow needs to be placated, much like a baby's crying, because more sophisticated sources of social integration and personal happiness, which nevertheless sometimes existed to a greater extent in more "primitive" societies, are unavailable. That is why regarding social evolution, you should be careful what you wish for, since more and more toys to play with and fewer and fewer adults to put pressure on you to develop rationality and realistic self-control, may still not make you happy.

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Chapter 9
America as a Post-Feudal Society, or How to Relate to the Islamic World

Hopefully, the following analysis will have its practical aspects. I emphasized previously the way America as a post-feudal society tries to reintegrate the more *gemeinschaft* functions of local government with the more *gesellschaft* functions of the central government in terms of formal law and checks and balances in society that pre-feudal societies often handled informally (their families often had a formal quality to them, not their governments). Therefore, it is a pity that America and the governments of the Islamic world that are so often influenced by the traditions of tribal society so often communicate at cross-purposes.

Thus, America's problem with trying to spread democracy in the Islamic world is that a good number of the people there think they already have democracy, or to be more exact, many Islamic lands are already the heirs to traditions of tribal democracy. They take their love of freedom one step further than we think is wise and believe the best democracy is one where the central government almost never gets involved in local affairs except for emergencies, be it war or famine or putting down revolts, which are common enough because the central government is so easily distrusted, or to arbitrate local disputes when the locals believe they have no other choice.

In fact, these societies have so often been monarchies because the bureaucratic structures of political parties and elections were things they were not interested in and did not know much about, and having a more or less figurehead ruler was preferable to having politics of any sort, let alone democratic politics. These tribal societies at least at the local level were quite willing to have relatively democratic societies in the sense that wealth, or in this case poverty, was pretty much equally distributed. The end result was that the ideal was to have social statuses that were pretty much equally distributed. They had social democracy; they just did not have political democracy. That was their ideal, though sometimes more in theory than in practice.

Obviously, America does have democratic politics and elections, and our conception of traditional order protected against interference from the central government is less extreme than that of such extremely traditional societies, often still tribally based or at least based on extended families as the ultimate basis of social order. This all occurs at the local level which is what mostly counts for them.

Even we admit that social closeness diminishes as we get further and further away from the intimacies of the family and the local community, and we consider it absurd the way the leaders of some modernizing traditional societies, in the full bloom of their extreme bureaucratization of society, so often claim that they can create out of the nation a giant family, one ruled by bureaucrats, not by mama and papa. They also claim these leaders are as close to, and are as interested in, the good of the nation as local leaders are interested in the good of the people they know personally in the local community. This is the American criticism of European nationalism and European authoritarianism, much of it an evolution out of rather feudal cultural traits that America as a frontier society revolted against.

That is why we in America with very few exceptions think of the politics of many modernizing traditional societies, those societies which are awash with the cult of personality so that they treat their political leaders more like religious figures than like politicians, as being farcical. It may be high drama, it may serve as a substitute for religious ritual to fill the emptiness of their lives, but it is not politics.

The Islamic world is filled with rather traditional communities and even whole societies, the remnants of kingdoms and empires, built upon a base of local social order that had a tradition of limited government that was even more limited than our American traditional version of limited government. They do not understand our approach to freedom, which does overlap with theirs though it is not exactly the same, since what they see us offering them is more bureaucratization, less communally enforced morality, and more materialism. Thus, what we have here is a failure to communicate.

In fact, America is in many ways less of a bureaucratic society, more concerned with protecting the diversity of local cultures against the social engineering schemes of central government, than is found in, for example, Europe. Though the following description was probably more true 200 years ago, the force of cultural momentum still has weight (yes, I would call this a recurring theme in this book), that in many ways Arab, and to a large extent Islamic, societies are pre-feudal, Europe is feudal or better yet described as having the remnants of feudalism, and American society is post-feudal.

The feudalism of medieval Europe, which was in some ways a simplified continuation of the culture of the late Roman Empire, was efficient because it was, as some would say, so oddly bureaucratic compared to the traditional world scheme of things. It was true after the fall of the Roman Empire many even of the governing class were illiterate, but even in those kingdoms the bureaucratic efficiencies of the literate Catholic priesthood, and the help they gave to the government, were quite sufficient for their purposes. By the time the Crusades European states still had primitive mass cultures, but in areas of concern to the government, such as warfare and building churches and castles, Europeans were quite advanced. Europeans were capable of mounting sea invasions of the Middle East, with heavily armored mounted knights that were like the tanks of that era, while the peoples of the Middle East really had no capability of mounting sea invasions in return, they could barely defeat European knights by relying on their

greater numbers, and even to raise large armies to face the European Crusaders stretched the bureaucratic capacities of these Middle Eastern states to their limits.

The reputation these Middle Eastern communities had for technical advancement in that era came in areas relating to their enjoyment of life and technology that would facilitate this, such as running water, baths, and beautiful gardens filled with fruit trees so that then, as now, the people of the Middle East take pride in their achievements in the social realm, or what may be called the preservation of norms of sociability and conviviality, and, yes, social bonding. This has been displaced in the West by the social norms that facilitate bureaucratization. In fact, the feudalism of medieval Europe, some of it dating back to the relatively advanced bureaucratization of the Roman Empire as preserved by the Catholic Church, is an early version of the bureaucratization that is such a hallmark of Western culture. Again, if anything, America has it less than Europe because America developed its culture partly in rebellion against the European class system, something which seems to develop hand in hand with the bureaucratization of society.

Lawrence Rosen, who is both a lawyer and an anthropologist, in *Varieties of Muslim Experience: Encounters With Arab Political and Cultural Life* (Rosen 2008), emphasizes that in Islam, and more especially in Arab culture, freedom is less oriented toward the economic freedom to attain things, that quite important freedom of the modern world partly because I might add economic freedom provides individual power in an anonymous world, but more toward the freedom to constantly engage with people and form new relationships and new social alliances so as to maximize the possibilities for all concerned. Such loyalties may evolve to something that seems rather feudal at times, but it is not the feudalism of medieval Europe based on hereditary loyalties passed on from generation to generation to produce a rather stagnant class system. Arab loyalties are dynamic because they are meant to change with the times and are constantly reevaluated so that moral responsibilities are determined according to a complex framework that is constantly discussed and reevaluated. That is why sociability is so honored in the Arab world, as alliances are constantly made and sometimes dropped, and as the credibility of ideas is learned through social input and discussion.

They find abhorrent, what they consider to be idolatrous, the way in the West communication can be made through manipulation of the masses through a symbol that does not allow for social discussion and thus verification. It is for that reason that the visual arts as a means of communicating ideas are distinctly underplayed in Arab society, for to them the images of the mass media are by their nature more prone to producing image-driven propaganda than truth-seeking. For us the mass media, and especially the visual mass media, are a source for political discussion, admittedly among strangers. For them conversation among people who hope to become somewhat intimate or at least in a sense part of a common community, and this traditionally has included social bonds between Muslims and non-Muslims as well no matter what background tensions remain, has been the means of non-bureaucratized political discussion. In fact, the legalism of Islam is considered necessary to give the background social order which is considered the highest

social value just because communally based social order does not come easy and thus requires a base upon which it can grow.

It is because this complexity of social flux, and the building up of social loyalties, provides the context for moral values that Islam distrusts economic freedom that in the West sometimes seems to be cut loose from its social moorings, as if economic growth has a value all its own. Justice as an Islamic ideal deals mostly with equity, that respect for individuals based on all their unique complexities, which is why it is so difficult for them to treat men and women the same since for them this would be to ignore crucial differences (admittedly differences that involve their cultural assumptions and not ours). However, we in the West with our bureaucratic and somewhat antiseptic business environments find it easy to ignore individual differences, including the differences between men and women, and try to just pay attention to social, which means now for the most part business, roles.

We in America can imagine a democracy based on isolated individuals voting, and that is the culmination of our culture of political democracy. In much of the world democracy is a matter of social democracy, an equivalency of social power, so that everyone can have the same approximate chances for maintaining powerful social alliances, if such a thing is possible. With the development of more complex divisions of labor as the basis of the economy in many societies they often believe, especially with modernization, it is not. Even in the Arab world many people would like such social equality to exist, that remnant of the traditions of the desert Bedouin. In America on the other hand our version of traditional moral conservatism is that moral rationality provides a base for economic rationality, and then constant economic growth will give us the options that complex social loyalties no longer do. Even though complex social loyalties are still considered to be quite a good thing, it is just that we no longer rely on them in our daily lives just as we no longer expect, though we would like, our leaders to be people of honor in the mode of an Arab sheik, beloved of the community, not anonymous and distant.

In America traditional moral virtues serve as a base upon which to build economic growth so that we have shared until now a common morality with many traditional societies even when our economic cultures are much more adventurous than those traditional people are used to. This, however, may be changing as we become more economically stagnant.

This is another way of saying middle-class traditions are declining in importance in America and are becoming replaced by lifestyles more immediately derived from the rich and the poor, partly because a higher proportion of the population are now thinking of themselves as being rich or poor. This has always been the case in Europe where the middle class has traditionally been just those middling in power and wealth, just another interest group and not a particularly influential one. It is the intellectuals, usually still requiring the patronage of the rich and powerful behind the scenes, who come up with compromises to balance the interests of the rich, who are also often the innovators given society's dependence on trickle-down economics, and the poor.

With us in America it is the middle class who traditionally serve this balancing function. This is not through coming up with schemes for social engineering, but

mostly because the lifestyles of the middle class and their avoidance of extremes in personal behavior at least here in America are traditionally admired by the rich and the poor, even when they cannot bring themselves to copy these lifestyles entirely.

America in some ways offers the Islamic world an image of how to preserve local cultures, and even local concerns with the real-life consequences of social order and public morality, which the bureaucrats of central government sometimes forget. Admittedly, some in the Islamic world may be more attracted to European-style social engineering to the extent they believe America is such a rich country, because of historical circumstances and not necessarily for much longer, that even with all our waste we are so rich that the average person can buy his or her way out of their problems. A poorer society may feel they have to resort to the state creating social order, something that Islamists have traditionally feared, for essentially the same reasons we do, but nevertheless may feel at this time in history has become a necessity.

In any case, our major criticism of the bureaucratized, even rather feudal culture of post-Roman Empire Europe and even now is that while the bureaucrats get to run the society and feel whatever pride they can get from feeling this sense of responsibility for what is ultimately their creation, the mass of people are left to be subservient recipients of bread and circuses. America even at its beginning wanted to create a culture that would uplift both the dignity and the morality of the working class so that they could achieve through politics and the nation it served a dignified and moral life, not bitter escapism. The lack of seriousness which many of the first generation of democratic participants often experienced, the rise to power of the Nazis was perhaps only the most extreme example, shows the importance of the traditional American concern for public virtue, not only among leaders, but among the mass of citizens as well.

This is something we share with the Islamic view of politics, even though we believe a minimal bureaucratization of society, to facilitate elections and politics and all that, is necessary in the modern world. This is something which some Islamists still wish was not the case.

In fact, traditional Islamic culture is in many ways the culture of craftsmen, and of course pastoralists, who believe in a rather equal sharing of economic opportunities, rather than, as is the case in both Europe and America, having sharp competition that results in putting specialists and innovators on a pedestal. This is something done by government fiat as well, which as an end result will empower elites who admittedly will probably produce great discoveries and inventions and improve the overall standard of living, but in the process will gain great power and wealth of their own, and for this reason will be tempted to abuse this power and upset the social equilibrium. The Islamic public's limited experience with bureaucratization in traditional societies was with traditional monarchs, who enabled society to avoid having politics at all, and for whatever their responsibilities they mostly let local communities alone. Even America's democratic politics is more bureaucratic than that.

We in America and in the Islamic world agree on ends in many ways, though not particularly on means. Cannot we learn from each other after all, to learn from

them not to force our way of life on those who want no part of it, and for both sides to learn from each other's best practises? There was a time when America was a place not of aristocratic arrogance but of middle-class sobriety and modesty. And willingness to learn from all. Maybe the time is ripe to return to these same virtues and regain the admiration of much of the rest of the world that has been lost.

After all, at one time America took pride in the ability of its working class to maintain its freedom and independence, and to act on its moral conscience. This was greatly facilitated by not having to wait hand and foot on their rich masters whose idea of economics was trying to run an economy based on trickle-down economics. Any cultural plan can be taken to an absurd degree, and so can this one. At one time American individualism was not merely the opportunity for everyone to have the opportunity to compete to enter the elite, so that a few could leave their fellows far behind. Freedom once meant in America something different, a good life even for those who are not rich.

It still can be. And then we in America maybe once again will have the opportunity to earn the praise of the rest of the world for the good example we set.

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Chapter 10
Personal Versus Impersonal Forms of Exploitation

Here, I will emphasize how the social democracy of pre-feudal societies differs from the political democracy so emphasized by post-feudal societies, and what this tells us about the nature of social evolution. This is an important issue in world politics, since post-feudal societies like America often fail to convince pre-feudal societies like those of the Islamic world that we really do have common ends, that they only differ on means, and that the Islamic world should copy the somewhat bureaucratized means that America relies on to preserve communal autonomy and individual freedom. The Islamic world is more likely to believe we should learn from them. Perhaps, we can learn from each other. One way to start is to learn from the work of Max Weber.

Discussions of the work of Max Weber tend to emphasize what amounts to an implicit exploration by him of social evolution as the ultimate theme and focus of his writings. This is certainly exemplified in his *General Economic History* (Weber 2003) which he gave as lectures shortly before his death. The ultimate conclusion of that survey of economic history is that Western society is highly bureaucratic and is becoming more so and in a sense started out more bureaucratic (dating back to the Roman Empire) than even such developed civilizations as those of India, China, and the Islamic world, which until very recently could be more broadly described as patrimonial societies, that is to say are relatively (though not absolutely) pre-feudal societies.

This type of analysis is reinforced by such writings as Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Barkey 2008) whose main theme is that the Ottoman Empire started out quite tolerant in comparison with the empires of the Hapsburgs (in both their Germanic Austrian and Latin Spanish forms) and the Russian Empire. The Ottomans were willing to use the Greek and Balkan nobilities as administrators of the empire in a way that the Christian empires mentioned above were not willing to do for their non-Christian minorities. Only in the nineteenth century, for example, was Russia starting to treat Islamic princes as equal to the Russian nobility as administrators of their sections of the Russian Empire. It was during approximately the same period of the nineteenth century that there developed increasing nationalism, partly through European

influence and partly in reaction to increasing taxation because of the inefficiencies of the Ottoman state and their need for greater military expenditures to meet the European threat, among the constituent ethnicities and religions of the Ottoman Empire which in turn encouraged Turkish nationalism. As a result, the multicultural traditions of the Ottoman Empire fell apart by the end of the nineteenth century.

One major reason why the Ottomans were willing to rely on Christian leaders as supporters of Ottoman rule among their own ethnicities for so long was because they could not automatically count on their often rebellious or at least independent-minded Muslim subjects, even in the Anatolian heartland of Turkish ethnicity. In that sense, there was a tradition throughout the Ottoman Empire of members of various ethnic groups thinking for themselves and following their own self-interest, and making strategic alliances and friendships with members of other ethnicities, something that is characteristic of pre-feudal societies, that was much less common in the more bureaucratically organized empires of Europe.

Thus, the Russian Empire was much more innately bureaucratic than the Ottoman one. The rulers of the Russian Empire pigeon-holed their various minority ethnicities so that both loyalty and disloyalty were inferred as a kind of bureaucratic rule by leaders who did not expect to get to know the people they ruled over very well. Instead, a hierarchy of loyalty and therefore of authority was a cultural assumption of that society. The Czar took for granted that the Ukrainian nobility was close enough to the culture of the Russians that they could be trusted, that they felt about the Germanic nobility of the Baltic states even though they often were Lutheran in religion, unlike the Orthodox Russians, since they were accomplished according to the European standards of culture that they admired, while the Islamic nobility of Central Asia was just too different and their culture did not fit into the hierarchy of standards that made up Russian Christian culture. Thus, the Islamic people in general until very late in Russian history were stigmatized as being backward and potentially disloyal, as were the Jews of the Russian Empire, in the way slow-moving and slow-thinking bureaucrats tend to follow rules about such things as opposed to having an empirical basis for their judgments of them. In bureaucratized societies, social relationships tend to form in conformity to social roles and not the other way around, so that pride in independent judgment and in freedom to associate with whoever will prove of benefit is just not part of the culture of highly bureaucratized societies.

In fact, the Christian empires of Europe during this period when they were at war with the Ottoman Empire seem to have been more bureaucratic, and thus more efficient in terms of organizing their societies and in particular organizing their armies, than their Ottoman foes. They also had greater tendencies toward social anonymity and the kinds of bureaucratic controls used to control relatively anonymous societies (though they became even more anonymous and bureaucratic later on). During this period, there was also more of the kinds of social exploitation in Europe typical of relatively impersonal social environments, than was the case for the Islamic states of that era. Just to take an example, Andrew Wheatcroft in *The Enemy at the Gate: Hapsburgs, Ottomans, and the Battle for Europe*

(Wheatcroft 2009) details how the Hapsburgs were successful in organizing a modern military that withstood the Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683 so that they were able to overcome the superiority in sheer numbers of the Ottoman military.

As a matter of fact, the greater bureaucratic capacities of European states compared to Islamic states hold true even for earlier eras. At the time of the crusades, whatever their lack in social graces and in amenities like gardens and baths conducive to social intercourse commented upon by their Islamic adversaries, the Christian crusaders already had advantages in military technology and seagoing capacity that only increased over time. Despite their advantage in having potentially larger numbers of soldiers, their weaknesses in bureaucratic capabilities, and their tendencies to fight among themselves rather than unite against the common enemy, meant that it took generations for the surrounding Muslim states to achieve the power to drive the crusaders from their midst. Also, in Spain, infighting among Muslim princelings weakened their ability to fight together against the Christian Reconquista.

Such lack of bureaucratic capacity is a trait of Islamic culture and of the governments that arise under this tradition, because it encourages loyalty to the extended family and to the community over bureaucratic loyalties, to this day. Here, I recommend for reading on comparing Christian and Islamic civilizations Marshall G. S. Hodgson, "A Comparison of Islam and Christianity as Framework for Religious Life" (Hodgson 1960, pp. 49–74). For a contemporary discussion of Islamic culture and its tribal underpinnings, I recommend once again Lawrence Rosen, *The Culture of Islam: Changing Aspects of Contemporary Muslim Life* (Rosen 2002).

One way to think about all of this is to reflect on the difference between Islamic and Western attitudes toward slavery, which is also an illustration of the difference between personal and impersonal forms of exploitation. The Islamic world retained slavery to a very late age, right into the modern era, partly because of the economic purpose it played in the everyday economy, partly because of constant low-level warfare, and certainly warfare between Islamic empires and the non-Muslim world retained the quality of slave-raiding expeditions, and partly because much of the usage of slaves was as household servants. The ego-enhancement to the rich in the Islamic world of having many household servants, a kind of personal egotism and personal exploitation, maintained its importance in the Islamic world while continuing to diminish in importance in the West ever since the decline of the Roman Empire.

Thus, with the end of the Roman plantations based on slave labor, the nobilities of the post-Roman Empire in the West soon did not want to have responsibility for slave populations that were not financially lucrative for them. The landowning class were quite willing for their serfs, not slaves, to be basically sharecroppers. Throughout the later history of the West, the wealthy classes were quite satisfied with having poorly paid workers rather than slaves that they would otherwise have been bound to take care of, even though this resulted in giving up the boosts to their ego that this paternalism would have produced. Impersonal accomplishment has increasingly become the hallmark of the West. Thus, the modern rich of the

West gain pride for their large homes, but not for having lots of house servants whom they would have to interact with, which would require them to be leaders of people and not of things. They are usually comfortable with treating people at least somewhat like things, in the bureaucratic organizations that they manage.

Another example of the personal (and egotistical) quality of exploitation in the Islamic world, and in other communities characterized by *gemeinschaft* (community) rather than *gesellschaft* (association), is their greater tolerance than in the West for polygamy rather than monogamy, which is not the same thing as promiscuity. Again, it should be remembered that the theoretical ideal in both *gemeinschaft*-oriented societies and in *gesellschaft*-oriented societies is fairness and justice; it is their means which differ not their ends, especially means that reflect their recognition of what kinds of hypocrisy to overlook because they are not easily dealt with, given their conditions of society and the power structures involved. Thus, Islam traditionally allowed four wives, and often many more concubines, in a way that Christianity, from the beginning with their ascetic priesthoods and their reaction against the sexual mores of the Roman Empire, did not (Rome even before Christianity did not accept polygamy, though upper-class unfaithfulness was common enough during the days of the Empire).

Partly, however, the Islamic cultural areas were just traditional in a way Europe after the Roman Empire was not. In the Islamic areas, harems for kings were partly a way for them to get loyalty from princelings and chieftains by marrying their daughters that was unnecessary in the more bureaucratically organized states of Europe, plus the fact that polygamy was a violation of the rules of Christianity. Thus, the King of England would make an alliance with the King of France by marrying his daughter, not by adding to his harem the daughters of a half dozen of the leading French nobility. It just was not necessary and had not been since the days of the Roman Republic and then Empire.

Also, there was a whole culture of polygamy which idealized the best use of it in the early days of Islam, taken from the history of the Prophet Mohammed, for example to provide protection for widows with children or to provide for the daughters of leading families who would otherwise be spinsters. Also, polygamy added protections to female slaves who were war captives that they would otherwise not have. Merely adding to the harems of rich, old men with young, desirable women who were denied their otherwise potential spouses were an obvious misuse of the institution of polygamy, and it is my understanding that within Islamic areas, there are cultural standards that make clear the nature of such abuse. Admittedly other than by appeal to popular sentiment, it is not always easy to enforce these standards.

Thus, though in the Islamic tradition, as in all moral traditions, there are standards for the right use of social institutions, in this case polygamous marriage, the ability to enforce these traditions and moral standards is limited by the power differentials of society, and by the very rules of society, in this case allowing polygamy rather than forbidding it outright. For that matter, Islam tries to inculcate standards of character and to produce social solidarity through rituals based on

food taboos that Christianity does not use at all except through such relatively minor customs as Catholics not eating meat during Lent.

Islam relies heavily on personal relationships to integrate society at large, often through ongoing social alliances between social groupings, and the ability to produce and enforce such alliances with limited recourse to bureaucratic controls is what produces personal rather than impersonal forms of social exploitation as a common social problem. Since bureaucratization in unavoidable in modern societies, there is the problem that Islamic societies often do not have the cultural underpinnings of adherence to universalistic rules, other than those promulgated by Islam, to underlie the functioning of modern Islamic societies.

Modern Western societies, sometimes very secular, or sometimes clearly Christian in orientation, are more likely to suffer from the dysfunctions of overbureaucratization and weak personal relationships, and sometimes they overcome these problems and then succeed in producing once again healthy personal relationships, and sometimes they do not and just fantasize about it using the illusions of the mass media.

No doubt both *gemeinschaft*-oriented societies, as is common in the Islamic world, and *gesellschaft*-oriented societies, now quite common in the West, seek to approach the golden mean between these two extremes though coming from opposite directions. Sometimes they succeed, and sometimes they do not.

In the West, there is no pressure to keep harems for reasons of state, and it is obvious the European elite are in no rush to succor poor widows with children, or to be the protectors of plain women who would otherwise be spinsters. The European nobility traditionally when they wanted to escape the limitations of their marriage vows wished merely to be promiscuous, and for the most part, there was no illusion of creating an extended polygamous family. In societies where leading families wish to breed very large families in order to increase family power, partly because developing a culture of extending cooperation beyond the extended family is an ongoing problem, a problem in the Islamic world but also in other traditional cultural areas of the world, one solution is to have a large polygamous family in order to have children from all the wives and to raise the children simultaneously as one family, despite the obvious tensions and rivalries among wives and children that results. The European nobility was never known for raising their legitimate with their illegitimate children as one large, extended family. As their monarchies aged, European rulers developed reputations for lasciviousness, impulsiveness, vanity, and promiscuity, not for their virility and their bravery, until the modern era when the remaining monarchs often are pressured to live up to middle-class standards of respectability in order to assure their legitimacy to rule. The period when they went into battle directly at the front of their troops ended long ago in European history. For the most part, they also are not thought of as the fathers of their nation, in the same way as Arab sheiks traditionally are, or as George Washington, the first President of the United States was metaphorically (though he had no children).

The traditionalism of the Islamic world, even in a secular sense, had to deal with personal exploitation, the vanity found among the rich who had many house

servants, many of whom were slaves. Yet when there was extreme poverty, the poverty-stricken population could see some benefit in this. As to the vanity of having an extended harem, it did serve certain social purposes, such as offering basic protections to female war captives who would otherwise be slave women. Such protections do not exist in the West and ideally should not be necessary because we should not be having wars and war captives, nor having to any great extent house servants, and certainly not house slaves. Of course in the West, the rich sometimes do have mistresses, but without offering them or the wife even the limited above-mentioned protections once available in harems.

Admittedly personal exploitation of the house slave and of the member of the harem can be extreme, and the rich and powerful in the Islamic world in this way may exploit their power. Partly because bureaucratic protections, as opposed to popular custom and popular religion, are often too weak to restrain the rich and powerful in the Islamic world, it is they who often develop a reputation for licentiousness and narcissism, and it is in these societies their version of the middle class who develop a reputation for self-restraint and moderation, and who like America's middle class seek to be the arbiters of society's cultural and religious standards.

In the traditional Catholic culture areas of the Mediterranean (not the Protestant Ethic areas where the middle class try to be the cultural arbiters of society), it is the lower classes who have a reputation for tending to lead licentious, vulgar lives predicated on resort to "bread and circuses," while the elites, not the middle class, are respected because they are the upholders of the cultural standards of society. They seek to control society by their access to the bureaucratic levers of power, partly because their reward for this is the self-respect, as well as the egotism, that they gain, as well as the esteem of others, by becoming "aristocratic" leaders. It is no surprise that modernization of the Islamic world has often taken the form of trying to copy the aristocratic cultures of Europe, or in an earlier era the aristocratic culture of Persia, because of a lack of aristocratic culture among their own originally tribal elites.

In this sense, Islamic areas often have a weak aristocratic tradition at the top of society, as is also true of Anglo-American Protestant areas, and the cultural leaders of society tend to come from the puritanical middle class, as is also true of Anglo-American Protestant areas (though more true of America than of Britain). However, Islamic areas tend to define morality in terms of social solidarity, based on the extended family, and loyalty to communal norms, much more than in Anglo-American Protestant areas. Luckily for us, by the time the middle class in Anglo-American cultural areas had begun to take active part in public affairs, they had learned to incorporate certain aristocratic virtues into their own culture, particularly a respect for learning and adherence to certain norms of public civility, while rejecting certain common aristocratic vices, particularly arrogance and licentiousness.

Still compared to the Islamic world, we in America just expect less from society at large in terms of effective public morality (distrust of amoral leaders at the top is common, partly because they are so hard to control even with our bureaucratic

tools) and place more emphasis on withdrawal from society into small affinity groups than has been the Islamic ideal where the extended family and the surrounding community are the appropriate affinity groups and for traditionalists it is hard for them to imagine any others. This is despite the fact that making and breaking social alliances is an admired social skill in Islamic cultural areas, in some ways much more so than in European cultural areas where bureaucratization of society, and intense social conformity to bureaucratic norms, is often taken for granted, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe. An interesting book relating to the cultural roots of Western bureaucracy is Michael Herzfeld, *The Social Production of Indifference: Exploring the Symbolic Roots of Western Bureaucracy* (Herzfeld 1992).

America in fact relies on the kinds of checks and balances appropriate to such as impersonal society as our own. Emphasis is on expanding the economy so that people can try to buy their way out of their problems. Enforcing public morality, compared to the Islamic world, is increasingly the last resort as a method to produce social order since for many interpersonal relationships can no longer rely on common motivations for cooperation or concern, nor on common processes of social conformity to enforce such motivations, nor on common rituals pertaining to a common culture to serve to enforce such motivations through common behavioral conformity through symbolism (it was easier to do all of this in the eighteenth century at America's founding when in many ways American culture was closer to the traditional cultures of Third World countries than it is today). The classic study of the increasing narcissism of American society is Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in An Age of Diminishing Expectations* (Lasch 1991).

Islamic people, being more likely to be traditionalists, tend to adore personal relationships, and charismatic leaders, such as those who claim to be the fathers of their nation because of their claimed beneficence. Though mothers of the nation are much more rare in politics there, they still have a strong place in actual families which are a central social institution in Islamic societies and not a decaying relic which is what they fear America's family structure is becoming. Americans tend to fear this also, but less than foreigners who indulge in that common human weakness to point out other people's flaws more than their own. Nevertheless, Americans often accuse Islamic traditionalists of tolerating tyranny and of empowering tyrants because they are unwilling to create the bureaucratic checks and balances (not the cultural checks and balances that they have and to a certain extent we in America are losing) that we take for granted. Perhaps, we are both right.

We in America with very few exceptions think of the politics of many modernizing traditional societies, those societies which are awash with the cult of personality so that they treat their political leaders more like religious figures than like politicians, as being unrealistic. It may be high drama, it may serve as a substitute for religious ritual to fill the emptiness of their lives as the closeness of their personal relationships decays, but we do not consider it to be realistic politics, which for us is the art of the possible. We consider their attempt to recapture the closeness of *gemeinschaft* (community-based) societies, even through religion, as impossible.

The Islamic world is filled with rather traditional communities and even whole societies, the remnants of kingdoms and empires, built upon a base of local social order that had a tradition of limited government that was even more limited than America's traditional version of limited government. They do not understand our approach to freedom, which does overlap with theirs though it is not exactly the same, since what they see us as offering them is more bureaucratization, less communally enforced morality, and more materialism. To a large extent, they are right. We also offer them more social justice through the checks and balances of political democracy. What we have here is a failure to communicate.

In fact, America is in many ways less of a bureaucratic society, more concerned with protecting the diversity of local cultures against the social engineering schemes of central government than is found in, for example Europe. The feudalism of medieval Europe, some of it dating back to the relatively advanced bureaucratization of the Roman Empire as preserved by the Catholic Church, was an early version of the bureaucratization that is such a hallmark of Western Culture. Again, if anything America has it less than Europe because the post-feudal America developed its culture partly in rebellion against the European class system, a class system which seems to develop hand in hand with the bureaucratization of society. The pre-feudal traditions of the Islamic world reflect hierarchical societies that are dynamic and that are constantly being built up and torn down through constant social discussion and social interaction. The feudal traditions of Europe reflected hierarchical societies that had become hereditary, and even though they evolved into somewhat meritocratic bureaucracies, the sense of subordination, of inequalities of power, and of manipulation of the led by their leaders has remained.

It is because the complexity of social flux, and the building up of social loyalties, provides the context for moral values that Islam distrusts economic freedom that in the West, sometimes seems to be cut loose from its social moorings, as if economic growth has a value all its own.

Justice as an Islamic ideal deals mostly with equity, that respect for individuals based on all their unique complexities, which is why it is so difficult for them to treat men and women the same since for them this would be to ignore crucial differences (admittedly differences that involve their cultural assumptions and not ours). However, we in the West with our bureaucratic and somewhat antiseptic business environments find it easy to ignore individual differences, including the differences between men and women, and try to just pay attention to social, which means now for the most part business, roles.

America in some ways offers the Islamic world an image of how to preserve local cultures and even local concerns with the real-life consequences of social order and public morality, which the bureaucrats of central government sometimes forget. Admittedly some in the Islamic world may be more attracted to European-style social engineering to the extent they believe America is such a rich country, because of historical circumstances and not necessarily for much longer, that even with all our waste we are so rich that the average person can buy their way out of their problems. A poorer society may feel they have to resort to the state creating

social order, something that Islamists have traditionally feared, for essentially the same reasons we in America have traditionally feared it, but nevertheless may feel at this time in history is necessary. People of the somewhat authoritarian societies of Europe have traditionally feared tyranny, but have feared anarchy more. This is something they have shared with the traditionalists of the Islamic world, even though the traditions of the Islamic world are innately less feudal than European traditions.

In any case, America's major criticism of the bureaucratized, even rather feudal culture of post-Roman Empire Europe and even now is that while the bureaucrats get to run the society, and feel whatever pride they can get from feeling this sense of responsibility for what is ultimately their creation, the mass of people are left to be subservient recipients of bread and circuses. America even at its beginning wanted to create a culture that would uplift both the dignity and the morality of the working class so that they could achieve through politics and the nation it created a dignified and moral life, not bitter escapism. This is something Americans share with the Islamic view of politics, even though we believe a minimal bureaucratization of society, for example to facilitate elections and politics, is necessary in the modern world. Some Islamists still wish this not to be the case.

The Islamic public's limited experience with bureaucratization in traditional societies was with traditional monarchs, who enabled society to avoid having politics at all, and for whatever their responsibilities and resulting tyrannies, they mostly let local communities alone. Even America's democratic politics is more bureaucratic than that.

After all, at one time, America took pride in the ability of its working class to maintain its freedom and independence and to act on its moral conscience which was greatly facilitated by not having to wait hand and foot on their rich masters while having to rely on trickle-down economics to an absurd degree. At one time, individualism was not merely the opportunity for everyone to have the opportunity to compete to enter the elite, so that a few could leave their fellows far behind. Freedom once meant a good life even for those who were not rich. It still can be.

In fact, it is not a big surprise that American racism developed hand in hand with slavery that functioned in some ways like giant open-air factories, so that it was both more impersonal and more racist than Arab slavery. The one protection against exploitation in the American economic system, individual autonomy through economic independence, was totally lacking in the case of slaves, which facilitated the culture at large to treat the black slaves as objects. That is also why American culture did not produce as cultural artifacts stories of tragic love affairs between slave owners and their slaves, which was a tradition, for example, of Arab love poetry, where the slave was free to reject the advances of the master. Instead, to have the power to make such a rejection would have been considered absurd in the American social context because of weak cultural protections for the slave, and the true sense of tragedy was feelings of repulsion by others in polite society at what they considered to be unsuitable attractions between, for example, white men and mulatto women.

Whatever tensions were expressed in Arab love poetry concerning the attractions that slave women held for their masters, the attractions were not considered absurd for racial reasons. That was an American fear and obsession, as social distance was constantly being reinforced, by the anonymity of society, by the economic system that created boundaries and lack of common sympathies between people, that made people treat people as objects, and for slaves this was true most of all. Thus, the impersonal nature of economic exploitation grew by leaps and bounds in the context of American culture and American economic society when slavery was introduced and developed, just as the personal nature of exploitation of slaves grew and evolved under the conditions of traditional Arab society.

For that matter, one reason America has been a place where immigrants have been welcome and treated relatively well compared to some other cultural areas, is not so much because they are accepted, but because they are ignored. One reason is because American culture starts with extreme social distance to begin with, a British cultural tradition that reduces tensions between individuals and between groups such as social classes, and which makes it easy for strangers to be tolerant enough of each other to work together.

To summarize, the American ideal is political democracy as opposed to a social democracy. The latter is the ideal of most tribal societies even when no longer effectively practiced, including those that are the underpinnings of so many Islamic societies. Political democracy is also inherently bureaucratic in the sense that government bestows certain boons upon people, for example the right to vote and free public education, but other than these grants it does not impinge on people's lives and neither does the mass of people have much ongoing influence on it. Thus, the Islamic ideal is social democracy (admittedly not easily achieved in societies more complex than the tribal), though not necessarily political democracy which they see as requiring a bureaucratization of society that they are uncomfortable with, communal consensus being more to their liking.

The result, which Americans often forget but other people remember, is that traditional societies and particularly tribal societies have an intermingling of political, religious, and economic influences as well as institutions such as family ties and religious loyalties that monitor and try to control these influences just because individuals as individuals have little power, which is why personal exploitation, among people who should be intimates but are not, is considered such a danger in such societies. In other words, social power comes from being part of social alliances because individuals and even families by themselves are recognized as being pretty powerless. However, government must also constantly try to justify its own power by maintaining the social alliances that are the source of its power. This means government in traditional Islamic areas is much more personal in orientation than is the American and the European norm.

In a sense, America has limited government because individuals and families gain power in the economic marketplace for which government is mostly irrelevant. Also in a sense, our tradition of limited government means we respect democracy so much that we do not want to stress it by putting too much pressure on it.

Islamic societies define social justice primarily as having equal opportunities in the social sphere, not the political sphere, so that all people through their social networks ideally should have approximately equal opportunities for making worthwhile marriages and worthwhile economic connections. In America, however, the opportunities bestowed upon everyone by government are the only equalities there are, since private social life is made up of extreme inequalities of social power. Nevertheless, the economy is so productive that even with extreme differences in social power, the economy itself produces a minimal quality of life for everyone, that is, no one starves, unlike tribal societies where equality means equality of poverty as well as equality of wealth.

The big gulf between political equality (everyone can vote) and social inequality (but also personal independence because of the opportunities offered to individuals by the marketplace) just does not exist in tribal societies including those that underlay most Islamic societies. For them political, religious and economic influences should mesh with each other, and just as individuals must make and break social alliances, so must leaders always justify their rule on a continuing basis, and not only at election time.

Likewise, these people expect political, religious, and economic ideals to be expressed and coordinated with each other on a continuing basis, arrived at preferably through consensus though the realities of mere leadership power are accepted when the alternative would be anarchy because of social conflict.

These people find it hard to conceive of political, religious, and economic institutions working separately and in uncoordinated fashion, each having their followers who make out of their loyalties a way of life, even though in America this uncoordination is the source of a great deal of individual freedom and in many ways is the American ideal. This situation of a weakly integrated culture, and of society at large being mostly integrated through bureaucratic means as family and communal loyalties decay, is increasingly the state of affairs in Europe, and they worry about it also, probably more so than in America. No matter to what extent people in Europe obsess about social equality, they obsess even more about the loss of social order.

Yes, in America, in theory, social coordination should develop through many individual decisions in a kind of market fashion. But in reality, this works in somewhat haphazard fashion, just as the authoritarian ideal of traditional societies with their emphases on loyalty to communal culture also often works better in theory than in practice.

In a sense, the hypocrisies of America and of Islamic societies are different because what both kinds of societies focus on and what they take for granted, as well as the hypocrisies which they both excuse and refuse to excuse, are different. Islamic societies both treasure a dynamic social process of reaching consensus and are tolerant of the kinds of corruption that are inevitable in societies unified by personal relationships. Thus, they are not surprised when individuals try to develop personal relationships with powerful people in society and are mostly upset when these leaders do not show proper gratitude and graciousness by returning this loyalty by spreading their wealth around. The result is they idealize a society

where everyone has such opportunities for social influence, as a kind of social democracy.

Participants in Islamic societies may even appreciate the impersonal norms of service that we in the West have developed to produce bureaucratic efficiency, which is in many ways the secret of the West's economic success. However, cultures such as those in Islamic areas that encourage emotional responses to everyday routines are likely to encourage individuals to consider this American way of life and to a certain extent even this modern European way of life, to be quite boring.

No doubt the personalistic world of tribal societies has its flaws. The necessity for ongoing personal relationships to defend one's social rights means that individual rights, without the presence of social alliances to back up these rights, are often disregarded. But their ideal of how to reduce this threat, a democracy of ongoing social consensus building through personal relationships, is not our method which is individual independence through access to the goods of the marketplace. By our method, I mean both the American and the European methods, though in fact European bureaucratic culture, in addition to having many subcultures, in general can be described as producing a split in personality that is even more severe there than is found in America.

In Europe, there is extreme bureaucratization of public life, particularly with more interference by the state in private life and in business life than is the case in America, and a common desire for rather intimate personal relationships in private life, a desire that is often not fulfilled so that there is often a romantic longing in private life for intimacies that exist better in literature and in philosophy than in real life. This is also one reason politics there often has a utopian and theoretical quality to it, ideals that are dreamt about, a source of criticism for European religion as well, rather than practiced.

The end result of our conflicts, and our misunderstandings, with the Islamic world is that modern happiness (at least in its American and European version) is concerned primarily with what money can buy, either earned directly or as the result of government subsidies, and not as in most traditional ways of life including those that underlay Islamic societies, as the direct result of non-economic institutions (usually religious or political in orientation, often a combination of both) that try to produce "meaningful" social order directly, and in a sense produces economic growth as a side effect.

Regarding the enforcement of moral values, which is one goal of politics, Islamic values tend to be communal, while Anglo-American values (reflecting a Protestant heritage) tend to be individualistic and Catholic family values tend to be bureaucratic (admittedly in many societies a pre-industrial bureaucratic tradition derived originally from the traditions of the Roman Empire and Roman Law and somewhat less harsh than the traditions of modern industrial bureaucracies that reign supreme in America's business culture but are given as little power as possible in America's family life).

In the Anglo-American tradition, individuals regarding their private lives follow a few rules and improvise or muddle through the rest. In the Catholic tradition,

there is a holistic vision of moral community, but it is enforced less through individual initiative and more through bureaucratic controls. Islamic family values tend to be communal because individuals are bonded together by many small values, not a few big ones, which makes them like Catholics, but they also have more of an individualistic (often puritanical) sense of social responsibility to the whole, like Protestants (especially of the Anglo-American sort), but the goal is responsibility for and with the community, not merely practicing individual rectitude and answering only to God, which makes them like Catholics again.

Also, there is just more of a living tradition, because Islamic societies even as secular entities tend to be more based on tribal or traditionally communal social structures than America is, that Islamic leaders (including secular leaders) should lead by moral example. This is easier said than done, but the tradition remains alive just because there are enough local communities where personal interaction between the leaders and the led remains a real possibility. The Catholic tradition is inherently bureaucratic so that the leaders of the Church set a moral example, but the mass of people do not so much copy their priests as are ruled by them. For that matter, they react in a similar way to secular authority, who on occasion may find their authority attacked by the priests, but ordinarily they have their own culture and their own sources of power, while they also rule bureaucratically.

In America, the whole issue of leaders leading by moral example is sidestepped, because though such a tradition exists to a certain extent locally, particularly in rural areas (though obviously there is much hypocrisy), national leaders particularly are expected to be leaders of bureaucracy. They are not expected to know their followers or to be known in return, nor particularly to lead by moral example. In a sense, Islamic government and American government (influenced by Anglo-American Protestant traditions) have their similarities of trying to limit the damage caused by anonymous central governments far from the people, but the Islamic tradition still retains a hope for at least potentially converting the state into something approximating a giant tribal confederation, or even one, big, happy family, while America has no hope at all for that.

Even Catholic countries have somewhat more hope of developing an overall communal feeling, in the modern era often taking the form of bureaucratically induced nationalism, than we do in America. Instead, we put consumer society on a pedestal that allows for a maximum of individual decision-making and which allows a maximum of individual decision-making in private life to be coordinated with on-the-job subordination to bureaucratic authority and likewise to the state's bureaucratic authority when necessary. Even movements for cultural and religious revival tend to be individualistic in America, producing affinity groups at best, competing for members and perhaps way off in the future converting the nation at large little by little to a life of virtue; either that or when that does not work, they may try to gain bureaucratic power through politics and gain political allies.

In communal cultures including Islamic ones, there is often the development of a martyr complex, a belief that feeling wounded by the necessity of withdrawing from a community because it has been corrupted through subservience to unworthy leaders can be remedied by overthrowing these leaders and coming in as

conquering heroes, returning to the esteem and love of the community, and in the end using the powers provided by communal interaction and communal conformity for what they consider to be more noble purposes. Obviously, fantasies of communal redemption are at work here.

This could be held within reasonable limits within a true intimate community where real-life knowledge about the characters of other people can occur, but in a newly anonymous society, forces of wishful thinking are often given great play. This is why Americans who take for granted anonymous conditions accept it even though they do not like it, and have no intention of encouraging mass hysteria, and also do not know how to deal with it very well because it does not occur here very much. We encourage "missionary types" in America for all kinds of causes because our state of emotional repression in an anonymous society is so common that we encourage almost any methods for emotional arousal (which is why entertainment is so important in America) and because we expect they will produce at worst individual cases of hysteria, not mass hysteria built upon group loyalties.

One tentative conclusion is that all modern and modernizing societies have evolved away from their roots, away from their core traditions as well as supporting circumstances which justified their cultural institutions. America has evolved away from its traditions of puritanical individualism which justified its reliance on individual decision-making in the marketplace, that and the fact that many social goods are no longer provided in the community and in the family (and are not simple commodities that can be judged at a glance in market fashion either). For that matter, the personal character of the people making the social decisions that turn into the culture of the society has changed as the social pressures of an anonymous, competitive society now increasingly produce not so much puritanical individualists, as narcissistic individualists.

On the other hand, Europe has evolved away from simple hierarchical societies where elites felt a sense of loyalty to those they ruled, even when they ruled bureaucratically, and the problems they dealt with were traditional enough that traditional solutions were also known and sufficient. They did not need an extraordinary amount of input from the people they led, and what they needed they got.

Islam has evolved away from small-scale, intimate societies where the state could be conceived as being like a large family, or at least a tribal confederation, with the leader supposing to lead through moral example (thought this was often more in theory than in practice), and would use individualistic or bureaucratic solutions, or even more likely solutions based on communal traditions, with full input from the people affected which is the tribal ideal.

Europe and America obviously have gone further in the direction of using predominantly bureaucratic and individualistic, market-based solutions to dealing with problems of social order, respectively, and both know their own traditions quite well and know the benefits and costs of the other's traditions much less well. Islamic societies know individualistic and bureaucratic solutions to providing social order even less well, but they do have their own advantages, at least in

communal settings. Whether they can combine their traditions in this area with the ability to deal with the problems of now big, in the population sense, and anonymous societies whose very anonymity predisposes them to bureaucratic and/or individualistic, market-driven solutions to their problems is something waiting to be seen.

As to the kinds of psychological stresses, and the kinds of interpersonal exploitation that are likely to result, if history is any lesson, there is the danger that because of the stresses of change in increasingly anonymous societies, and the longings for interpersonal closeness that can be dreamed about but not fulfilled, that exploitation dominated by economic motives, possibly motivated by sadistic motives encouraged by paranoia, and sexual perversions can also be added to the mix, all of which are kinds of exploitation that easily arise in impersonal social settings, or in personal social settings that are becoming impersonal, that such things may get worse before they get better. We hope not, but unfortunately one of the lessons of history is that we often do not learn from history.

Though there are often incentives for exploitation in personal settings like the family simply because the opportunities are there, sometimes exploiters can be shamed. In more impersonal settings, appealing to a sense of honor is often difficult to achieve because a sense of honor is what is lacking. In modern societies, sometimes a sense of humor is used during social occasions to draw attention to the social tensions that keep people apart and hamper social solidarity. Luckily, there may still be a sense of guilt, among the powerful who benefit from this state of affairs, but if that is lost, then truly that society will be in trouble.

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Part IV
Conclusion

Chapter 11
Politics from the Bottom Up, Rather Than the Top Down

An illustration of how democratic culture encourages politics percolating up from the bottom of society, or at least from somewhere in the middle, rather than all initiative starting at the top of society and percolating down, will reveal how much room there is for development of a truly democratic culture in all modern societies. It will also reveal something about the relation between democratic culture and moral character.

For example, in case you have not noticed, there is a tendency in politics, even democratic politics though it occurs also in oligarchical politics, to develop policies, let's take America, for example, that consist of just throwing money at problems. This kind of politics will create jobs, even if it does not do anything else such as solving problems in an efficient manner, creating a livable society in the process.

Let's start with a thought experiment. Imagine a king who is willing to provide support to starving peasants if they support him in turn by persecuting a minority religion and supporting his war with a neighboring country. In other words, a political program that most everybody can agree on, helping the starving, is only supported by those at the top if the people at the bottom agree to support quite controversial programs that will bring in them as political allies, out of a sense of subservience, for those at the top.

This model serves well to describe much of modern American politics, and for that matter in many other democratic societies as well. But to get back to America, the political parties the Democrats and the Republicans have become much like the aristocratic parties of eighteenth century Britain. The Democrats as the party of the cultural elite are like the Tories, and the Republicans as the party of the business elite are like the Whigs. True, the Democrats get their mass base of support from the urban working class, but they still tend to get their marching orders from the professional classes who make money off of the working class. Programs to help the working class offer them services, but the money often sticks in the pockets of the professional classes. And the Republicans get their mass base of support from small-town moralists and property owners, but the party is still dominated by big businesses who flick like lounging hippopotami with their tails against upstart

small business competitors. Thus, both parties take for granted the votes of their mass base, while often driving their parties to serve the interests of their swing groups, these small but powerful special interests.

True, unlike Europe, in America there is a strong middle class that serves as the gyroscope of society, coming up with compromises that both the rich and the poor can live with, since elements of the middle class associate with and communicate with both. In Europe, "intellectuals" serve as the third class beside the rich and the poor, though they tend to come from the rich who leave for the greener pastures of public service because they are bored. They serve as the alternative to the middle class as being the source of initiative in society, largely because the middle class there is considered for the most part just another interest group that does not communicate with the rest of society, and it ends up not a particularly influential one.

In fact, there seems to be an "intellectualizing" of government functions throughout the modern world. Partly, this is because it is thought that the mass of people will not give honest answers when it comes to asking whether money should be spent on them. So instead, outsiders are asked to survey the situation and come to conclusions independently. That they often make mistakes by being so far removed from the people they serve is an unfortunate side effect.

That is why traditionally in continental Europe government bureaucrats are quite efficient in an engineering sense, but often do not represent the mass of people, or even necessarily understand them well. Just as in the days of the kings when civil servants facilitated the will of their royal masters, nowadays they are facilitators for the ideological parties who come to power who claim to represent the will of the people, and if they don't, these bureaucrats do not feel qualified to judge them.

Traditionally in Britain, the high civil servants were more likely than their continental counterparts to be liberal-arts-educated generalists who communicated with both the rich and the poor. In a land devoted to liberty and limited government, they would come up with rationales for what the government should do and what it should not. This was the ideal, if not always the practice. Yet even in the past when patronage politics reared its head, this was particularly true in the eighteenth century, these civil servants were expected to be refined rather than boorish, and no matter how they got their jobs to not too greatly embarrass their benefactors.

This was originally the American ideal too, especially since at the time of the American Revolution, the colonists were quite disgusted with British patronage politics. What they wanted was the British ideal, not always well practiced that the notables of the community should represent their neighbors. Particularly for the politicians themselves, they liked the idea of amateurs who made their point, that is they acted on their original purposes for being elected, and then went back to private life, not professional politicians who would forever feed at the public trough and would then create political machines in order to continue to do so. This ideal did not last very long, as practice, even in America (Ketcham 1981).

Politicians have, however, learned something over the years, in America but also in other places. They have learned to deal with public mistrust of their motives and their actions; they have become experts at feeding at the public trough as feared, by relying on ever more attempts at "spin." "Spin," which is a

combination of excuse-making, distorting, and outright lying, was perfected to handle the scandals of "celebrities" by discussing their lives with the media in a manner to accentuate the entertainment value of their actions and to minimize drawing any conclusions and learning anything.

With such an emphasis on image, is it any wonder that the temptation to rely on image is increasingly important in politics? Like the monarchs of Europe who eventually became more important as a place in an organizational chart than for what they did, the temptation is for political leaders to become figureheads too, merely fronts for the "advisors" who provide them with ideas but whose ideas they are not competent to judge, and so advisors often have become intellectual "celebrities" in their own right (Silberman 1993).

Once ensuring the independence of what would otherwise be the dependent classes, which is basically the working class in general, and continuously judging the honor, and the competence, of the leadership classes, that they remain worthy to rule, was what Thomas Jefferson, that founder of the ideal of American democracy as opposed to merely American republicanism, considered to be the goal of American politics. He was the founder of what later became called the Democratic Party. But this is not easily done nowadays. How easily we forget!. By the way, the Republican Party is also a democratic party, but a more moralistic and a more business-oriented one than its rival.

So it must be remembered once again, whenever an election season once again looms on the horizon, that helping the working class is helping the mass of people, not endlessly trumpeting social mobility for a small minority of them. That instead is the cult of celebrity. It benefits the mass media in their goal to sell entertainment and even fantasy to the mass of people, and it more than anything else supports the goals of the upper class by expanding their social base and so defuses criticism of them.

Again, once ensuring the independence of what would otherwise be the dependent classes, which is basically the working class in general, and continuously judging the honor, and the competence, of the leadership classes, that they remain worthy to rule, was what Thomas Jefferson considered to be the goal of American politics. It is what made the American Revolution a model for all antimonarchical revolutions from that time forward. However, what he feared for America was that its gains would not last, that it would once again develop what Europe already had, figurehead rulers. It would be a real pity if what he feared should have come to pass, not only for America, but for all the other democracies of the world, some long standing in existence, some recently established.

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Chapter 12
Means and Ends in Personal Relationships

The following analysis provides a useful general framework for analyzing the nature of authoritarianism and narcissism, which can in turn provide the cultural underpinnings for democratic societies, though in the modern environment, there seems to be more of an affinity between mass narcissism and democratic societies. We can start by noticing that the emotional tone of our lives and why certain acts are more enjoyable than others comes more from identifying with others, appreciating others, showing concern or wanting the concern of others, and doing activities with others than from any other reason except for self-esteem and attitudes toward oneself. Thus, attitudes toward others and attitudes toward oneself are inevitably intertwined.

However, social evolution is affecting the meaningfulness of life and is putting pressure on psychological defenses to adapt and react because of stresses regarding personal relationships. One result is a good deal of ambivalence. Ambivalence can reflect less familial loyalty and even fewer opportunities and expectations for romantic intimacy, all of which is a common result of increasing anonymity in modern society. In effect, people are spreading themselves thin emotionally, and this is true for an increasing number of modern societies, filled with many, though not deep, social relationships. Electronic means of communication as a substitute for face-to-face interaction only exacerbate the process. The probabilities for having various kinds of achievements, and also various kinds of social relationships, also change as class relationships change through social and cultural evolution, something emphasized in the writings of Max Weber, and others.

But what do we mean by deep relationships and intimacy, and how do different types of relationships have different requirements for producing emotional feelings of fulfillment? Certainly not all relationships are of the same sort. Familial relationships, friendships, and romantic relationships all differ in the mixture of psychological needs that are met, and the resulting psychological responses they produce.

Existential realities produce boundaries that limit the options for psychological development. Thus, some needs can be realistically met only in relationships strengthened by loyalty and shared duty that are characteristic of familial

relationships, though there are usually some shared interests and intimacy as well. Yet this loyalty and duty can prove tiring, and the shared interests provided by friendship can prove an exhilarating alternative at times, involving common "fun" activities, and at other times a source of emotional relaxation as others provide an audience for narcissistic expression and emotional release. Though friendship also requires a sense of duty and loyalty, it is typically less than found among family members.

On the other hand, a romantic relationship requires rapport that goes beyond mere duty and loyalty and goes beyond sharing of superficial interests, though it needs both loyalty and sharing of interests as well. In fact, such intensity cannot easily be sustained for just two people, let alone for a large number of people in a community, though it is true some communities are more conducive for intimate sharing of feelings than others.

The German sociologist, Georg Simmel, maintained that women are ordinarily more holistic than men, reacting to the world as an emotional whole, and so provide a general emotional environment for the family that is supportive of the male, who is more oriented toward objects and control, and by reacting to the world in bits and pieces is less able to enjoy everyday experience (Oakes 1984). Such complementary emotions are especially true of intimate romantic relationships.

One consequence of these differences is a feeling of stagnation in marriage when partners no longer stimulate each other. One solution is to become more alike, like work buddies with common goals. Simmel would maintain that the differences between men and women are crucial for them to stimulate each other, though no doubt an element of friendship would be useful as well to provide shared interests. Another solution to habituation in marriage is for partners to maintain their spheres of privacy. Then, they can basically go their own way when common endeavors like raising the family are out of the way (Lindbergh 1975). This has always been an option, though the modern emphasis on individual achievement certainly stresses this option by making individual self-satisfaction coordinated with mutual goals problematic even early in a marriage. One effect has been the growth of serial marriages, of marriages that have a definite life cycle ending in decay as individual self-centeredness inevitably reasserts itself.

These different kinds of personal relationships differ because of the varying proportions they contain of different kinds of bonds and of different kinds of emotional needs that these bonds both produce and satisfy. One way to look at pathology in relationships is to try to determine what makes up relationships under various kinds of circumstances, and what a disproportion of factors would mean.

Thus, familial relationships, friendships, and romantic relationships, at least as conceived of in such Western societies as America, form a continuum where as one moves toward the pole of romance, duty and loyalty become less important and intimate sharing of feelings becomes more important as a goal. There are social and cultural factors at work in different societies determining how intimate familial relationships (otherwise based on common duties and loyalties) and friendly relationships (otherwise based on common, but rather shallow for the most

part, interests) should become, how romantic and intimate romantic relationships should become (in terms of sharing of feelings and which feelings), and to what extent mercenary interests, desire for security and especially economic security should enter into all of these relationships.

In other words, the ideal proportions of duty, interest, and intimacy in various kinds of social relationships, and the understandings of what constitutes pathology in these kinds of relationships reflect cultural norms. They also reflect the existential realities that are part of the human experience, that in turn reflect a combination of instinctual (mostly emotional) needs and the way social organization provides opportunities for the expression of these needs.

For example, there are marriages of convenience held together by simple, shared interests like those of friendships, by duty, and by economic advantage. These bonds can produce ritualized encounters that reinforce feelings of emotional comfort and resulting dependency, and the continuation of these marriages does require these kinds of bonds, yet without continuing to grow in their emotional feelings by sharing deep interests and feelings toward each other what they have in common cannot be called romance.

Extreme versions of ritualized relationships where mutual communication of interests and/or feelings has almost disappeared are marriages for money, friendships held together only by team sports, mutually complementary psychopathology which can be found in many kinds of personal relationships, and mutual pathos (as in a community based on religious feeling). To show how difficult it is to separate human nature from cultural elaborations of it, consider Simmel's belief that a man, because of his tendency to relate to objects, is fulfilled by women in general, while a female, because of her holistic attitude, needs an individual man to make her feelings concrete. In other words for a woman, social accomplishment, and in this case a personal relationship, is the ultimate accomplishment, while for a man relationships to objects almost in an engineering sense take up much more of his interests, which means that in old age she can return to her holistic attitude and maintain her independent interests more successfully than her mate who when he is no longer working and creating has much less to enjoy (Oakes 1984, p. 108–110). Simmel also seems to be saying there is a natural tendency to fulfill the role of wife, as there is to fulfill the role of husband based on their instinctual predilections complementing each other, though no doubt such instincts can be overruled by environmental factors that help form individual character, and in any case, individual differences, including differences in individual interests, also exist.

Personal relationships can be considered to be entering pathological states when one type starts turning into another, for example, romance into friendship, or family feeling, such as parent–child, into romance, that is when personal relationships are turning into inappropriate types given the circumstances, the environments, and what would be expected to be the normal needs of the people involved. Another cause for pathological states in personal relationships is simple failure. The reason can be personal psychopathology, environmental stresses, force applied to individuals to conform, misunderstandings of each other or of overall circumstances; as well I expect other possible reasons.

Since personal relationships are held together by both behavior and feelings, problems in relationships can reflect malfunctions in both areas. Familial relationships tend to be more ritualized and to suffer more from inappropriate behaviors than do romantic relationships, which tend to suffer more from inappropriate feelings. Even though proportions differ, obviously any relationship requires both behaviors and feelings.

Behavior and/or feelings that are not justified by reality produce various sorts of failures that induce psychological tensions. A prime example is engaging in feelings or behavior inappropriate to the type of relationship at hand, for example, feeling romantic feelings in a relationship that can objectively produce only friendship. When one misconstrues the type of relationship one is in, there is the danger of crossing what amounts to forbidden boundaries. A common psychological result of resulting stress is hysteria (anxiety expressed outward) or depression (anxiety expressed inward). When a change of state from one type of relationship to another is difficult but not impossible, cultural rites of passage are often there to help. Sometimes, a culture creates a rite of passage out of a hysterical outbreak, and the society as a whole ends up fooling itself, as in the "witch-hunts" of modern totalitarianism.

It is useful to look at the relation between culture and personality, especially as they interact and form the basis for personal relationships. Even when discussing the place of ethics in cultural values, it should be kept in mind that the place of law in culture is that it emphasizes the performance of a rule. However, ethics is much more. It includes pursuit of an aim, exemplification of a virtue, and fulfillment of a role. Western civilization emphasizes this rule aspect of law and with it the danger of following the wrong rule. The East ritualizes behavior more, emphasizing less the loyalty of rule followers and more self-actualization and social duty in its broadest aspect.

Injustices produced by pedantic rule followers of unjust leaders is one of the characteristics of Western totalitarianism with its source in extreme bureaucratization of society, while more patrimonial societies who treat the ruler as a "father figure" or "mother figure" or even as a saintly guru figure results more often in injustices that reflect leaders' thoughtless snobbery more than outright cruelty, often sins of omission more than sins of commission. Admittedly, both tendencies can be found in most civilizations of any serious complexity, they just differ by degree at various historical times.

How does normal, everyday existence affect emotional balance and self-esteem processes is a critical question for the study of culture and personality. To provide some orientation, a very useful overview on this subject is John Ingham, *Psychological Anthropology Reconsidered* (Ingham 1996). For two classic works in this field, I recommend Anthony F.C. Wallace, *Culture and Personality*, 2nd edition (Wallace 1970), and an old classic, Ralph Linton, *The Cultural Background of Personality* (Linton 2010—this book was first published in 1945). I also recommend Conerly Casey and Robert B. Edgerton, eds., *A Companion to Psychological Anthropology: Modernity and Psychocultural Change* (Casey and Edgerton 2007). A short but useful introduction to this field is Charles Lindholm,

Culture and Identity: The History, Theory, and Practice of Psychological Anthropology (Lindholm 2007). And for a classic in psychoanalytic anthropology, I recommend George Devereux, *Basic Problems of Ethnopsychiatry* (Devereux 1980).

As for my own summary, there are important questions to be asked of any civilization. For example, what are the social processes by which extreme authoritarians (e.g., Nazis) become emotionally dead, reify society (treat their theories and ideologies as reality) and find scapegoats? How does everyday existence affect emotional balance and self-esteem processes, for example, making it difficult to experience grief, anger, anxiety, despair, and the comforting emotions of hope and relief except by projection? Thus, the routinization of social despair in Hindu Indian society by fatalism because of one's hereditary caste position is unstable in Western society. The closest parallel is the non-fatalistic Christian sense that sin has no connection to social roles, but that one, even if disrespected here, can be rewarded in heaven.

There are a good number of similar psychological processes that occur in most societies, though the actual expression reflects partly cultural modes of expression as well as individual idiosyncrasies. Thus, there have been until fairly recently witch accusation mass hysterias in Western as well as non-Western societies, and while belief in witches has declined in the West, analogous "witch hunt" accusations against disrupters of society still exist, the Nazi movement, and more recent neo-Nazi analogs, being prime examples. Many societies also have millenarian mass hysterias, antinomianism (religious revival movements), as well as individual hysterias and depressions, which tend to be more amorphous when there is no clear cultural interpretation as to the source or cure for one's unhappiness.

In general, depression reflects mourning over loss of love (or in a more general sense, loss of one's place in society that offers a meaningful existence including hope for the future), while hysteria reflects the eruption of repressed erotic or aggressive feelings. Hostility may also be turned inward as masochism or to spite others through failure (as in being passive aggressive). There is also a situation where hostility, otherwise it would be hysterical and explosive, is turned inward as depression because of rejection by a loved one. Fear of rejection or betrayal can result in hysterical hostility expressed outward.

One's tools, sometimes treated as existential realities, are given by one's society, culture, and individual personality. They may include religious ritual appeasing the ancestors, reconciliation with a monotheistic God as an explanation of one's duties and responsibilities, now metaphysical as well as social, and projecting authoritarian loyalties onto a state or party or religion. Any of these methods can be applied to meet strong dependency needs that were either overly satisfied in childhood, so now expected, or not satisfied enough so that a leader can become the substitute parent one never had. Under somewhat different circumstances, particularly if cultural traditions teach one not to expect it, no outside conditions will be treated as substitutes for childhood relationships, or the frustrations of childhood relationships may be such that no attempts to serve as the latter-day substitutes will be trusted. As you can see, there are many possibilities.

The result may be in a somewhat authoritarian society, honor as social validation, and security by being encapsulated in a social structure; or as in America with its loose social ties, success as acting out idealized achievement through routinized competition at work or in sports. This routinized competition allows the practice of socially approved skills and offers rewards for accomplishment that validate self-worth, such as social admiration or popularity with the opposite sex, or offers rewards in the realm of fantasy, such as earned relaxation treated as the final reward for exerted effort but in addition becoming the final escape from the social strain of anomie and competition. Relaxation may also be contributed to by sexual license, the pleasures of wealth, or religious euphoria.

In the West according to most of the religions practiced there, a person is the instrument of God and tries to seek His pleasure, thus the emphasis on action as a sign of character. In the East, a person is the vessel of the spiritual (or the divine) and tries to participate in its essence, thus the emphasis on contemplation and meditation as a sign of character. Thus, Western individualism, which from early on because of monotheism emphasized individual self-absorption sufficient to provide understanding how to avoid sin, is a common and not unexpected result to the breakdown of social hierarchy, with resulting anomie, confusion, ambition for advancement now unrestrained by social order, and guilt over failure of both the moral and material kind. An extreme version of this is the Protestant Ethic that arose with the cultural, economic, political, and religious upheavals that came with the end of the Middle Ages in Europe. Thus, do existential questions arising out of both culture and social interactions give the purposes that orient people and that they use to evaluate their relationships.

For a discussion of the evolution in modern Western society of these changes in social constraints and cultural ideals, see Michael Harrington, *The Politics at God's Funeral* (Harrington 1985). For discussion of the Anglo-American case, see John Carroll, *Puritan, Paranoid, Remissive* (Carroll 1977). For a non-Western example, see Robert Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, 2nd edition (Bellah 1985). From a historical perspective, you might want to take a look at Jacques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life 1500 to the Present* (Barzun 2000). For a book more specifically dealing with the evolution of recent trends particularly in the high and low culture of literature and art, see Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism,* 2nd edition (Colinescu 1987).

The Christian but not only Christian philosophy that society should be held together by love reflects the importance of love in the Western tradition, especially the Western conception of it. No doubt the modern conception of love is much more than the inward longing for acceptance and being accepted as in the Christian tradition. There is, at least nowadays, a strong erotic and competitive element. Feelings of communal belonging that dominated such small-scale societies as those of ancient Greece, and the religious unity of the West in the Middle Ages, have given way to an individualism that cannot conceptualize fulfillment, for the most part, except at the level of intense personal experience with a few others.

Unfortunately, the intensity is partly produced by a great deal of longing as a result of anomie and loneliness, introspective longings and anticipation of future fulfillment, and fantasy displacement, made necessary by the deferral of gratification so built into modern socialization for future, rather than for present, accomplishment. People increasingly marry late, though this is not necessarily true for sex, so this is one reason marriage is idealized. Marriages and other close personal relationships are in fact offered as alternative sources of emotional satisfaction because for many people there is lack of emotional satisfaction offered in the community and on the job. And when this does not work, there is a third source of emotional release that is highlighted in modern societies, and that is commercial sources of entertainment. Modern democratic societies for the most part accept these sources of emotional fulfillment as legitimate individual goals, to be facilitated if possible by society, and do not seek to force alternative sources of emotional fulfillment, particularly "virtue" as conceived by various religious traditions, onto people except in a very basic sense (this was less true in the nineteenth century). Modern democratic societies emphasize the virtue of mutual tolerance, but other than this are more likely to build on virtue already present in a community, rather than to try to rebuild a sense of virtue (except though crime control measures) that has already been lost.

Regarding lack of emotional satisfaction, there is a continuum ranging from the purely biologically oriented theorists who think people are programmed by instincts to those existentialists who believe that all people are programmed for is to have meaning in their lives, an intellectual satisfaction according to some, but according to most the result of good interpersonal relationships that must embody certain values, in this case kindness, concern, justice, and even a little accomplishment and aggression. For a book on personal relationships from a psychoanalytic perspective, see Stephen Mitchell, *Relationality: From Attachment to Intersubjectivity* (Mitchell 2003). For a more sociological approach to problems with human relationships, see Gary Thom, *Human Nature of Social Discontent: Alienation, Anomie, Ambivalence* (Thom 1984).

As to the inauthenticity of poor quality personal relationships, excessive conformity to the point of subordination results in remaining narcissism that is more oriented to the negative identity of avoiding pain, including pain of memory, than to positive pleasure. Avoiding pain does not necessarily mean passivity. It can mean covering up pain with aggression and the kind of ecstasy brought about by extreme excitement that allows forgetfulness of the world. Yet, the denial of the joys of aggressive achievement found among those aesthetes who admire pure contemplation (and pure schizoid withdrawal) above all is going to the opposite, and also unhealthy, extreme.

Joel Shor and Jean Sanville in *Illusion in Loving: Balancing Intimacy and Independence* (Shor and Sanville 1978) discuss how underlying character structure determines how one reacts to separation or divorce. Paranoid fantasies of abandonment to fragmentation and dissolution is a result of a tendency to feeling deprived of basic trust, depressive fantasies of isolation in dangerous open spaces or in oppressive confinement is a result of a tendency to feeling suppressed and

being denied personal autonomy, and reactive fantasies of devaluation and impotent rage is a result of a tendency to feeling frustrated by lack of interpersonal exchange (Shor and Sanville 1978, p. 107).

There remains the question is feelings justified by reality (i.e., realism) all that important for self-esteem, or is resiliency based on fantasy, dreaming, and ritual sufficient? There is a common moral bias that, in the long run, authenticity of feeling (not playing a role) validated by realistic perceptions of reality is the best guarantee of a healthy identity. But whether natural processes of resiliency foster mental growth according to this standard has always been subject to sharp debate regarding the values of "being realistic" and "not fooling oneself."

For example, we often ask ourselves if the illusion of love, at least in the short run, is as psychologically useful as the real thing, especially since love is often an ideology of the self-fulfilling prophecy sort, where we love those for whom, because of an ongoing social relationship, it is expected or useful for us to love. The difference between this and "true" love may exist but may not always be a useful distinction, since imitations of the real thing are often treated as good enough. This is to be expected when ideologies are so often cognitions used to give form and structure to vague, ambiguous feelings, resulting in a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. But then, a medieval peasant in Europe would probably not have used modern standards in describing how he "loved" his wife, though he might have in describing how he "loved" God (see Reddy 2012).

There are of course cultural cycles in the history of ideologies that mold identities from the outside. Taking the history of passion as part of romantic passion in the West, during the seventeenth century, passion was important, though not necessarily a basis for marriage, and for high-status groups, gallantry was the means of communicating or at least stimulating it. By the eighteenth century, passion was considered an achievement of frivolity, and not a basis for romantic marriage, whose best hope was friendship. By the romantic period of the nineteenth century, passion was again in vogue as a hoped-for basis for marriage, as other bases for social identity, particularly those based in community, but also in the extended family and even in friendship, had become weaker.

While we in the educated classes at the beginning of the twenty-first century are still supportive of love as the basis for marriage, we are still not quite so sure how often it naturally (that is to say socially) occurs, so that the ideology of love no longer functions so easily as a self-fulfilling prophecy. For many people, the ideology may consist of longing for what does not exist because it is purely idealistic and often fanciful, given the constraints of modern atomistic and narcissistic society, a return to the romance of pure longing, where the cult of romance was when it entered Western culture during the age of troubadours in the Middle Ages. For more background information on this entire subject from which the above analysis is taken, see Niklas Luhmann, *Love as Passion: The Codification of Intimacy* (Luhmann 1986).

In fact, we have developed two versions of the ideology of romance: The childish version sold to teenagers, and the more tragic version accepted by adults, partly because teenagers are so poorly prepared for the realities of adulthood,

including the realities of romance. The adult version, oddly enough, since it reflects personal experiences, is the least communicated and discussed in modern society. Fantasy sells because of the mass media; personal experiences do not. Now even adults tend to relax by regressing to childish fantasies, not by dealing with present realities.

Love is increasingly not a social institution, governed by norms for social relationships, but an asocial fantasy. Modern romance, at least for adults, includes a strong sense of failure because the norms of relationships are breaking down just when the fantasies are becoming stronger than ever. Modern romance is thus an institution rooted more in longings than in relationships, and the mass media are much better at portraying what occurs before marriage than what occurs afterward.

To get back to resiliency of the personality, catharsis (overcoming trauma and its resulting fixations by releasing emotions, in a sense releasing psychic energy) is the much more common process of childhood and childlike behavior, while cathexis (creating psychic bonds and tying up emotions through emotions) seems to be the primary psychic process of adulthood. Existential angst seems to be more a problem of the educated classes, who intellectualize their problems, while the uneducated deal with their problems more with sheer defensiveness, and though obviously there are mixed cases.

To show the lack of agreement on the nature of the resiliency process in the personality, it can be noted there is a division of labor, a difference of perspective, in the psychoanalytic (let alone the psychiatric, and general psychological) community between those who follow Freud's emphasis on instinct to emphasis the mechanism in resiliency of catharsis, and those who emphasize the lack of free-floating instincts (what instincts there are they see in the modern world leading mainly to anxiety) and thus emphasize cathexis. Even in the early days of psychoanalysis Jung, in opposition to Freud's emphasis on potential instinctual satisfaction, emphasized symptoms such as approach/avoidance inconstancy and overall debilitation and weakness as symptoms of weak ego structure, of lack of ego objects as opposed to blocked instincts that, when unblocked, could gush out. Most modern psychiatrists and psychoanalysts downplay instinctual repression as the main cause for modern problems of mental health because they recognize that instincts and the people who have them so often live in unloving circumstances for which there are no practical outlets.

In reality, both mechanisms of catharsis and cathexis are necessary to undo psychic trauma, in the first case to overcome fixation on bad emotional experiences (as if it is a kind of scar tissue), and the latter to deal with a meaningless, boring, lonely life. In fact, modern psychiatry, perhaps too much, focuses on overall anxiety as a kind of generalized fear the whole (self) has of its dysfunctional parts rather than looking at primary traumas of particular emotions as Freudian psychoanalysis so emphasized (but in an anonymous society, it is easier to look to the future than to recover one's youth).

Nevertheless, here is a description of causes of anxiety, of the sort a psychoanalyst might appreciate:

Fear of falling apart—dysfunctional ego.
Fear of losing control—dysfunctional superego.
Fear of being overwhelmed by emotion—dysfunctional id.

In a sense, the whole (self) has fear of its dysfunctional parts, and of the environment that causes this to be. The psychoanalytic goal of insight is a mixture of various degrees of cathexis, cathexis and suggestion where reality testing is predominant (by the ego rather than being dominated by the superego or id), so that the ego constantly tests the effects of catharsis, cathexis, and suggestion rather than just giving into them. It is the proper functioning of a differentiated psychic structure of superego, ego, and id.

In general, authoritarian people, and especially working-class people of the sort who have little power over their everyday lives, tend to enjoy ritual and tend not to expect or hope for experiences of an ecstatic or self-actualizing sort, especially if controlling social circumstances guarantee that there will be contemplation involved, not ecstatic release of emotion. This holds true except when social controls break down, in which case people may grab for power and for emotional release as in the violence of the mob, and then they still aim for catharsis and not creation of new ego objects through contemplation.

Even when they do have an ideology of self-actualization (a common modern cultural ideal), this will more likely lead to stoic self-control and extinction of desire (and extinction of too much self-consciousness) than to elaboration of consciousness through meditative contemplation. This is the common reaction to lack of choice in a bureaucratized society, full of anonymity, and a weak sense of intimate community. As in the stages of mourning, the end result is acceptance and often a certain detachment from the existential realities of a good life (conceptualized in most moral traditions as a just society), which one accepts as never being able to be fulfilled.

At the very same time, they often give loyalty to, and perhaps unconsciously identify with or at least live through, people of a higher social class who do have a greater variety of experiences, engage in more self-actualization, and at the very least take more chances. Sometimes, the admiration, and perhaps unconscious identification, is not with upper-class people in a secular sense but with religious adepts, as if the secular world is something to be escaped from (in the Hindu/Buddhist tradition) or reformed (in the Jewish/Christian/Islamic tradition).

It should also be remembered that emotions, and in more severe cases defense mechanisms, enter into existential dilemmas, for adult frustration is far more complex than the simple frustrations of the screaming child. Adult motivation is often the result of a generalized, yet repressed, fear called anxiety and a generalized, yet, repressed anger called depression. There is also probably a generalized, yet repressed search for joy that can take such forms as searching for love, searching for meaning in life, and because of its lack, existential loneliness. The German word *angst* or anguish reflects this last state well. *It is a useful question to ask, which is more determinative of unhappiness, frustration of basic emotions with their instinctual and drive quality, frustration of those emotions that*

in the form of feelings are just markers of consciousness providing mild hedonic tone, or existential frustration, which serves to confuse the emotions but which can be dealt with cognitively and through courageous acts of will?

This is because emotions often begin in desire, which results in action, which on consummation leads to a more generalized emotion like joy, but which ordinarily does not last. Feeling states not ascribed to a particular sensation but to a total inner state are much more long lasting, and can be called moods, such as those associated with peace of mind, as opposed to moods reflecting restlessness (a generalized state of boredom) or even depression (often reflecting feelings of being unloved, unappreciated, or just not being integrated into society in a meaningful way). Thus, emotions arouse, sustain, and direct activity.

Freudian psychoanalysis had originally emphasized freeing repressed emotions (as instincts) through insight that leads to catharsis. Later and really leading to the present day, psychoanalysis has become the study of the self though admittedly psychoanalysis as a social movement of influence has waned, but some of its ideas have moved into the general culture. Now psychoanalysis increasingly has become the study of communicative symbols, and therapy has become a type of training, training in rationality, training in being healthy, training in understanding life, and training in communicating. Thus, in psychoanalysis and in allied social movements, therapy and counseling, and the advice taken, relate to the management of personality, not the freeing of it (see Illouz 2008). In fact, the study of symbols through general education and cultural critique has become increasingly removed from studying concrete events, and symbols are less and less inferred to be substitutes for repressed traumas of the past.

Though psychological therapy in general has moved from the study of psychodynamics (instinctual drives) to the study of communicative symbols in the somewhat arbitrary world of modern social relationships, the best therapists are not mere theoreticians seeking to cajole patients into reduction in symptoms and into reality testing. Reliance on the power of suggestion or on the priest's attempt at producing reconciliation with the world through faith has not totally returned as the sole technique of therapy. Nevertheless, Tullio Maranhão in his book *Therapeutic Discourse and Socratic Dialogue* refers to the major modes of therapeutic discourse as follows: (1) insight, (2) suggestion, and (3) control (Maranhão 1986, p. 123).

As a matter of fact, such modern schools of therapy as the family therapists tend to have no working model of intrapsychic processes to guide them but treat communication as all, whatever insights develop by participants in communicative sessions being treated on an ad hoc basis according to standards of practical reason. Therapy that occurs uses a scattergun approach of rhetorical influence between family members and between family members and therapist. Sometimes, the major result is merely to change power relations between family members.

Unlike Freudians, such therapists have no great hope for transference relationships to occur (typically reacting to the therapist the way a parent was once reacted to as a way of working through problems and this time getting it right). There is much less hope that rhetoric will at least provide access to unconscious

psychic processes. For them, therapy must remain hit or miss, and adjustment to the world is often the best that can be hoped for.

So, adjustment to the world, and not reconciliation with the past through catharsis of past traumas, is increasingly the goal of psychological therapy in all the major schools. A useful discussion of these issues is Eva Illouz, *Saving the Modern Soul: Therapy, Emotions, and the Culture of Self-Help* (Illouz 2008).

In general, our personal relationships tend to fall into the categories of romantic, familial, and friendship. Yet in fact, these relationships with their existential boundaries are buffered by outside pressures, including social and cultural ones. Thus, the emotions that bind relationships together are often filtered through social and cultural expectations and interpretations. A scholar who believes culture is so determinative of the interpretation of emotional states that he prefers the term "cultural psychology" is Prof. Richard A. Shweder. A good introduction to his work is Richard A. Shweder, *Thinking Through Cultures: Expeditions in Cultural Psychology* (Shweder 1991).

Cultural determinists in general believe there is no one type of unconscious but a variety, so that they place much more emphasis on ego structure than on instinctual emotions. They are likely to emphasize that poor people are not the same around the world. Some may feel (not just think intellectually) themselves to be losers in competition (fair or unfair); others may feel discriminated against (which might make them hateful); others may be self-destructive (or feel themselves to be just no good). When social and cultural expectations are dashed and, more seriously, when one becomes disillusioned with what one identifies with (like when a love is betrayed), that chunk of reality that this bit of self can come apart, leaving in its place a feeling of nothingness. This feeling of coming apart is both instinctually based and also a realistic perception that a reason for one's orientation to the world, a kernel around which one crystallizes an aspect of one's mode of being, that is an aspect of one's sense of self, has disappeared, and then the question is what is one going to do about it. It is difficult to separate out biological instincts and the more cognitively based existential perceptions, and different cultures may emphasize different sensitivities to each. Weak family life and friendships certainly sensitize one to the existential sense of angst. How one handles loss also reflects sensitivities of both the biological and existential sort. Will one replace a relationship like replacing a light bulb? or will a more radical restructuring of one's life and one's sense of basic trust be required? Social and cultural resources and expectations are crucial here.

Creating identifications and emotional bonds and breaking them leave either good or bad residues depending on the social environment. Search for catharsis can have the bad effect of endless rebelliousness against authority, and fixation can have the good effect of bonding to relationships such as friendships or even broader loyalties such as to the government. Culture often provides ready-made structures to bond to. Whether the search for truth is better than such bonding, and when and where, is a hard question to answer, because the answer is it all depends. Thus, some cultures give ready-made interpretations that desire for authority and structure in one's life should be interpreted as desire for religion and/or God,

others infer that introspective musings should be interpreted as communications from God, and others imply that dissociative experiences should be interpreted as possession by a god.

In general, dissociative experiences seem to be less dangerous in primitive societies than in modern societies because the modern emphasis on self-control and objective observation leaves little room for such escape from the observing ego except under conditions of extreme psychological breakdown. Primitive societies, for the most part, are likely to allow room for such changes in consciousness to occur without stigmatization so that, if anything, there are less guilt and shame attached, and so more self-acceptance and reintegration into society after the episode has passed.

Whether such cultures also foster intellectual dishonesty can also legitimately be asked. "Studies disclose that of all forms of madness brief reactive psychoses bear the strongest causal relationship to immediate life event stressors, especially stressors that are of particular cultural salience, that they are the most culturally diverse of all psychoses, that they overlap with final common pathways of normal behavior (e.g., culturally approved trance states), and that they respond well to indigenous healing systems" (Kleinman 1988, p. 36).

It is true traditionally people have held in their feelings in anonymous situations and released them with friends, and even more so with loved ones. With the increase in adaptation to this anonymous modern world, so that all personal relationships become less intimate, many people learn to share their feelings, hopes, and aspirations, in effect, with no one. Romantic relationships become more like friendships, and friendships more like acquaintanceships, or when there is the formal bond of marriage, this bond no longer holds together a multipurpose relationship combining intimacy, loyalty, and common respect but increasingly a rather brittle, specialized relationship. It is sometimes clung to because there is nothing else as a motive in this relationship except for authoritarian loyalty or simple mutually supportive narcissisms or perhaps common economic or social class interests. It is no longer a multipurpose relationship because the people involved are no longer multidimensional and their personalities and interests have shrunk with their social roles.

Of course, there are also people, usually with money to spare, whose social role has become endless narcissistic contemplation of alternatives (they call it being ambitious). They may be looking for a great romance, endlessly, but very few relationships, especially over time will meet their expectations, or their needs, since their needs tend to be in a narcissistic sense insatiable.

In fact, there seems to be an increasing tendency for decline in both familial relationships (loyal but not equal and not intimate in a romantic sense; somewhat routinized) and romantic relationships (equal and intense but involving elements of routinization into family loyalties) and their replacement by friendships. Even these friendships are being replaced by specialized acquaintanceships of the authoritarian sort (emphasizing loyalty toward a common goal like among work buddies), and of a narcissistic sort (emphasizing specialized emotional functions,

be they erotic, common aggression against scapegoats, folies à deux, and mutual pathos such as is common in religious fellowship).

One result is that people increasingly do not know what they should expect out of personal relationships because of the pressures of an anonymous, competitive, rather impersonal, and also quite bureaucratized society, with resulting ambivalence, lack of commitment (or neurotic loyalty posing as commitment). Here are some of the problems caused by ambivalence, by a failure to achieve intimacy or supportiveness or both. The mixtures differ by the kind of relationship, be it based on family, romance, or friendship.

For example, it is quite common for feelings to be expressed either outwardly (often hysterically in uncontrolled eruptions) toward others or in defense toward oneself (either as masochism or, to spite others, through failure). In the latter case, when the source of the hostility is fear of rejection by a loved one or failure to achieve a believed goal, it is quite common for the result to be doubt of one's self-worth. This fear of rejection or betrayal by a loved one can result in hostility, often of a rather hysterical sort outward toward him or her, and with the possibility of anger projected inward resulting in depression.

There is an ambivalence we have for most of our relationships in whatever increasingly anonymous society we happen to live in, an ambivalence that is increased by the manipulations fostered by competition, narrow social roles, isolation, and lack of concern and solidarity fostered by social specialization. Though people have traditionally kept their feelings in, then released them when among friends, for many in modern mass society because of their loss of friends (as opposed to acquaintances), society makes people keep their feelings in permanently.

Ambivalence can also lead to weakening not only of romantic relationships and friendships, but even familial relationships, as acquaintanceships replace all, or at the very least, each more intimate relationship is replaced by its less intimate version, such as romance replaced by friendship or by a familial or a quasi-familial relationship based on loyalty (Weigert and Hastings 1977, p. 1171–1185).

One period in history when the resolving of ambivalence could take extreme forms was in the second half of the nineteenth century in Europe and America where the official cultures were usually quite moralistic but obviously there were rewards for extreme aggressiveness to the point of encouraging extreme growth of colonialism, with resulting colonial wars. During this period, there were many cases of this ambivalence being resolved by developing an ideal of ascetic self-denial for "spiritual advancement" (in such diverse cases as in the lives of the Russian, Leo Tolstoy, and that British subject, Mohandas Gandhi), or the reverse, the desire to act out one's aggressiveness, perhaps a desire for revenge for being kept down by social superiors and/or rivals (the ultimate goal of the philosophy of life of Friedrich Nietzche and with much less intellectual finesse, that of much of the German elite).

Even nowadays young people are bombarded with messages about "healthy lifestyles," but also by messages regarding the adult-created lifestyle sold to them as "youth culture." At least some of them resolve these mixed messages by

choosing one extreme path or the other, extreme health consciousness or extreme misuse of their bodies through hedonism.

What may be considered the root cause for many problems is the mistaking of means for ends in personal relationships, especially the producing of various specializations and environmental adaptations that interfere with the ultimate purpose of the relationship. Such ultimate purposes would be the equality and intimacy of romance (especially in monogamous cultures), the rather more supportiveness but not necessarily equality of familial relationships (ultimate differences of age, experience, interest, and duty cannot be glossed over by claims for equality; functional specializations are just too great), or the somewhat mixed case of friendship (that produces emotional affect but usually of less depth than the other relationships).

I suppose the end or goal of personal relationships is a realistic relation to the world of relationships and its sign is emotional fulfillment and emotional balance, not unrealistic emotion not matched by behavior and not unrealistic behavior not marched by emotion. For example, false friendships offer poor quality of emotional support, either because of lack of loyalty or because the other person is too much involved in his or her own emotional games to share in true concern, sometimes because of social roles that are contradictory to true intimacy (see Berne 1976).

What tentative conclusions can we come to about the options offered by modern trends? Now most likely there will be a weakening of both familial and romantic relationships, with their replacement by peer group friendships and even acquaintanceships. In effect, there is increasing ambivalence as one effect of modernization of societies, because of an increasing cultural emphasis on treating all goals, including relationships, like commodities, and because of increasing cultural emphasis on always having many choices, instead of loyalty and being satisfied with fewer choices, and of course there is also cultural backlash against this and people who seek out emotional security in return for giving up some of their freedom of choice. One result is they may offer loyalty to authoritarian political and cultural movements in return for the security they offer, and sometimes even for the "noble" values these movements espouse.

Thus, increasing social change in general will probably result in increasing social distrust and ambivalence, now that it is harder to count on the loyalty and stability of families, and the deep concern, stimulation, and compassionate understanding of romantic relationships. The result may be all those kinds of ego splitting, projections, identifications, denials, idealizations, depressions, and schizoid withdrawals that failures in personal relationships bring about. The result can also be social backlash against this social trend, and the development of authoritarian cultural and political movements, and then backlash against this as well. Perhaps a golden mean will eventually be achieved, or perhaps not.

Just as one's sense of self, one's very sense of existing, is maintained in childhood by a mother's love (and by a father's love, but probably somewhat less so), so is, usually to a lesser extent, the adult's sense of self is maintained by a sense of imposed continuity that strengthens identity by an adult love (romantic)

relationship. After all the ego, defenses that protect the child from trauma, from the effects of his or her own anger, from his or her own ambivalences, and ultimately from a feeling of rejection, are present in adult love relationships as well. Thus, ambivalence, identifying with a love partner, projecting one's own feelings, fears, and hopes unto him or her, splitting his or her personality and reacting to some aspects and denying others, the catharsis that comes from a true meeting of minds, which often results in the breaking up of unhealthy fixations, and then the cathexis of a true meeting of minds and the formation of healthy personal relationships, as well as the illusions and disillusions that come from fantasy and/or fooling oneself, are all part of adult and potential love (romantic) relationships, as well as envy and rage, love and joy.

Fear of the world as threatening and, more especially, not accepting oneself is a major determinant of the fear of intimacy common in many love (romantic) relationships and/or the idealization of the partner. A certain amount of this fear is of the nature of the world. Nevertheless, it is useful when the appropriate love object (that is to say the love partner) will be a partner for honest relationships, not playing games, despite the fact for some their common perception of romance is that it is nothing but playing games. Thus, some people feel that marriage is not the culmination but the destruction of romantic love. A relationship is poor if it is stronger the less you know about the other person and weaker the more you know about that other person. Such pessimism is truly the death of romance, for there are not that many good actors in the world.

Nevertheless, peasant societies, perhaps even more so than tribal societies, have tended to ritualize relationships since intimacy is less easily achieved than routinization of behavior and motivation. But at least some of these societies have historically had somewhat rigorous moral standards, routinized though they are.

Given the existence of poverty, war, illness, and class injustice among most such authoritarian people, with increasing injustice and alienation, and constant stress, came also hysteria, and depression and despair, rather than joyful communion and sharing with others. Unfortunately, over time moral standards sometimes fell by the wayside as practiced goals, and a common authoritarianism, encouraging following rules in the West, somewhat oriented more toward meditative escape in the East, became increasingly common. Often loyalty, perhaps to each other, but more likely to a common rule governing loyalty, or to a common social or political goal, over time increasingly became the most common factor in social relationships in these authoritarian societies.

This is the kind of social evolution sociologists like Max Weber or nowadays Michael Mann like to write about (Mann 2004). People sometimes also had narcissistic reactions even in authoritarian societies, so even without being told to by authority they ended up scapegoating outsiders. In the most modern societies, social looseness helps avoid these problems, but loneliness and boredom among an anonymous mass are creating their own problems, often dependent on simplistic solutions such as the narcissism catered to and even encouraged by the entertainment industries.

What we must realize is that there is bad faith in human relationships, using the language of Jean-Paul Sartre, instead of seeking truth in order to respect and be kind to each other. There are people, depending on what conditions allow, who seek to maintain their self-image (following narcissistic pressures, in terms of both psychological and cultural norms), or their social role (following authoritarian pressures, in terms of both psychological and cultural norms) but do not very well coordinate the two. This universal problem is only given new twists by modernity.

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Chapter 13
The Sense of Self in Democratic Societies

I will go into some detail on what can be inferred about the sense of self from a psychological, and especially a psychoanalytic, perspective, before going on to some of the political ramifications of this analysis. The result will be of interest to those who wish to explore how social evolution impacts on incentives and constraints for the development of personal character.

Sigmund Freud himself never made clear which is the seat of subjectivity, the id, or the ego. Many later theorists to this day have tended to emphasize the inherent rationality of the ego as a result of its autonomy, and, thus, impartiality, though Freud emphasized, in effect, that the ego, like any biological mechanism, can establish a healthy equilibrium, can reestablish after dealing with stress a healthy equilibrium with unhealthy side effects, or can conceivably, like a maladjusted organ of the body, make things worse.

Thus, what Heinz Hartmann and many of Freud's critics "found objectionable about Freud's metapsychology was that it did not provide a term for the total person: a composite of the id, ego, and superego as a single entity and at the same time more personal than Freud's psychic apparatus" (Thompson 1985, p. 12). For a good summary of the evolution of psychoanalytic thought relating to ego psychology, read Stephen A. Mitchell and Margaret J. Black, *Freud and Beyond: A History of Modern Psychoanalytic Thought* (Mitchell and Black 1996). A useful book with more theoretical detail is Jay R. Greenberg and Stephen A. Mitchell, *Object Relations in Psychoanalytic Theory* (Greenberg and Mitchell 1983).

Many American and British theorists since Freud's time have tended to look favorably upon adaptation to culture and society, and with a belief in at least a predisposition for that psychological rudder known as conscience. Some believe that what would be the equivalent to conscience, as expressed through the ego in traditional Freudian theory, is easily overwhelmed. But many theorists, such as Heinz Hartmann, emphasized the non-conflictual aspects of the ego, while others, such as David Rapaport, emphasized that the mature ego can experience the self as a whole, as a self-object that tends to eliminate the unconscious as an active force.

Continental European theorists, following the lead of such theorists as Jacques Lacan, emphasize that the desires of the id constitute the true source of the self and

that the ego is a rather authoritarian and not always rational censor. For Lacan, the ego is the self, and the individual can never know the "real" self with all its unconscious components. Also, the ego, when formed, to use a computer analogy, incorporates a lot of errors into the program. At the same time, the "real" self of the unconscious does not have a lot of innate structure, but being vague and amorphous, its goals and structure are determined by the goals set by the outside world, often in the form of identifications. There seems to be a cultural bias at work whereby the American and British theorists believe in the "ultimate reality" of an ego much like a conscience, and many Continental European theorists believe in the "ultimate reality" of authoritarian identifications that overlay an irrational id.

No doubt there will continue to be much debate about how "rational" and "powerful" the ego really is. Obviously, some of the rationality and autonomy result from the incorporation of lessons from childhood. Some comes from responses to the experiences of the more mature adolescent child as well as the adult. From these experiences, there is the development of ideas, some of which function as values, on how to reduce one's own suffering and that of others. This does add meaning to most people's lives and, through a chain of connections, becomes a source of pleasure.

It is quite possible that the strength and autonomy of the ego are not universal, but differ in differing social and cultural environments. Thus, there is the Scottish Calvinist emphasis by D. W. Winnicott on "the true self" (like a conscience, it is a moral intuition, not an intuition of myths, as the Germanic Jungians seem to believe). Then, there is the French emphasis of Lacan on the conflicts of the self with the ego that is easily overwhelmed by unconscious feeling, and not reinforced so much by its innate autonomy, like a conscience, but in a typically French solution by learning to use logic and language and so identifying more with reason than with society. I should add this is a traditional French left-wing approach, the traditional French right-wing approach being the opposite, seeking a rather authoritarian identification with society.

Of course, Jung did smuggle in intuition, not of the self as a whole, but of mythological ideas (archetypes) that were goal oriented and were supposed to govern the self even more than the instincts did, ideas tied more to authenticity of feeling and personal growth than to traditional morality. Still the question remains, self-control for what purpose?

Freud wrote of general mechanisms that could take various forms because of differing combinations and strengths. Therefore, many of his later followers, with their contradictory assumptions, could have all been right in a sense since in various cultures under various conditions, different kinds of ego can form.

Still, there is the question, is there a universal human nature, is there indeed a "true self" that is accessible to consciousness, even if it must be looked for? Most psychiatrists will agree that if there is a "true self" accessible to consciousness through instincts or intuitions, it is only a tendency that can be interfered with through later habits and experiences. Most likely, the cultural and experiential component of "authentic feeling" is very important for allowing such feeling,

even if it is an innate one, to be expressed. As in most innate mechanisms, like language, only the tendency is innate, not the mode of expression.

Examples of cross-cultural modes of expression can be found in Arthur Kleinman, *Rethinking Psychiatry: From Cultural Category to Personal Experience* (Kleinman 1988), Theodore Schwartz, Geoffrey M. White, and Catherine Lutz, eds., *New Directions in Psychological Anthropology* (Schwartz et al. 1992), and Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Work of Culture: Symbolic Transformation in Psychoanalysis and Anthropology* (Obeyesekere 1990). There is also Richard Shweder, *Thinking Through Cultures: Explorations in Cultural Psychology* (Shweder 1991).

Freud wrote a sense of self dominated by instinctual drives, which paradoxically reflects feelings of anxiety and hysteria (often in turn acted out through obsessive–compulsive behaviors and phobias, that is through classical neuroses), that also reflects rather intact egos and emotional repression of these drives, the common personality types of authoritarian societies with very strong cultural and social identifications. Likewise, more modern, especially American and British, ego theorists tend to emphasize the emptiness of a sense of self that has weak identifications and a longing for such identifications, in a sense a longing for love. This reflects the modern society, especially of Britain and America, where self-structure does not function to keep emotions repressed; if anything, emotions are weak and there is a feeling of nothingness because there are few identifications to draw out emotions. This is the modern world of grandiosity and exhibitionism before longed for or idealized others—and when this does not work, a world of addictions to give meaning to one's life, in other words, a world of narcissism.

It should also be remembered that there are mixed cases, as in modernizing authoritarian societies where identifications have weakened enough so that they are strongly longed for by narcissists. For example, fascistic societies often have narcissistic leaders who rule over authoritarian followers, the leaders being authoritarian enough to be captivated by traditional symbols that they often misinterpret, the followers being narcissistic enough to try to live through leaders rather than, in a mature manner, practicing their traditional moral values.

But let us get back to the point that Freud took for granted, repressed drives of the sort that often exist in traditional societies (not necessarily the most traditional, tribal societies, but those up the evolutionary ladder where division of labor and self-control to function in the economy go hand in hand). However, modern American and British ego theorists, such as Heinz Kohut (despite his Germanic name, his influence was primarily in America which was his home), took for granted a lack of structure upon which to model a sense of self. "Here we see Kohut clearly and explicitly stating a theoretical position in which drives are secondary to considerations of self and of object relations, a position which is the reverse of the traditional Freudian" (Eagle 1984, p. 38).

Thus, it is little wonder that much of the longings of people in modern societies nowadays are expressed in video games and artistic creations such as movies that create figures to be identified with that have absolutely no connection historically or culturally to the society that created them. What they offer literally are avenues

of escape based on feelings. This is especially true of modern youth culture with its grandiosity, its exhibitionism, and its lack of realistic contact with the past, and thus with social movements that have existed through time and reflect both social evolution and the lessons of history. Instead, the social movements of youth culture tend to be fads that have no permanence and thus reflect the narcissistic and poorly anchored egos of their creators, and in a parallel sense, unless they are merely being mindlessly conformist in a trendy sense which is possible, the similarly weak egos of their followers. Such fads can include, as in modernizing authoritarian societies, or in narcissistic societies where individuals tire of lack of emotional security and start seeking social order, an unrealistic rejection or idealization of the past, not through an understanding of the past, but through new mythologies.

Again, as to whether there is a "true self" that transcends the innate division of the self postulated by Freud, whether it is the Calvinistic-like conscience postulated in effect by Winnicott, or the feeling of authenticity postulated by Continental European existential philosophers, whether this "true self" is innately moral, as some "New Age" thinkers would like to believe, or is a mass of instinctual irrationality, as the intellectual descendants of Freud believe, I would say that in different personalities in different cultures all such structures of self are possible, if not probable.

No doubt, a mature adult in any culture can have an existential leap of faith and accept values that mold his or her sense of self, and just as there are probably certain innate instinctual drives, there are probably also existential pulls that create goals for these drives. And perhaps even such existential pulls tend to be more in the direction of morality and alleviation of the suffering of others than in the opposite direction. Yet once a tendency becomes institutionalized in culture and society, it is hard for a child to withstand its cultural pull.

Though some people become molded into almost pure narcissists and others into almost pure authoritarians, and though there are further elaborations, so that some narcissists are not just ambitious and striving but are almost pure pleasure seekers (creatures of id), and some authoritarians are almost purely driven by guilt to be saints or self-righteous torturers (creatures of superego), yet most people, products of less extreme circumstances, are mixtures. This allows them to retain their freedom of will and the rationality to use it.

Thus, I personally believe that there is not so much an innate "true" or "authentic" self as much as authentic feeling, which is biologically based, which ordinarily does not tend toward perverted fulfillment through inappropriate objects (most clearly visible in the sincerity of happy children), is "purified" by rationality and depth of experience and leads to the choosing of existentially appropriate goals of adulthood, or the reverse if trauma leads to warped development. Yet in childhood, adult models that are identified with are by far the best way for such adult characters to form. This of course is the character ideal for self-possessed, rational, and yes empathetic citizens in democratic societies. The self-made person is doing it the hard way. A book relevant to this discussion is William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Reddy 2001).

This brings us to the issues of political psychology, authoritarian and narcissistic politics, and the psychology of nationalism. We can start of course by mentioning that there are whole societies that are held together on the model of the extended family, and as these social groupings get bigger and more and more extended and split off and form their own groupings, starting with their own extended families, eventually what develops is a political structure that is often called patrimonial, or as I often call it pre-feudal. True feudal societies evolve out of this but have a clear-cut sense of political hierarchy that in the early days involved personal loyalties along the model of family or even neighborhood loyalties, but eventually societies became more anonymous and specialized and loyalties of the sort that bureaucracies are based on became more and more the norm.

Societies like America in some ways try to return power to the local communities, now organized according to formal political rather than informal communal or familial structures, so there is built in a fundamental lack of cohesiveness in society, a division of labor in the structure of communal organization itself. Now only by going through the proper procedures can coordination be done between various levels of communal governing authority. No longer can the highest level of authority command the lowest level of authority with no other justification than a traditional right to command.

Of course, this right to command often had its roots in traditional communal custom, or in religious morality, often a combination of both, and this limitation on the egotism of the ruler, which underlay the customary law of the smallest societies but which grew weaker as societies became more anonymous and bureaucratized, eventually returned in the form of legal formalities. The resulting checks and balances between various units of community are the pride of the "limited government" traditions of such post-feudal societies as America.

The place of the Catholic Church in medieval European society as a counterweight to the rule of princes became one model for checks and balances in society that was influential in Europe during its period of dominance, a model that has become an influential tradition in Western social thought up to this very day since it justifies freedom of conscience. Of course, the very tradition of secular law that underlay the legal authority of the Roman Empire and that survived its fall to provide a model for the legal underpinnings of secular government, when combined with Christian (perhaps better now called Judeo-Christian) values, so that religion served as a traditional format for conceptualizing morality through law by judging moral intentions, combined with the secular form of interpersonal loyalties that existed under feudalism that derived originally from the personal loyalties of Germanic tribesmen to their chieftains, all eventually coalesced to form the conceptions of popular rights under the rule of law and popular sovereignty that today is the basis for all modern, and especially democratic, government. For a discussion of this evolution, see Francois Guizot, *The History of Civilization in Europe*, edited by Larry Siedentop (Guizot 1997).

13.1 Social Relationships and the Formation of Societies

What is peculiar about modern societies in general, and America in particular as an extreme example of a post-feudal society, is that with increasing individualism sometimes to the point of narcissism, people often become self-consciousness about what kinds of rituals to participate in, rather than merely accept custom unthinkingly, that is to say what kinds of social institutionalization they should reaffirm, and also in a similar vein what should be the justifications for social hierarchy. In effect, self-consciousness as the ritual of an individual toward himself or herself substitutes for the rituals that once integrated whole communities. In fact, societies that are like America nowadays tend to be integrated less by values and feelings of solidarity and more by patterns of work and patterns of recreation resulting in escapism (Stearns 2008).

It is not that modern societies are not structured by rituals in everyday life and by loyalty to hierarchy. It is that there is not much intrinsic loyalty to any principles of social order anymore, so that such loyalty increasingly has not a sacred but an arbitrary quality to it. This builds in a great deal of abstract moralism (as opposed to a concrete sense of duty), idealism, hypocrisy, and from the psychological point of view dissatisfaction and lack of coherence of the ego.

In contrast to American individualism, the Mediterranean area all the way through the Middle East to India tends to have traditional social relationships that are concrete, ritualistic, present and past oriented rather than future oriented, all of which proves conducive to impulsive personalities and to cycles of revenge. On the other hand, Central and Eastern European cultures are abstract, theoretical, oriented toward past and future and less toward the present, more escapist than hedonistic (escaping pain through forgetfulness as in neurotic repression sometimes to the point of a rebounding into hysteria is treated as a practical solution to frustration of desire), all of which is also conducive to paranoia, a more complicated state than mere obsessions, especially when these obsessions become tinged with hysteria.

This may be because the Mediterranean and Middle East are old culture areas that have institutionalized modes of social interaction that emphasize status striving and rivalries in the present and vengeance for real rather than imagined slights (though in practice real and imagined are not always distinguishable). In Central and Eastern Europe, there has developed an emphasis on ideology (though there has been some backsliding from the extreme authoritarianism of the recent past) rather than mere social ritual, perhaps because a more intellectually based culture has evolved from its traditional base in recent generations (but the Christian emphasis on theological correctness has also had influence) and because of this has not had to overcome the anti-intellectualism of society-wide ritual common to patrimonial societies.

Nevertheless, interpersonal dealings in Central and Eastern Europe are still somewhat ritualized by social etiquette that greases the wheels of social interaction that would otherwise flounder from unintended insults that would have been

interpreted in a paranoid vein. This is because interpersonal trust is not something taken for granted, since social order, and the psychological comforts of social solidarity, is longed for, but other than during the few years of childhood, cannot overcome the harshness of bureaucratic and general social coldness. *American acquaintanceships may be getting colder, but they do not yet have the abrupt coldness characteristic of more bureaucratized, more class-ridden, societies.*

In a sense, the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern culture areas foster individuals' seeking a feeling of society, creating roles rather than blindly accepting them, while in Central and Eastern Europe, there is probably less overt individualism because individuals do not seek fulfillment in society in the concrete sense as much as in cultural meaning. In other words, the cultures of Central and Eastern Europe offer meaning by explaining the whole, which gives meaning to individual social roles, roles that are not freely chosen or competed for. This reduces overt status rivalries, but the price of greater intellectual abstractness (rather than concrete ritualism rooted in everyday life) is the possibility of greater rationalization and distortion, the formation of ideologies so dear to the hearts of paranoids.

For those who wonder where Anglo-American culture fits into this scheme of things, it fosters neither concern with honor and concrete social duties and decorum nor brooding over the vagaries of history, often in a rather abstract sense, often as an escape from one's own private misery, but fosters personalities that do not brood but, in the language of European existentialists, are not authentic (emotionally expressive) either. Instead, Anglo-American culture, and especially American culture, has puritanical tendencies that encourage aspirations for achievement for those pleasures that can be won or bought, that must be substituted at least in the short run for the pleasures that cannot be bought, that must be given voluntarily by one's social intimates. Many of these substitute pleasures have a strong fantasy component and are unconnected to the activities of everyday life, which is why deferring gratification that cannot be bought ends up being so important in traditional American culture.

American culture especially has evolved in an increasingly anonymous yet also bureaucratized society, but nevertheless still relies on small-scale solutions to social problems, nevertheless often of a technocratic or bureaucratic nature, but less so on the social controls of an honor and social decorum society (that it relied on more in earlier days). Nor does it rely on the large-scale visions of social engineering common until very recently in Central and Eastern Europe. The American version of social decorum is based to a large extent on conformity to rules that subjugate personal feelings to the requirements of the bureaucratic (or the community being treated as if it is a bureaucracy) whole, but there are remnants of an historical heritage that provides room for "due process" that legitimizes collaboration and communication, rather than just taking orders and fitting in without providing any personal input.

This tradition of renegotiating one's social roles is a remnant of the days when America was a frontier society and such negotiations of one's social standing were common. Whether it will survive the ending of America's frontier era is waiting to be seen. For that matter, truly tribal societies such as those found in many Islamic

areas often have constant renegotiations of social alliances, and occasionally of individual roles within these alliances (Rosen 2008).

In summary, nowadays the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cultures are conducive to formation of relatively extraverted personalities, Central and Eastern European cultures are conducive to formation of relatively introverted personalities, and Anglo-American culture is a mixed case since socializing nowadays often occurs under the limiting conditions of recreation and sport rather than the broad-based conditions of emotionally involved communal interaction. It is not a surprise that Anglo-American culture areas are prime homes for the formation of religious cults, as one option to feelings of social isolation, personal loneliness, and general anomie, especially when feelings formerly repressed cannot be held in any longer and come to the surface, is to seek out a new community when it is felt there is no satisfactory old one to cling to. This is an American tradition dating back to frontier days because of the need to rebuild a sense of community from scratch, though the need is in some ways greater in modern America because of the in some ways even greater anomie nowadays.

In Central and Eastern Europe, it was harder to literally found new communities. So, in the recent past, individual and often mass hysteria conducive to nationalism, a seeking to revive the old community in a fantasy-driven form, were a not unusual reaction to society-wide, and even individual, stress.

In these parts of Europe, until very recently, there was little hope that individuals could maintain their dignity by trying to produce a moral influence on society through an accumulation of individual decisions in market fashion, as if the freedom to choose one's loyalties will produce a marketplace for morality. They did not believe, certainly in the short run, that the best people and the resulting best community would draw more adherents and would win more influence. Instead of achieved personal, and in bureaucratic settings impersonal, relationships being crucial to one's personal identity, ascribed relationships were considered by them to be more realistic and thus of prime importance. In this environment, the feelings of drowning one's identity in the whole, the feelings of nationalism, for example, often became a substitute for the lack of other social accomplishments.

To take the example of 1930s Germany, there was a common belief then that social order through social engineering, even if necessary at the expense of civil liberties, was the ultimate goal of government, because it was the ultimate goal of society. You could say there was a common belief that not self-organized communities through either market forces or communal self-organization, or both, but anarchy, was the natural state of society without governmental intervention.

Also, the very fact that elites there felt they could not bring about social order through their own prestige but had to work through demagogic middlemen (Nazi bully boys) showed the degree of bureaucratization of society, and how the right to rule was not the result of earned prestige, and certainly was not the result of close interaction between the leaders and the led. This was where more than a 100 years of German idealism, sometimes hyperintellectual philosophy, and sometimes nationalistic politics, had led, one wasteful world war a few years earlier, and soon another.

A spiritual quest that is done in bad faith is not easily distinguished from a quest that is sincere, even for the person doing the quest. Thus, the difference between narcissistic and sincere expression of values is that the narcissist to a large extent has no values and has nothing to be sincere about. For the extreme narcissist, and for that matter the extreme authoritarian, resiliency will always be repairing the cracks in the sense of self rather than growing outward from the self to experience the world honestly and without fear, in the process growing in moral stature and in character. The work of Erik Erikson is a good source of ideas on such emotional growth, resulting in growth of the personality throughout the life cycle.

13.2 Authoritarianism and Narcissism as Sources of Social Identity

One of the major problems of traditional societies, or even more so, traditional societies undergoing social change (such as among traditional peasantries), is perverted or unrealistic identifications (extreme authoritarianism). One of the major problems of a modern society or a modern society undergoing social change based on its tradition of sometimes self-centered individualism, such as America, is perverted or unrealistic escapism (extreme narcissism).

Traditional societies have few institutionalized or store-bought sources of escapism, though the ones they have can be very powerful, while modern societies have many sources of escaping ultimate questions, and not just metaphysical ones, but ones of where one's life is going or what constitutes a good life. In effect, traditional (admittedly, somewhat authoritarian) societies often have too few choices, with resulting cynicism, and modern societies have too many, at least ephemeral ones. Still the important ones that are so important to happiness (including that which provides meaning to life, particularly a non-alienating, meaningful place in society) are often limited because of lack of social cooperation or simply because of lack of economic opportunities. As to the classic book on the hierarchy of human needs relevant to all societies, see Abraham Maslow, *The Psychology of Being*, 3rd edition (Maslow 2011).

It is also true that such political movements as nationalism draw upon both authoritarian and narcissistic motives, whose combined strengths usually differ from individual to individual and from time to time. It also should be remembered that cultural differences between societies will tend to at least partially reflect different average combinations of the strengths of these individual motives, as if one could add together the combined motivations for the population and then determine the average, that will differ from society to society. This is not to say that an outsider will be able to determine these average motives for each society except in an approximate sense, which reflects the pragmatic limitations of social research.

It is safe to assume traditional and modernizing traditional societies have as their ideal non-alienating communities to which they can be loyal. It is because of this that they hope for social structures based on multiplex social bonds rather than highly specialized social bonds that serve little more than a single purpose, which is more characteristic of bureaucratic organizations.

Modern societies such as America with their tendencies toward individualism take for granted much more isolated individuals who feel they must seek happiness from consumption of commodities and loyalty to simple, not particularly multiplex, institutions such as sports or academia. Some people may in effect become addicted, psychologically if not physically, to such simple pleasures and become dependent on the institutions that provide them. Thus, a central aspect of their personalities may become that of a shopper, rather than a loyal member of the community who fulfills his or her social needs based on duty and trust, which is a more effective way to relieve existential anxiety than shopping.

Of course, the pathologies of authoritarian societies when they evolve to absurd extremes, often reflecting power-hungry leaders who find willing subjects among paranoid masses seeking social order at all cost, often have proven even worse. These people can be called paranoid because their attitude toward life seems to be the fear, if most everything is not controlled, through traditional loyalties perhaps, that then there will be no source of community and nothing will be controlled. This is not merely the outcome of identification with a social group that would result in ignoring outsiders, but a kind of channeling of that core of narcissism that all people have toward outsiders who are not merely ignored, the common American attitude toward social minorities, but become hated and feared because alternative identities are seen as competitive with and ultimately undermining of one's own.

That narcissistic core that is not well managed among those authoritarian people who, dependent on outside controls, have never developed very good self-control, especially in new situations, which unfortunately is not uncommon, is not a healthy way to live. Neither is the puritanism of people who, in truly narcissistic societies, can never truly relax, that is can never release self-control when taking pride in personal asceticism or even when engaged in compulsive pleasure seeking to counterbalance these other restrictions in their lives. This is a combination of two contradictory personality traits, a motivation for asceticism and a motivation for hedonism, which can be combined somewhat harmoniously, but often is not which is not uncommon in modern America.

In traditional societies, people are under less pressure to specialize in response to social pressures, so people expect and want holistic relationships that provide many venues for emotional expression and for spontaneous, and sometimes random, expressions of feeling. In other words, they want the kinds of intimacies appropriate to family, to friends, to neighbors, and, though this is not that ideal relationship that can substitute for all other intimate relationships that it is so often described as being in the entertainment media, and as a result, it is assumed to be the ideal personal relationship in modern societies, to romantic relationships. Romantic relationships can be the ideal personal relationship in theory, though it is not always so easy in practice, which is why pragmatically it must almost always

be supplemented by other personal relationships such as based on the family and based on friendships.

Of course, when bureaucratization does hit traditional societies, longing for a mythical, non-bureaucratic past, not achieved through individual assertion but through fitting into or just identifying with an ecologically (and emotionally) sound social environment can be overwhelming. The result of this longing is often the politics of nationalism and similar cultural revival, sometimes religious revival, movements. For an anthropological take on this, see Anthony F. C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (Wallace 1969).

Social change, especially in authoritarian societies that put loyalty on a pedestal, can provide the environment for social engineering and nationalism as sources of community. This can also result in societies where narcissism was tried and because of immense social and economic stress fear set in and with it a cultural and psychological backlash. In America, which historically has usually been economically successful, social change often creates an environment conducive to ambitions and to a more vapid version of this, addictions. Particularly in societies like America that has had constant social change throughout its history (though it may eventually learn to stagnate), individuals can come together to form communities that can be pathological, as in the case of gang behavior based on mutually shared deviance among those who would otherwise perhaps be social isolates, or that can be healthy, as in intimacy, be it of the friendship or of the romantic sort.

What does not happen much in an American style, somewhat atomized, modern society is the creation of a nation, or perhaps just social cliques, who function as a kind of extended family, as happens in more authoritarian societies—unless, as in American slums, the family has so disappeared in influence that approximations of family influence must be created out of other social structures, such as youth gangs. It is possible then that the community at large becomes controlled less by the families of the community and more by the gangs of the community, which in turn can evolve into rule by criminal syndicates. Something similar occurred in that modernizing authoritarian society that led to the rise of the Nazis in Weimar Republic Germany where there was a great distaste for social disorder (more distaste for social disorder than is the American norm), so that at least elites and much of the middle class feared social disorder more than they feared tyranny. Traditionally in America (and this may change), elites fear tyranny more than they fear social disorder, at least within acceptable limits.

In fact the same type of social structure can be created out of different kinds of motives in different societies, these different motives being limited to the same cultural mode of expression, or the same motives in different societies can be offered different cultural modes of expression, the motives being perhaps influenced or changed in the process. This is similar to the distinction made by the sociologist, and social philosopher, Georg Simmel, between form and content with form being a sociological, and often a social psychological, mode of functioning in society such as domination, or less extreme psychologically, leadership, and the cultural content being the details that determine what it consists of such as legal, or

sometimes just cultural, norms. Thus, the social form of domination, which determines the nature of government in a society, can be further analyzed according to its content. An example of content would be the legal rules and social customs that govern a certain monarchy at a certain time and place in its history. For a good introduction to such ideas, see David Frisby, *Georg Simmel* (Frisby 2002).

To return to our previous analysis, the cultural practices available to criminally oriented politicians in 1930s Germany (the cultural content to their leadership role) were not available even to criminally oriented American politicians in the 1930s. Ganglike behavior can be created out of authoritarian loyalty in seeking out leaders to be loyal to in order to induce economic security, or as an expression of narcissistic longing for someone to adore, to boost self-confidence that way, though in truly narcissistic societies, this loyalty will be short-lived and faddish as followers grow bored and seek to move on to the next fad. Or in the case of members of criminal gangs, they may be unwilling to ultimately sacrifice for the gang when there is pressure from the police and money is not coming in because of their own weak sense of loyalty because of their innate narcissism.

In cultures where authoritarian loyalties are more the norm, this psychological predisposition to loyalty (or just to structure one's life by taking orders) may be transferred to gang loyalty even when there is outside social pressure against it, especially when the psychological motives, historically used for loyalty to families, no longer have strong families to be loyal to, and now seek another outlet. A combination of motives is also quite common, for example, when narcissistic leaders end up bullying their once narcissistic followers including those who put them into power. Or perhaps these followers are authoritarian and subservient to begin with but also have strong narcissistic cores to their personalities, so that the leaders offer them an outlet for their frustrations when they grow disappointed by offering them scapegoats whom they can bully in return as an outlet for their narcissistic sense of frustration. This is the common practice of totalitarian governments once they get into power.

In American slums, authoritarian loyalties, but that fulfill narcissistic needs as well, are created in a sense from the bottom up, their leaders from the perspective of the leaders of society would be considered the highest of the low, while in disorganized, previously authoritarian societies, let us take the Weimar Republic of the 1920s as an example, the leaders of the Nazis claimed to be not ex-slum dwellers, even though some previously were, especially Hitler, but temporarily misplaced natural members of the elite. In this case, the members of the social elite who helped finance them as a counterweight to communist influence certainly thought of themselves as the natural elite (not the Nazi leaders they sought to use, but they failed at this). In that sense, this was an attempt being made to create social order from the top down. A good introduction to the comparative study of the rise of various varieties of fascism is Michael Mann, *Fascists* (Mann 2004).

It is not a big surprise when the leaders of extreme left-wing political movements turn out to be people who dislike one or more of their parents and now are contemptuous of traditional authority, or when the leaders of extreme right-wing

political movements come from rather low-class families, and with their obsessions with social mobility do not sympathize with the people they grew up with, and do not want to be reminded of them. In the latter case, that is why they are obsessed with maintaining proper social distance, with them of course at the top, particularly so they do not have to answer criticism and be reminded of past humiliations. For that matter, left-wing leaders also often do not like to answer criticism and often recreate the hierarchies that they originally claimed they would tear down.

In modern authoritarian societies, loyalty tends to be the glue that holds together these substitutes for earlier, traditional social structures that were once held together more by personal relationships than by the bureaucratic, impersonal loyalties more characteristic of modern times. However, it is true impersonal loyalties are not just a recent development, and narcissistic, overbearing leaders existed in the long-ago past also. Narcissistic leaders is one reason exploitation of intimates existed then, and also why warfare was so common in the past. The lack of overarching authority to mediate disputes also increased the propensity for warfare between communities, which is one reason communities often wanted to have a monarch to be that final authority to mediate or to adjudicate disputes.

Naturally, there are in-between situations combining somewhat bureaucratic, and somewhat personal relationships between leaders and the led, and charismatic leaders especially often claim to have fond feelings toward followers that may or may not be true. Even nowadays, comparatively narcissistic leaders may have their saintly virtues, such as compassion that they claim to have for others, but for those who rise to power with brute force, probably not. Also one emotional outlet for this need to express loyalty, partly to feel tied to something bigger than oneself, partly to therefore earn the loyalty of leaders and of society at large in return, is nationalism, which is nowadays less communally based in a traditional sense, than ideological and fantasy driven.

In modern, narcissistic societies' individuals are likely to bring into new social groupings that they join their own personal narcissistic fantasies, not just among leaders but among followers as well, with resulting weaknesses in long-term loyalties to these new social structures, unless leaders seek to remedy this, sometimes violently, sometimes merely by the development of bureaucratic controls. One example is the famous evolution of sect into church.

Of course, even authoritarian followers tend to realize when things are not going well, and then they often brood about their failed social relationships in narcissistic fashion. Narcissistic followers also often react to their personal failures and their sense of personal emptiness with simple, not complex, escapism that can take the form of seeking authoritarian social structures to cling to, the kind that then can grow to dominate their lives, much like an addiction. Thus, authoritarian personalities can evolve into narcissistic personalities, and vice versa.

In actuality, traditional societies are only relatively authoritarian, modern societies are only relatively narcissistic, and tribal societies are often the least authoritarian of all. In fact, various combinations of the two types of motives are possible as institutionalized patterns of motivation and of behavior. Social institutions such as the

family in fact often have different histories in different cultures, perhaps starting out rather authoritarian and rule bound and becoming more an arena for narcissistic motives over time, or starting off narcissistic and becoming more authoritarian, as when tribal societies are influenced by rather puritanical missionaries who seek to mold their disciples in their own images, though probably there are remnants of the earlier culture and of the earlier personality types that remain. Of course, sometimes the missionaries did have some basis for their criticisms, which was one reason for their initial success.

Why in practice there is such a deep connection between modernity and narcissism can best be illustrated. In traditional societies, whatever tensions and misunderstandings there are between groups, which can be extreme, and within groups that are rather small and, if not always intimate, are at least stable, the attitude among people who know each other well is often: "You don't have to impress us. Just be yourself."

In large-scale modern societies, however, the tendency is for such rootlessness that people without strong social ties often have few restraints against using each other. People under such conditions soon learn that the only ones they can be emotionally involved with enough to truly trust are themselves. But what they appreciate about themselves is something they have learned socially, the image they present to others, even if it is just the image in the mirror. Since an early American sociologist, Charles Horton Cooley, coined the term "the looking-glass self," you might want to take a look at his writings (Cooley 1998). This concept reminds us of something not often realized by social commentators in America; that achievement motivation for socially admired goals is actually a sign of social conformity, which is quite different from individual freedom to act on idiosyncratic personal goals, which is encouraged best by the respect of others for individual dignity, though it can also be encouraged by the mutual ignorance and unconcern of others. However, such unconcern may not last against the pressures of social fads, and of occasional social scapegoating, particularly of the sort that is a side effect of waves of popular nationalism.

In fact, communities because they are built on personal relationships rather than impersonal relationships of the bureaucratic sort tend to give leeway to individual predispositions (both authoritarian and narcissistic) that are respected because the people who embody them are respected. However, when more impersonal associations arise they tend to place greater weight on norms that ignore or even restrain individual dispositions unless they serve a purpose, perhaps a marketing niche, in an economic market, or unless privacy itself becomes an ultimate value, partly because it encourages the workings of the marketplace in this otherwise anonymous environment. However, respect for privacy, admittedly a traditional American value, can diminish when respect for one's fellows diminishes through increasing narcissism.

Cultural differences are quite important in determining the proper weight to be given to individual freedom versus social conformity when comparing societies. A society far removed from the communal-based (*gemeinschaft*) norms of the long-ago past, America is a good example, though in some ways rather archaic and

retaining political traditions from the more recent past, will more likely have a strong differentiation between work and non-work norms than a society closer to its communal-based roots.

It is even possible for a society to become less differentiated between work and non-work spheres of influence over time. For example, in the present America, narcissistic norms of private life seem to be spreading to the workplace. However, this is the narcissism conducive to hyper ambition typical of association infecting the workplace (commonly found among the ambitious who seek upward mobility in increasingly impersonal towns and cities—*gesellschaft*), not the narcissism typical of community (*gemeinschaft*). In the latter situation, there is a great deal of socially conformist snobbery, which looks down upon overt ambition, distinguishing instead between social insiders and social outsiders, though depending on the culture individual idiosyncrasies are given play also. In fact, what happened with the rise of the Nazis in Germany was the replacement of impersonal norms of the bureaucratized business world with discriminatory norms arising from the fantasies and thrill seeking of increasingly alienated private life, which then became an impersonal legal, but not moral, obligation.

Coalescing of individual idiosyncrasies with social norms imposed by leaders together to form or at least to strongly influence a culture seems to occur differently in authoritarian and narcissistic societies, that is to say societies that produce authoritarian and narcissistic personalities among the mass of population. In the case of Nazi Germany, the mass of people gave up their right to their own individual fantasies while identifying with the nationalistic fantasies of their leaders, or at least remained passive and allowed their leaders to give full play to their own, sometimes private, fantasies, all of this in return for emotional and economic security for the masses. This is an illustration of the way authoritarianism functioned in that culture at that time in history.

Under similar pressures, a more narcissistic culture would probably fall apart into extreme factionalism as individuals would refuse to give up their private fantasies and their own individual idiosyncrasies, or perhaps their own socially specific and not society-wide loyalties. In a more in-between culture, they would accept imposed work habits and general social interests when driven by economic necessity, but would be less likely to allow their personalities to be colonized by propaganda and emotional pressures coming from their leaders, an ideal of individual moral seriousness and independence that is the present-day American ideal.

In fact, both *gemeinschaft* communities and *gesellschaft* associations, and authoritarian and narcissistic personalities which is a separate issue, can have as their goals the practice of morality and fairness, or not. The differences are not so much in the goals as abstract ideals, but in the means and sensitivities to these means, the perceptions of the possible, that different physical and social environments encourage or merely just allow.

I will illustrate this point, and I will use individualism as a synonym for narcissism and collectivism as a synonym for authoritarianism, though I recognize the match is not perfect since it is possible to be individualistic in conformity to a social norm making it a kind of authoritarian loyalty, though this kind of culture is

pretty rare. There are some pressures in that direction coming from liberal Protestant churches, and regarding artistic taste from modern artistic communities with their emphasis on novelty in style. It is also possible to be authoritarian resulting from narcissistic idiosyncrasy as the result of a search for emotional security, and I suppose many converts to ideologies are of this sort.

Still, the match is broadly realistic, so it is a useful generalization. If one substitutes narcissistic personality for individualism and authoritarian personality for collectivism, this will place such a great emphasis on individual agency that it will overlook the fact that what seems to be the result of a personality disposition may in reality be the result of mere social conformity. The social reality is that under pressures of social conformity individualists may be forced to become more ambitious than they would like, and under pressures of social conformity the same holds true for collectivists becoming more conformist and authoritarian than they would like.

All this means is that the modern distinction between individualism and collectivism takes for granted a kind of overall *gesellschaft* orientation that allows self-interest to govern both types of communal life. In a more *gemeinschaft* environment, such as that of the European Middle Ages, both individualism and collectivism would reflect greater interest in conformity for its own sake, a mutual intersubjectivity as the basis for both community and individual self-identity. That is why it is so hard for modern people to understand and empathize with people whose "rationality," that is to say goals in life, are so different from theirs. For example, traditional people often have little interest or even concept of achievement motivation because standing out from the group seems to have little purpose for them. There are also modern people who reject the modern *gesellschaft* orientation, yet are confused when they try to build a *gemeinschaft* community as the alternative, since it is something they barely understand. Many religious fundamentalists have been accused of this.

To sum up, especially in our modern world, there is an individualism that is intellectual and contemplative, just as there is a collectivism that is intellectual and contemplative (reflecting an underlying narcissism common among members of both communities). The first can lead to overintellectuality and social withdrawal, and the second can lead to ideological fanaticism that feeds a brooding nationalism, a problem that seems more relevant to modern societies than to the traditional societies of the past. Because traditional societies tend to be anti-intellectual (ritualism tends to build their social solidarity), more relevant to them especially when they start modernizing is an individualism that is not contemplative (and under certain conditions can become enamored of authoritarian loyalty to a charismatic leader) but which ordinarily can lead to loneliness and to seeking remedies through various types of addictions, and there is also a collectivism that is also not contemplative but which can lead to mindless loyalty and acting out, such as communal rioting or at least scapegoating of outsiders, though not necessarily to organized pogroms because by not being very contemplative (and ideological) the emotional spur to fanaticism is easily dispersed and weakened, at least temporarily.

To just show an example of these various mixtures of character, environment, and fate, democracy arose out of quarreling clans where individual autonomy (but in the *gemeinschaft* mode of being part and parcel of community or at least extended family autonomy) was jealously guarded against the rise of feudal overlords. The practical effect was often a great deal of quarreling and factionalism between groups, a kind of gang structure to society, to protect groups both against the incipient tyranny of other groups and against that of powerful leaders. This situation also reflected the kinds of egotism and vanity encouraged by an environment of extreme factionalism and quarreling where self-protection was something on everybody's mind. The two big benefits of this kind of situation were that inherent social instability encouraged social skills and not the petrification of feudal tyranny, and leaders were not miserable in their social isolation, but shared in camaraderie with their followers. Patrimonial societies, especially in their later stages, can develop these negative features, especially as feudal tendencies develop.

This state of affairs, common to both ancient and modern Greece, though not so in the Greek-speaking Hellenistic and Byzantine empires in-between, is different from what occurred in that other Mediterranean land, Spain. There successful imperialism and the wealth of the Indies bred a tradition of arrogance among social leaders who were influenced by many of the same cultural pressures (and pleasures) that influenced their kings. The result was that the leaders of society no longer learned a tradition of compromise with outsiders, and increasingly sought royal-style prerogatives among their peers, which meant to a large extent they no longer had peers, only people they ruled over.

Thus, in Spain during its Golden Age of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whatever individualism arose among the dispossessed and among the mob, its greatest effect was to empower narcissistic leaders, not tolerance and mutual respect between citizens. This is a common result in decadent monarchies, the little feudalisms of everyday social life not only in Spain but also soon in France and in most other European monarchies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In fact, the development of something as simple as consumers' rationality, so common in modern American society, and with it its downside of simplistic hedonism as well as its upside of social cooperation based on rational and knowledgeable consumers expressing their preferences through the market, is in many ways a late cultural development (something commented upon in the Scottish Enlightenment of the eighteenth century). It arises out of a kind of individualism not common outside of cultures similar in this aspect to America's.

In general, "rational" democracy as a kind of agglomeration of individual interests and wants is a complex social institution that is difficult to achieve, much more difficult than the democracy of mass social conformity or the democracy of perpetual feuding. This is true as long as vanity, jealousy, hatred, and egotism, and not to forget arrogance and greed, are such determining principles in anything other than the smallest social groups where, finally, cooperation is more likely to come into its own as a principle of social order. For a discussion of such issues,

see Albert O. Hirschmann, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism Before Its Triumph* (Hirschmann 1977). That is one reason traditional American political philosophy is to resist centralization of governmental functions unless necessary because of it weakening local community solidarities.

America has succeeded partly in weakening these ignoble passions, but now perhaps partly at the price of weakening the possibility of feeling any passions at all, a puritanism that leads to the tunnel vision of workaholism and its recreational compensation through all kinds of strange and artificial channeling of feelings that can also produce various fanaticisms but rarely a holistic social life. The modern consumer world is a new experiment even for America, and even more so for the many societies that are so much more *gemeinschaft* oriented than we are, which often results in the modern context of a split in the personality between the loyalties of private life to intimates and the impersonal loyalties required for public order. In theory in America, our *gesellschaft* style of impersonal rationality and decision making is for the good of, in addition to ourselves, the *gemeinschaft* communities we are loyal to.

The practice of course is often quite different. It is also true of other modern societies such as those of Western Europe who tend to have the same ideal, but practice it somewhat differently. There they usually produce a greater *gesellschaft* deference to authority in public life (reinforcing authoritarian personality traits for the masses and narcissistic personality traits for the leaders) and greater *gemeinschaft* loyalty to intimate community in private life (reinforcing mixtures of authoritarian loyalty and narcissistic selfishness that only the particular subcultures that practice them can adequately describe) that on the whole makes the split between public and private personalities greater than what is found in America.

During periods of extreme emphasis on communal loyalty like during the Middle Ages in Europe, authoritarian personalities would likely feel at home with all the opportunities to fit it and not stand out as individuals, while true narcissists probably felt compelled to engage in ostentatious expressions of "loyalty" as the only real outlet for "standing out" and "showing off," and perhaps their hearts would not really be in it to the extent that what they really wanted to do was to show off in an egotistical sense. This is one reason there was religious pressure then to confess such sins.

In modern more anonymous and more competitive societies based on associations, true narcissists feel at home with many opportunities for "showing off" and competing against strangers and acquaintances, while true authoritarians can fit in by trying to endlessly compete in sports and at work, but often their hearts are not in it, and many may wish they had "more noble goals" to compete for. Except that paradoxically there is now less warfare between states than was common in Europe's Middle Ages because of adherence to bureaucratic norms of dispute settling now extended to the world at large, so that cultural pressures toward communal conformity may have declined, but pressures to be law abiding in a bureaucratic sense have increased.

To summarize, though we now take for granted in modern *gesellschaft* communities that individualists in a self-conscious way are striving to meet its social

ideal by being narcissistic, and in the very same society, many collectivists end up becoming somewhat authoritarian in order to achieve a feeling of security, during the European Middle Ages *gemeinschaft* communities quite likely resulted in many individualists that were authoritarian (sometimes outright puritans) who consciously strove to support communal norms, and collectivists were often narcissistic, who in a thoughtless and self-centered way strove to be honored and admired for fitting in so well with the community.

For that matter, the early British puritans in a sense had authoritarian personalities that nevertheless fostered individualism (individual responsibility). It is little wonder that American culture that so much descends from theirs at least in ideals also fosters individualism, but arising now out of a *gesellschaft* community instead of the *gemeinschaft* community of the puritans, favors increasingly individualism as narcissistic striving for pleasure instead of individualism as striving to serve the community by fulfilling the tenets of morality. Here, individualism was the means for serving the community which was the end. In modern societies like modern America, individualism has become an end in itself, which is why it tends to evolve into narcissism.

In the earlier, more traditional situation, individualism was one way of being somewhat conformist (by following conscience, and not by being narcissistic) and thus it is possible, though in some cultures rare, to be authoritarian in the sense of following duly constituted and worthy authority by seeking to achieve a meaningful life by something other than mere narcissistic self-satisfaction, by seeking achievements of greater intrinsic value. In other words, it is possible to be somewhat though not excessively authoritarian, which in coming from the opposite direction is probably the same thing as being somewhat but not excessively narcissistic, both being examples of the golden mean.

This rather puritanical tradition of America, however, is declining, not because the moral goals of life are declining, they may be increasing as a kind of existential leap of faith among many people, but because the common individualistic, market-driven means used for their achievement are rather clumsy (perhaps in our circumstances necessary) ways of building a community. Traditional moralists from all eras would probably applaud our moralistic ends, which still remain accepted by many people in all modern societies, if not the increasingly common individualistic, market-driven, means.

To fill out this discussion of culture and personality in politics, German culture until recently had a tendency to foster an ideal, especially for leaders, of collectivism and extraversion (unlike other Northern European culture areas that fostered collectivism and introversion) in the sense of punitiveness toward outsiders (often people do not mind their own business) which probably was to a large extent the effect of the ideal of *gemeinschaft* community for both authoritarians and narcissists. More recently, Germans have been more likely to follow the more typical Northern European norm (for example found in Sweden) of collectivism and introversion, though the remnants of that earlier tradition still remains. Likewise, Italy has seen cultural conditions fluctuating between favoring, especially for

leaders, collectivism and extraversion (during the Fascist era) and now individualism (or more accurately in many cases, familialism) and extraversion.

There is no abstract way to judge whether individualism or collectivism as modes of personality functioning is better without knowledge of concrete circumstances. All that can be said is that a *gemeinschaft* society gives a purpose for authoritarian individualism and narcissistic collectivism (notice the combinations of the two personality traits, just as yin (essentially female traits) and yang (essentially male traits) are combined in individuals in traditional Chinese philosophy), that is missing from a *gesellschaft* society where for the most part individualists are basically narcissists and collectivists basically just take orders. Again to repeat, though we take for granted that in *gesellschaft* societies individualists in the personality and social sense will be rather narcissistic (motivated by self-interest) and collectivists will be authoritarian (motivated by the security offered by conformity that is a kind of self-interest for the weak), in *gemeinschaft* societies it is individualists who are often authoritarian (showing their loyalty to norms greater than, in the self-centered sense, self-interest by expressing a strong sense of individual responsibility, that is to say following their consciences), while collectivists are of often narcissistic (pleasure for them is not the result of individual accomplishment but of becoming ever more integrated with the group).

In fact, to take an example from the modern entertainment industry which is a clear case of narcissists serving a *gesellschaft* community, entertainers are often perpetually "on" rather than fine-tuning their vivaciousness to particular people in particular relationships, either that or they become simple snobs, becoming emotionally accessible only for a price. This, unfortunately, for many people is the mark of *gesellschaft* success, the life of the "celebrity."

With growth in the scale of society, hypocrisy in *gemeinschaft* societies, claiming a close, personal knowledge of outsiders who were in fact only understood in a stereotypical fashion became inevitable. For that matter, hypocrisy in *gesellschaft* societies, bureaucratic cliques claiming a specialized knowledge that in fact justifies their power more than their competence, is also common as growth in social complexity and anonymity outgrows the bureaucratic competencies capable of keeping up with these changes. The compromise solution of American-style limited government, leaving to small, local subcultures what they do best, and leaving to central authority their responsibility for remedying gross injustice, not micromanaging society, may not be such a bad solution after all. Lest we forget, the attempt of the British parliament to micromanage their American colonies led to the American Revolution.

Still, the transition from a traditional society to a modern one is often quite terrifying and dangerous, for the methods for informal decision making in a small-scale society no longer are sufficient but the methods of formal decision making, often based on deferring to experts, have often not been well developed. In fact, a major problem for such people is to learn how to evaluate expertise, for a childlike deference to ethnic politicians as if they are parents and thus are assumed to be innately trustworthy, is a common source of the tyrannical governments of the last century.

The transition from a traditional, small-scale society to a modern, anonymous, bureaucratized, large-scale society, dangerous though it is, is dangerous for two additional reasons. One reason is when the ignorant masses react emotionally and thoughtlessly to so much change that they do not understand, but the other is when there are irrational leaders, or even cold-blooded, technocratic, unemotional (at least in public) leaders whose reasoning is too formal and rational (but just in theory), and abstract, with no concrete knowledge of reality to give them depth, with no real opportunity or desire to gain this information from others such as the people affected by their policies.

Authoritarian followers and narcissistic leaders in a traditional society sometimes produced loyalty at the bottom (narcissistic loyalty in fact) and morality at the top (authoritarian moralism or honor, an odd way of being individualistic by our standards, but not by theirs), but in modern, anonymous society, this state of affairs often no longer exists. Instead, we often have narcissistic leaders at the top who are kept in check by their competitive situations, including elections, rather than by their innate sense of honor, and authoritarian followers who are loyal because of their clinging for the sake of security (narcissism results in a kind of self-interest for the weak). That is why, no matter how hard it is to achieve, in modern society, it is very important for the common people to not be too ignorant, especially of what is going on, and for leaders to not be too arrogant, because the temptation is there in both areas. Otherwise something else will survive, but it will not be democracy. It will not be government by the people, certainly, but it probably will not be for them either.

To get back to politics, the split between instrumental and value rationality is more of a problem in America than in more authoritarian societies, where means and ends are more inherently bound up together in the culture, either for good or for ill (for ill if in fact unhealthy values end up being encouraged).

This leads us to the issue of alienation in modern society. Erich Fromm in *The Sane Society* (Fromm 1955) distinguishes between the individual conforming to the requirements of the society, and the society conforming to the desires of the individual, and both extremes result in an unhealthy state of affairs. As he puts it: "The person who dreams while awake, that is, the person who is in touch only with his inner world and who is incapable of perceiving the outer world in its objective-action context, is insane. The person who can only experience the outer world photographically, but is out of touch with his inner world, with himself, is the alienated person" (Fromm 1955, pp. 206–207). That is also why in *gemeinschaft* societies authoritarian personalities often feel fulfilled, but it is harder for narcissistic personalities to feel so, while in *gesellschaft* societies it is the reverse.

In a sense, in America, the alienation of the worker is given priority over the alienation of the intellectual, but only to the extent that solutions to personal unhappiness tend to be simple ones that fit into the culture, individualistic, market-based, materialistic ones and often resulting in admiration for entrepreneurship and individual initiative (at least in theory). You might say workers are given the opportunities to compete for a higher standard of living as the solution to their problems, whether they want to or not, and thus certain freedoms but not other

freedoms are given to workers by elites. A more complicated vision of society is more common in Europe, but this requires people to manage this vision of society, so the alienation of the intellectual is in many ways of more concern to ruling groups, and to the society at large, and this is accepted in the attitudes of the population at large that then compose their culture. This means that this culture that derives from intellectuals is then taught to future generations that produces a general conformity to these attitudes and takes these attitudes as a basis for values, rather than a culture derived from workers and created as a reaction to the alienation of workers.

In fact, in most societies, the most important values of the national culture takes comparatively little from the local subcultures derived from working-class groups compared to what they take from the values of groups of intellectuals. One change has been that increasingly in the present-day elements of working-class culture are taken out of context and fed back to working-class groups in entertainment venues, but by then it has been turned into a product rather than a direct expression created out of the everyday lives of working-class people.

True, this latter tendency is even more important in America than in Europe, though it has become increasingly important in Europe through the entertainment influence of America. However, in America, the values of pop culture are counterbalanced by other sources of working-class culture, in particular rather puritanical middle-class traditions, still derived from religion to a large extent. Therefore, that tendency toward opposition of upper-class intellectuals to pop culture in the past, and present-day approval by upper-class intellectuals toward pop culture, in both Europe and America, at least in America finds that middle-class attitudes on the subject serves as the ultimate tiebreaker in terms of overall societal attitudes, particularly regarding moral ramifications.

13.3 The Political Influence of Intellectuals

In Europe, however, the cultural influence of intellectuals comes from the fact that they are encouraged to think of themselves as being very important, much more important than the middle class in developing social values and solutions to social problems, so that they feel they should be the tiebreaker in any conflict between social classes. In fact, they are encouraged by their cultural tradition to come up with solutions to social problems that involve nationalism and/or socialism, rather than through individual achievements alone. Traditionally, a larger group of upper-class intellectuals in Europe has been resistant to pop culture than their counterparts in America, but these attitudes are not reinforced one way or the other by middle-class influences as much as is the case in America.

In America, the entertainment functions of intellectuals are even more important than in Europe, because the importance of intellectuals in America for setting the values of society at large is considered less important. No doubt at times even in Europe, the leaders of society may claim to be profound but in fact function

more like mediocre entertainers (the claim to fame of Hitler and Mussolini became in the end their rhetoric), while in America entertainers can have a morally uplifting function, which does occur at times in America since we rely so much on entertainment to produce a feeling of community.

But even in America, the morally uplifting side of entertainment is rather overrated by the mass media who benefit from it mostly by their profits. The effects of the culture industries, and in particular the entertainment industries, on modern society, mostly critical and totally taken from the point of view of European intellectuals, were an important interest of the proponents of Critical Theory at the University of Frankfurt in the 1920s and early 1930s, and later on in their various locations after the rise of Nazism made them flee Germany. See Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute for Social Research* (Jay 1996).

An interesting take on the alienation of the intellectual can be found in Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism Avant-Garde Decadence Kitsch Postmodernism* (Calinescu 1987). He essentially writes about the ponderings of intellectuals, the kinds of ideas, including those that derive from and encourage cynicism, that may spread to the working class even if only on rare occasion do they originate there. He mentions that once the substantive rationality characteristic of religion was quite important in Western culture. There always were secular values of course, but they had to compete with or at least justify themselves to religion. By the eighteenth century, there was a certain tendency for secular values and religion to exist side by side and not affect each other, at least compared to earlier days. This was true even in the early nineteenth century when disillusionment with the French Revolution led to disillusionment with the often anti-religious, idealistic intellectuals who had justified it.

Yet with time, the cultural creations of artists became ever more extreme and even outright ideological. Increasingly, some artists could be described according to their right-wing and left-wing political positions, as if there was less and less of a common cultural perspective to share with one's audience, so that their art had to embody their whole philosophy of life, while I should add other artists were extremely apolitical in a rather solipsistic kind of way. In many ways, art took on the characteristics of the work of cultural missionaries who personally felt the need to spread their own personal doctrines in order to feel at home with the society at large, since they felt alienated to begin with from this overall culture, and thus felt alienated from the interests, if not necessarily the ultimate values, of many of the people around them.

To a certain extent, they felt comfortable only with intellectuals with similar interests. They used their art to spread their personal values to society at large, or at least to protest against the values of society at large, as their way of integrating back into it. Eventually the left artists more and more supported political utopianism, as they reacted to everyday life with distaste, and the right reacted against this, not by returning to traditional religious morality, but to an evolution out of it to something quite different. In this latter case, the result was often a belief in a kind of authoritarian fascism, believing not in a hierarchical society justified by

leaders adhering to traditional religious virtues, but justifying hierarchy by referring to the mediocrity of everyone else, as if hierarchy was its own justification.

The extreme left which justified extreme egalitarianism without much of a sense of social context, and the extreme right which justified hierarchy for its own sake (as if Social Darwinism could be a source of values) again without much of a sense of social context, increasingly produced striking art, but not realistic commentary about society. In fact, in many ways, art became more and more characterized by intellectual experimentation for its own sake, and less and less characterized by being tied in an easily recognizable manner to realistic social contexts.

Eventually, both rather authoritarian political positions (the extreme left aimed to practice their egalitarianism only in their future utopia) became discredited with the failures of fascism and communism, and celebrating the mediocrities of mass culture essentially became all that was and is left, at least according to the postmodernists who do not much believe in progress anymore. If anything, this alienation of artists from the society at large, at least according to the argument of Calinescu, has increased in steady progression during the last 200 years. No doubt at certain times this alienation of artists stabilized, and perhaps the present period will be one of those times.

In the increasingly anonymous societies of the modern world, there is great value relativism at the interpersonal level, which means people often do not much trust each other. Adam Seligman's book *The Problem of Trust* (Seligman 2000) produces a good deal of insight on this. Instead, there is an increase in value absolutism for leaders, which means more is expected from leaders to create order in society. This is more true of the societies of Europe where an authoritarian search for social order provided by the state is more part of their culture than in America where the historical tradition was that of local communities that already had the social order they wanted, and resisted tampering with this from the central government. Nevertheless, social anonymity is becoming more common in America, and the temptation to seek social order imposed from the government is also increasing.

The practical result of the growth of nihilism in modern societies in general is what Stjepan Mestrovic calls, and this is also the title of his book, "postemotional society" (Mestrovic 1997). Traditional societies take for granted scarcity, but at the same time, the pleasures of life are emotional. Providing the proper context to enable the healthy expression of emotion is probably the major goal of life, and certainly in traditional societies where "ambition" of the modern sort based on a complex economy has little meaning. The acting-out of emotions is seen in the multitude of social, and especially religious, rituals. The end goal desired from such rituals as well as from spontaneous expression of feelings is that of everyday repetitive behaviors with valued others in personal relationships. The result is the self-fulfillment that results from the expression of intimacy, sexual intimacy being only the most obvious.

Nevertheless, while we in the modern world now live in a cornucopia of material goods, we increasingly live in a desert of personal relationships. In fact, increasingly people relate "rationally" to the vast majority of people they meet as if they are mere instrumentalities for achieving more and more material goods. The effect is usually one of great confusion, and many of the social philosophies of our time reflect this confusion between means and ends, and between the sacred and the profane.

Again to get back to politics and personality, in all authoritarian societies (unless the sense of authority is underlaid by values that justify it, and this is much less true in bureaucratized societies where hierarchy produces economic security, not morality), there are tendencies for social relationships to become relationships of unequals. The consequences of this are feudal-like loyalties being the emotional bond that ties relationships together, even of romantic, familial, and friendship-based relationships.

The cure tried for this nowadays is often even more anonymity, since the meeting of strangers can offer people a chance to unburden themselves in a way they cannot do to not totally trusted acquaintances. Such anonymity can also cause people a great deal of anxiety as it reminds them they did not choose their social roles, and now in this situation, they do not know what to do. Regarding this search for emotional security in a modern society in general for unrealistic authoritarians their cathexes are sticky, involving neurotic clinging, and are based on primitive longings for support and lack of trust/fear of abandonment (not mature love). Thus, they are loyal until they find a more powerful master. Narcissists are often like bees hopping from flower to flower, since they fear that any closeness they develop cannot last, because they easily get bored and distrusting and often impute those motives to others too.

America as a place of competitive individualists has its unrealistic authoritarians, sometimes with tendencies of feudal-like loyalty, but, more so than in most places, fosters narcissism on a grand scale. Unrealistic narcissists are in fact dependent on a world where fear is pushed away through power, mostly through the power of money, but possibly merely through status. Their social relationships often consist of shared fantasies.

Since both extreme authoritarians and extreme narcissists are lacking in balance, one type of person can flip over into another if circumstances change, such as the economically poor authoritarian becoming the narcissistic nouveau riche. Also common is the child of one type rebelling by becoming the other.

In modern societies, neither extreme authoritarians, who do not think they can change, nor extreme narcissists, who do not want to, can adapt to the needs and interests of others very well, nor can they empathize and share the feelings of others. Both can take and give orders, but find it hard to give and take in empathy with others. There is also a strong political tendency for narcissistic leaders to find authoritarian followers. That is to say narcissists tend to give orders and authoritarians tend to take them. While extreme narcissists are quick to react defensively to stress, possibly by attacking the critic, extreme authoritarians often identify with their attackers (unless these attackers are social outsiders who do not count),

and blame themselves, though not necessarily getting depressed about it. After all, they are just taking orders.

Even in the traditional authoritarian societies of Europe's Middle Ages, there was in some ways more religious idealism than in the modern world, but also much hypocrisy, which is why religion eventually developed some disrepute with the coming of the Renaissance because its opponents as well as the people who sought to reform it claimed that it fostered hypocrisy by encouraging its followers to interpret religion hypocritically. The religion under discussion here is Christianity, but the pressures for hypocrisy seem to be endemic to all religions, and for that matter to all idealistic value systems. In any case in traditional authoritarian societies, individualists are often authoritarian (sometimes outright puritans) who consciously strive to support communal norms, while collectivists are often narcissistic, who in a thoughtless and self-centered way strive to be honored and admired for fitting in so well with the community.

Obviously, ego structure begins to be affected by, even mirrors sometimes, social opportunities. The study of motives in relationships, including the study of the emotions that cement and break apart relationships, must deal with not only conscious, purposeful decisions but a great deal of irrationality. For example, in neurosis, the least severe type of major psychopathology, where there are repeated acted-out patterns of reaction to past traumas and present anxiety (or often simply felt feelings, or the reverse, to be expected feelings are not felt), it is common for one to act out the aggressor while feeling (or not feeling when one should feel something) like the victim.

This having your cake and eating it too is what makes such psychological patterns so hard to break, and what makes it so hard for an individual to react to a third "unbiased" perspective pointing out to others their neurotic symptoms (internal psychological conflict) or conflicts between people that seem to be inexplicable except for the meeting of psychological needs (for example, revenge, feelings of jealousy, exaggerated need to conform to an ideology, scapegoating in order to maintain one's self-image, exaggerated respect for the ideas of a clearly demagogic leader). Having your cake and eating it too can also develop in cultural institutions, which is why value systems including religions have so often been accused of it, that allow people to unrealistically experience contradictory feelings, and thus temporarily overcome a great deal of ambivalence. An example is when elites encourage the masses to scapegoat outsiders, allowing them to release tensions by displacing any anger they might feel against these elites (which is separate from the issue whether these scapegoats have any moral faults of their own).

Individuals to be psychologically stable must have a taken-for-granted worldview which, when the world itself is dangerous, is the very thing that is psychologically damaging yet cannot be rejected unless there is something to replace it. Often there is not, especially when certain identifications and defense mechanisms, sometimes just cultural ideals or political loyalties, have become part of one's character. Thus, are psychological flexibility and growth so very important, and yet so often lacking.

Sometimes people in the middle class are so emotionally involved in their schemes for achieving self-control and especially respectability, or simply ambitions for social advancement, that their biases get in the way of their insight. Meanwhile, those who have the opportunity to gain insight because so many social problems originate in their sectors of society, the very rich and the very poor, are often the very ones who because of narcissism (or authoritarianism) do not have the self-control to seek insight or if they have it to act upon it.

In fact, there are many paradoxes in the confluence between psychology and politics. Thus, social change such as weakening family structures may result in looking for a father figure (not accepting the weakening of authoritarian families), or not identifying with a father figure as much as considering all authority figures to be unreliable sources of resources to be both feared and manipulated (a loosely structured society like America can breed optimism that is real, when the economy is good, or as a veneer overlying lack of trust, when the economy is bad). Or there may be thinking of a father figure as being like Santa Claus, someone respected and loved, just ineffectual and ultimately not feared (and possibly not respected).

The potentials for conflict between the individual and society are almost endless. When there is political conflict over the direction a society will take politically, egalitarian versus inegalitarian, and the political direction an individual person will take, rational independence of thought versus conformist or narcissistic, there are various possibilities for combinations. In an inegalitarian society conformist, status-conscious people may seek to serve reactionary leaders to keep it so, in an egalitarian society becoming inegalitarian independent-minded, rational people may seek to serve social reformers (though not revolutionaries) to return the society to its original ideals. Or in the latter case, social reform may be authoritarian/narcissistic meanderings lacking direction because, as in much of American history, the society has no clear-cut patterns of ultimate authority and discourages hope of finding final directions for social reform. It may also mean actual social reform based on a groundswell of social cooperation. Likewise reactionary/revolutionary situations in authoritarian societies may lead to a reaffirmation of public morality or a nihilistic authoritarianism based on the brute power of the rulers and the acquiescence of the ruled. These are just a few of the possibilities.

For now, it should be remembered that it is hard for at least extreme authoritarians (and it is hard to know what this signifies without knowing the social structure of which they are a part and their mental images of it) to accept the possibility of success and, therefore, the need to deal empirically with the complicated details of life. This is because they pretty much expect failure or at least expect that their initiatives, especially against established authority, will result in failure.

They hope only to minimize failure through all-encompassing schemes based on subordinating their feelings to the situation and the will of their superiors, often telling others what they want to hear or engaging in hysterical acting out, which is their version of producing narcissistic satisfaction. Realizing one method of social order does not work often results in going to the opposite extreme because the

fundamental attitude of expecting lack of choice makes it seem pointless to deal with life except in gross categories of escapism (often hysteria) or control (usually neurotic acceptance of being controlled, sometimes getting narcissistic satisfaction as controllers).

Some authoritarians are prone to depression because of fearing betrayal by their leaders and/or loved ones, or at the very least face the possibility of learned helplessness, and perhaps paranoia as well, especially when distrust dates back to childhood and/or to betrayal in intimate relationships (perhaps they were just not allowed to express the authenticity of their feelings, so that their feelings were forced to fester and eventually seek symbolic outlets). Of course, paranoia can also develop in the present because of present sources of anxiety, especially since some paranoids really do have enemies, especially ones that they make themselves (something politicians should be reminded of). Authoritarian family lives, including marriages of convenience, add to these dangers.

The pathologies of narcissism, common in modern Western societies, including up-to-date democratic societies, fit less into the classic neurotic syndromes of depression and paranoia, and more into what are called borderline disorders. Here, the fact that such societies have democratic political forms do not override the problems of big, anonymous, bureaucratized communities, so that questions of the meaninglessness of life, and of developing addictions as the only way to structure pleasure, because there are not even good objects to fear or hate in such societies, unless the society rallies together because of an attack from outside it, becomes paramount. This does not mean, however, depression and paranoia does not exist, since individual circumstances may produce it.

Paranoid reactions can be an intensification of feelings of depression, or if there is intense vulnerability, the stage of depression may be short or skipped, especially when one is prevented because of a lack of a supportive social environment from expressing depression. Thus, the lack of a supportive social environment for expressing depression (in the form of sadness) can become more damaging than the original reasons for the depression, especially when they are trivial, which is one reason why a weak family life is so damaging. Thus, depression over lack of fulfilling and, even more damaging, lack of supportive, social relationships is a major attack on one's ego, and this is productive of paranoid reactions. Paranoid reactions are likely to have arisen through lack of supportiveness during stages of personality development when there was a somewhat stable ego capable of attacking and being attacked, and of feeling fear, though severe anxiety in the present can cause regression to that stage of personality functioning (overcoming the "rationality" of the adult personality, to the extent it has developed and so exists). Likewise, schizoid reactions of withdrawal from others are likely to have originally developed when there was a sense of self capable of standing on its own, alone as it were. Schizophrenic reactions reflect more lack of supportiveness at a stage before the sense of self stabilized, producing great vulnerability for later on in life, or destruction of the sense of self in the present, though this is more rare than the former; that is why people do survive emotionally prison and persecution.

Francis L. K. Hsu in "The Self in Cross-Cultural Perspective" (Hsu 1985) produces a quite useful resource for studying the social, and especially cultural pressures that mold the self, especially in childhood, and that pressure it from then on. He emphasizes the layers of the self from the unconscious to the expressible conscious and then to the wider society in which it operates. He emphasizes the psychological effects for individualistic societies of lack of intimacy within a small, extended kin group. This causes people in such societies to seek intimacy almost like a missionary, creating intimates out of strangers in a common cause or perhaps through exploration of their own sense of self, capable of sharing their extreme self-consciousness with no one, except perhaps their God. Because of this Westerners in general love their pets more fervently than do the Chinese, to a large extent because the Chinese have been socialized to have an extended kin group to love.

To get back to politics and personality, most of this work relates to studies of public attitudes, and less so to strictly studies of personality as such. Someone who has thought about the usefulness of these studies for theory building is Fred Greenstein, so I recommend his book *Personality and Politics: Problems of Evidence, Inference, and Conceptualization* (Greenstein 1987). He also has a useful review article on "Personality and Political Socialization: The Theories of Authoritarian and Democratic Character" in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (Greenstein 1965, pp. 81–95).

Regarding two people who approach politics using a more classic psychoanalytic approach, I recommend the work of Prof. Vamik Volkan whose approach is that of the present-day psychoanalysis with its emphasis on the development of a sense of self (he taught at the Medical School of the University of Virginia), particularly *The Need to Have Enemies and Allies: From Clinical Practice to International Relationships* (Volkan 1988) and *Blind Trust: Large Groups and Their Leaders in Times of Crisis* (Volkan 2004), and one of the originators of this field, Prof. Harold Lasswell, with his emphasis derived from the sociology and psychoanalysis of the first half of the twentieth century, particularly *Psychopathology and Politics* (Lasswell 1977—originally published in 1930) and the later updating of his work in *Power and Personality* (Lasswell 2009—originally published in 1948).

Regarding ongoing writing in this field, much of it has taken on a rather philosophical tone and so has become somewhat marginalized from the standpoint of mainstream study of modern politics and political sociology, but still let me recommend the journal *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society,* and the writing of a major contributor to this field at the present time, Prof. C. Fred Alford, particularly *Narcissism: Socrates, the Frankfurt School, and Psychoanalytic Theory* (Alford 1988), *Group Psychology and Political Theory* (Alford 1994), and *Levinas, the Frankfurt School and Psychoanalysis* (Alford 2003). Regarding writings relating to political psychology particularly from the point of view of the psychology of attitudes, see James Sidanius and Felicia Pratto, *Social Dominance: An Intergroup Theory of Social Hierarchy and Oppression* (Sidanius and Pratto 2001), Kristen Renwick Monroe, *Political Psychology* (Monroe 2001), George E. Marcus,

The Sentimental Citizen: Emotion in Democratic Politics (Marcus 2002), and John T. Jost and James Sidanius, eds., *Political Psychology: Key Readings* (Jost and Sidanius 2004).

Returning to the perspective of Prof. Volkan, his major contribution is to emphasize some of the conditions that make stressed-out people vulnerable to the political appeals of demagogic politicians, particularly those who incite ethnic hatred. He emphasizes that under extreme stress, economic downturn, defeat in war, weakening of traditional social solidarity such as through economic change, or weakening of religious loyalties are some sources that I can think of, there can be a regression to earlier stages of personality functioning, particularly that very early, baby-like stage when the child's weak ego reacted to stresses by splitting and projecting what one feared with imputing "badness" unto that aspect of the environment that was seen as unsupportive, and overly clinging and imputing "goodness" to that aspect of the environment that was considered not only supportive, but also that the person was utterly dependent on. Obviously for an adult to react in this way would produce tendencies toward paranoia, with clinging to one's ethnic leaders and utter fear of leaders of ethnic rivals, the actual existence of the rivalry between the ethnic groups becoming exaggerated as cooperation becomes more and more literally unthinkable.

The work of Prof. Harold Lasswell emphasizes more the personalities of leaders, or at least those who try to become leaders, and how they interpret their social roles in ways congruent with personality needs dating back to childhood. Thus, his major emphasis is on the social roles that pertain to politics, in the broadest sense, and that can be performed in ways that make obvious that personality needs are a driving force in the way they are performed. He emphasizes the tensions and pressures of childhood, though obviously tensions arising in later stages of life can warp the personality also, as can mere social conformity when leaders in effect "seduce" a population to go down an unhealthy or immoral path as a way of thinking, often a paranoid way. Vamik Volkan interprets this political process as being successful especially when it produces in the target population a regression to more psychologically primitive (childish) modes of functioning, or by getting them to accept new cultural norms, that can be psychologically unhealthy, or at the very least that increase rather than diminish the possibility for conflict with other groups, conflict that would otherwise be unnecessary.

But to get back to the work of Prof. Lasswell, his work has a strong common sense, pragmatic, American feel to it, as he adapts the European perspectives in psychoanalysis to what he considers to be the norms of American political life, and occasionally European political life in comparison, though I would not exaggerate how deeply he tries to investigate any of these norms. There is a strong journalistic and pop psychology feel to much of his investigations, but when it works it works very well. He expressed his practical side by emphasizing the study of development of public policy during what amounts to the second half of his career, a period when he placed much less emphasis on the study of psychopathology and politics. Nevertheless, his book *Power and Personality* (Lasswell 2009), originally published in 1948, remains a good summary of his ideas on this subject.

Since he emphasizes that the adult personality is marked by the experiences of childhood, thus he places less practical emphasis on the experiences of adulthood other than providing an outlet for the expression of basic needs dating back to childhood, he emphasizes that the personality can be conceived of as the net result of the indulgences and the deprivations that one experienced in childhood, and that much adult behavior is the reflection of attempts to maintain self-esteem in reaction to one's interpretation of one's place in the world based on this net result in childhood and one's expectation that the world will continue to act in this way.

Regarding political roles, he emphasizes the role of agitator, the role of administrator, and the role of intellectual (as socially detached). Obviously, there can be agitators who merely grew up in environments where the arts of sales-manship were learned, there can be administrators who merely grew up in envi-ronments where there were role models for being successful bureaucrats, and there can be intellectuals in politics who merely grew up in environments where scholarship was honored. But Prof. Lasswell emphasizes the agitator who is driven by a need to express his paranoia and resulting anger, or perhaps needs of the id in general such as sexual impulsiveness or perhaps a need to be admired by the opposite sex that can have sexual benefits but takes on a functional autonomy of its own as in the need to be flirtatious, reflecting a need to be loved, but also with the fear of getting too close and eventually getting rejected so also with the constant need to hedge one's bets by moving on. The latter is also characteristic of certain histrionic personalities, not unusual among people in the acting profession.

He also emphasizes the administrator as bureaucrat who needs the security of routine because he or she is not comfortable with people, is more comfortable with procedures that limit human interactions to those that involve limited goals, and he also emphasizes a not uncommon active hostility toward people such that any kind of stress allows the bureaucrat to use bureaucratic procedures in a defensive posture, and even in a way to antagonize and mistreat people who have raised the anger or the fear, perhaps even the jealousy, of the bureaucrat. He also emphasizes the need to maintain social distance by a good number of intellectuals, as if the fantasy maintained by intellectual comprehension of the lives of people relieves the stress of really interacting with them, and of course I should add in this way avoiding the possibility of rejection, or even more likely, of having expectations of social interaction that cannot be fulfilled, possibly because anxiety arises under so many social circumstances that involve competition, comparison between people, or that produce active rivalries that encourage hostility by others or at the very least shows the weakness of one's own social power. Intellectuals react to such conditions by getting to postulate the utopias that suit them the best, though on occasion some learn to be objective enough to give advice that really does benefit others, and not only themselves.

It is obvious all these writings dealing with the psychological dispositions of people who are expected to be concerned about being good citizens, rational for their own self-interest, and sympathetic enough about the problems of their fellow citizens that they will not only cooperate with them, but will even at times self-sacrifice for them, are all prerequisites not only for character in its broadest sense

(a traditional concern of religion that predated modern politics), but also for that mode of social cooperation known as political democracy.

Political democracy not only relies on the maturity and good sense of the average citizen, so that elections will be acceptable to the average citizen as a means for exercising good judgment, and as a means for educating the public on issues of public concern. It is also a reaction against the political systems that preceded it that were based on belief in the untrustworthiness of the average citizen, or so elites believed who got to pat themselves on the back and to claim legitimacy to rule just because as they so often reminded the poor how they considered them to be unworthy to rule.

The Roman Empire, which replaced the Roman Republic, which offered the poor bread and circuses and the opportunity to worship the emperor as a god, while the elites had the responsibility and the pleasure of showing concern for the common good through public affairs and politics (*res publica,* common good, is the word from which our word republic derives), has become a model for what present-day democracies, or even republics even when not democracies, should not do. They should not create an environment where there is longing for what the Roman Empire offered, and what republics, including democratic republics, reject, a slavish or avaricious or hysterical or impulsive public (often in a carnival-loving, hedonistic sense) or a paranoid mass population who are more concerned with their private pleasures or their public, paranoid hates and jealousies than to serve higher goals when they legitimize the public agenda through the act of voting.

But if it is true for them, it is even more true for their leadership class who sets the agenda that they get to vote on in electing representatives who then in turn fine-tune the public agenda for them. When leaders themselves become avaricious or hysterical or impulsive, and worse yet, when the mass of citizens does not reprove their leaders at the ballot box, but actually admire them for their clever trickeries, as if they can live vicariously through the very people that demean and abuse them, democracy is on its last legs and is about to expire.

True, the psychological processes that underlay political attitudes are often latent, which is why the political unconscious does have some importance. There is a good deal of ambivalence in attitudes that underlay values, which is one reason the late nineteenth century in Europe and America was a period of idealism, resulting in the antislavery movement, and the growth of political movements that finally brought in the working class to the political arena, and also a period of cynicism, where economic growth was firmly tied to finding new markets and new sources of raw materials to the point of causing outright imperialistic aggression. Individuals were often pushed by events, private and public, and by their own psychological needs, to resolve this ambivalence in one direction or the other.

True, often the antisocial, manipulative attitudes were not on the surface, but were instead latent, as a kind of temptation. Thus, when America entered the Spanish-American War in 1898, there was no call for imperialistic expansion, quite the opposite, the only public call was for America to drive Spain from their colony in Cuba whom they were abusing, but when military strategies led to attacks on the Spanish military at some of their other bases in Puerto Rico and in

the Philippines, the temptation to copy the imperialism of the European powers, one can call it an unconscious jealousy among sectors of the public, proved irresistible. Such attitudes, which were not obvious at the beginning of the war, became the path of least resistance, once they were aroused by the war itself when people realized that America was going to win.

Much imperialistic expansion in the nineteenth century was of this sort, events provided temptations and opportunities, and people, and especially leaders, gave into them. This was also an era of professional soldiers, who served these imperialistic adventures, often not out of any personal interest, but because economic and social class conditions were such that becoming a professional soldier was considered sometimes the only viable option for a career, particularly for the very rich and the very poor. Even the political democracy of America of that era provided political and social options, but not unlimited ones, which is one reason they also had a professional military class who got involved in imperialistic adventures, just like their monarchist rivals. So, there are some differences between republics and monarchies, but not unlimited ones.

In Issue 192 (June, 2008) of the *International Social Science Journal* (Braun 2008, pp. 209–222) in my essay on "Character, Civil Society, and Prospects for Democracy," I emphasize that American democracy is good at preventing tyranny, but is less efficient at producing ongoing social order. It relies on ongoing cultural traditions, especially from its middle class, but is hard pressed to replace these traditions when they disappear. In fact, I mention that political democracy is the end of a long process of evolution, particularly since the social democracy of tribal people is such that they do not have much purpose for politics, and often no reason for a central government of any sort, including a democratic one. Political democracy tends to develop to do more efficiently what monarchy had done before it, redistribute income, and provide opportunities that were lost when social (and economic) democracy started to disappear. Of course, this original social democracy was usually an equality of poverty, and one reason it weakened was to expand the economic pie through increased specialization and division of labor, even though the distribution of the economic pie became skewed in the process.

The earliest democracies were oriented toward maintaining social equality and focused on reciprocity in trade and equality in economic benefits. When this broke down, especially with the weakening of tribal societies, commercial republics sometimes developed that were ruled by oligarchies that nevertheless emphasized individual economic competition resulting in social mobility through economic growth and equity in trade. They were concerned about increasing the economic pie.

They often evolved into aristocratic republics where there was hereditary wealth, and rule was often limited to a hereditary elite who competed among themselves for leadership of the state. These elites tended to be upholders of values greater than just economic growth, and often they were concerned with enforcing cultural and moral values through redistributing a portion of the economic surplus (a surplus that was becoming more and more hereditary anyway) according to non-economic criteria, so that there was less emphasis on economic growth or on social mobility, and more emphasis on charity. These aristocratic states in turn often

evolved into monarchies when the wealth of the state no longer required much entrepreneurial nor aristocratic initiative, but could be expanded solely through bureaucratic means and bureaucratic efficiency. Thus, not by emphasizing competition among the merchant class for leadership of the state nor by emphasizing competition among the hereditary aristocracy for leadership of the state so as to emphasize non-economic values, but instead now that the structure of the state was in place, simply keeping the state bureaucracy going was considered sufficient in a monarchy for maintaining social order.

Having a hereditary generalist as the, often symbolic, leader as monarch was considered sufficient to keep all the specialist bureaucrats in line and doing their jobs, from both the culture-leader aristocracy and the economically oriented merchant class. When it was considered no longer necessary to avoid politics at all cost in selecting this generalist to set the agenda for all the bureaucrats underneath, but instead a certain bureaucratic efficiency could be applied to the governing process itself, especially in choosing the governing class rather than officially allowing it to be hereditary, when that happened modern political democracy was born and put into play.

As to whether the mass of citizens will continue to monitor their rulers, or will fall back into patterns of subservience or ignorant passivity and torpor, will determine whether social evolution can move in the opposite direction as well.

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Chapter 14
A Basic Summary on Social Evolution and Character

One way to look at the effects of social evolution on personal character is that what is taken away by ecology, the weakening sense of social solidarity that comes with increasing social anonymity and bureaucratization, can be returned by a more sophisticated self-consciousness, enforced by greater use of social contracts (especially in the business world), resulting in a more fine-tuned sense of personal character. This requires people to be more self-aware, which is not always a pleasant experience, and in any case, there is a common desire for this self-consciousness to be counteracted by the pleasurable escapism of increasing narcissism.

As a defensive posture, sometimes such people feel they must become more self-aware only to the extent that the dangers of being manipulated by uncaring others have increased because of social evolution, and also because developing a more complex sense of self includes more opportunities for fooling oneself, which is a psychological danger. This is partly because what is equal and unequal in traditional and modern societies are the reverse of each other. There is now more equality of opportunity for top positions, but the very existence of so much modern dependence on endless economic growth based on division of labor results at times in intense competition, and at other times in bureaucratic subservience, which produces social inequalities even as the standard of living rises.

One possible result is that modernizing *gemeinschafts* (often modernizing authoritarian societies where traditional social bonds are now breaking down) are encouraged by ecological circumstances, or sometimes merely by their leaders, to rely not on self-assertion but on amoral, fatalistic loyalty of a rather feudalistic sort. Such loyalty is now encouraged by the culture, more specifically by their leaders, rather than the simple moralism (at least to a certain extent based on universalistic rules of common morality) that had been more common in past versions of their culture.

On the other hand, *gesellschafts* that had once arisen by an accumulation of individual decisions based on a combination of self-interest and conformity to universalistic rules of common morality can "de-modernize" and become

increasingly feudalistic so that people fatalistically accept individual lack of choice as the norm, resulting in individual subservence to the will of elites counterbalanced by fantasy-driven longing for idealized (that is to say often *gemeinschaft*) community. Such a society may result in mainly security-conscious, rather blindly loyal authoritarian personalities (the narcissism of the weak), or rather manipulative of others narcissistic personalities, or may end up with combinations of the two personality types, sometimes alternating in the same person, more often than not producing a society that is a mixture of both types of personalities, often in reality distributed among various subcultures.

Of course, it is also true that the balancing of political equality (equality before the law) and social inequality of modern societies based on *gesellschaft* relations does not exist in tribal societies based on *gemeinschaft* relations and social equality (and sometimes political inequality, or sometimes hardly any politics at all which makes political equality nonexistent because irrelevant). For them political, religious, and economic influences should mesh with each other, unlike in *gesellschafts* where lifestyles often crystalize around political, religious, and economic differences, including those in the modern world based on bureaucratic specializations that arise on the job. That is why the developing of feudalistic loyalties in modernizing *gemeinsschaft* societies (loyalties have lost their moral purpose but are now based on power) or the redeveloping of feudalistic loyalties in de-modernizing *gesellschaft* societies (loyalties are not freely accepted as much as are forced upon people who mostly only have bad choices) are a bad version of social evolution, resulting in a rigid class system, while a golden mean alternative to this is the American ideal, a rather pragmatic one, that arose after the American Revolution where local governments and local societies retained *gemeinschaft* characteristics while the central government specialized in those social functions that required *gesellschaft* characteristics.

In *gemeinschaft* societies, people tend to have strong egos (also strong super-egos when the moral sense is highly developed) as long as they are psychologically rooted in supportive social environments. Especially under conditions of social change (especially modernization), some of them develop feelings and beliefs that support ambition because they feel that they are being limited and held back, and can do better (sometimes they actually feel they are being exploited). At least psychologically they then tend to seek catharsis. Otherwise, they are satisfied with cathexis, which is the typical state for them. In *gesellschaft* societies, people tend to have weak egos because of lack of trust and resulting lack of a sense of emotional security, and thus tend to seek cathexis, that is to say they seek to make social bonds, unless of course they are those narcissistic people who end up feeling so successful economically, and sometimes in terms of social power, that short-term social manipulation of others is all they feel they will ever need. For these narcissists, short-term cathexis with others is often followed by dissatisfaction and seeking catharsis, which is the typical state for them.

Gemeinschaft societies often have a good amount of formality in social relationships but less so in economic matters that are handled competitively with few formal niceties, with the reverse in *gesellschaft* societies. There are also

in-between situations such as certain tribal societies that have some formality in social relationships and some formality in economic exchange relationships (often with neighboring communities), but without excessive formality and ritualism (and magical thinking) in either situation.

Societies that try to limit the effects of over-bureaucratization try to retain some *gemeinschaft* virtues in the midst of organizations that exercise every greater control over society in an increasingly *gesellschaft* manner. Thus, post-feudal societies, like America, try to limit the bureaucratic tendencies of *gesellschaft,* and the tendencies of the anonymous marketplace that can be seen as sometimes leading to moral anarchy, without losing the economic and political advantages of *gesellschaft*. They do so by trying to retain some of the virtues of *gemeinschaft* communities, under these new more complex circumstances, by retaining mutual concern for fairness under these new circumstances of either hierarchical sub-servience (the bureaucratic alternative) or single-minded competition for personal advantage which is only fair if both adversaries have equal knowledge and equal power (the market alternative).

In a *gemeinschaft,* one achieves individual expression by having an audience of intimates, an audience that may be hereditary, so that in a sense there is a formal rule for determining the strength of certain relationships (such as who are relatives to each other, or who treat each other as neighbors or even as fellow citizens), but no formal rule for broader senses of social status, which in these societies do not exist such as titles of nobility. There are also often cultural rules that put a limit to what areas of emotional expression are legitimate within the *gemeinschaft* group in order to guarantee that one's loyalty to the group and to the group's values are never put into question.

In a *gesellschaft*, there are rules determining broader senses of social status, sometimes merely the status of being a "celebrity" and individual expression is often an "artistic" statement expressed to acquaintances or to outright strangers as an audience. Also for powerful people there may be formal procedures to deter-mine social status (such as those procedures that allow one to gain entrance to a "prestigious" education), but as a result of this status, one may feel one can ignore the feelings of "social inferiors." The result is often to act in a quite narcissistic manner toward them. In truly anonymous, and usually relatively wealthy, societies many people act in such a rather narcissistic manner toward the people of the surrounding communities, or perhaps even the community they are part of, because there are so few consequences to disrespectful behavior toward this anonymous public.

One can summarize by saying that in *gemeinschaft* societies, intense personal relationships such as those of the family, and to a certain extent friendships, are reinforced by formalities and even ritualism though the degree is strongly influ-enced by the particular culture, while in *gesellschaft* societies, they are reinforced by fewer formalities and ritualism, as if the freedom to start anew in market fashion, or at least the threat of limiting personal interaction to a minimum, is the best guarantee of preventing bad feelings or even exploitation in what otherwise

could be potentially close personal relationships, but under these circumstances will not be.

In *gesellschaft* societies, families are somewhat united by formalities leading to loyalties, so that they remain an island of security amidst friendships that tend to be informal in order to allow a certain amount of emotional expressiveness, which is emotionally enjoyable, but by the same token, these friendly relationships often cannot withstand a great deal of stress, including "being out of sight, out of mind" such as when careers cause physical relocation. In fact, it is the business world of formal, sometimes short-term and sometimes merely implied, contracts, that is, the location in *gesellschafts* of tendencies toward extreme formality.

The g*esellschafts* of Europe and America still show the effects of their respective cultural and historic trajectories. In Europe the remnants of ascribed social identities like those of the family coexist with those more modern ones ascribed by bureaucratic fiat, which results in relatively strong authoritarian loyalties (relatively informal and intimate in the family compared to the formal and bureaucratic and status-driven ones on the job). This can be compared to America where achieved social identities, often achieved through relatively unstructured market competitions which can also have a relatively irrational, image-driven, or even somewhat anarchistic quality, are relatively common, outside of the family that is. The family remains as an ideal an island of personal stability based on authoritarian loyalty (though obviously tempered by narcissistic feelings also, which is why relationships are still relatively informal and intimate in the family compared to the formal and bureaucratic and status-driven ones on the job). In fact, authoritarian loyalties and narcissistic longings (and seeking of sympathy and of rather intimate understandings and thus appreciations of one's fate) combine in rather complex forms in the modern family.

The cultural justification for a high-level, though not extreme, authoritarianism, its best case scenario in effect, is that it produces social solidarity because it enforces moral values and also offers security, often both emotional and economic. The typical psychological defenses engaged in by people with authoritarian personalities are repression, projection, and in somewhat more extreme cases, paranoia. The cultural justification for individualism to the point of narcissism is that it offers creativity-enhancing values as well as offering opportunities for removing oneself from social barriers that impede self-actualization. This is usually if one is competitive, since offering opportunities for everyone to succeed is rare in a society because it is expensive to accomplish. The typical psychological defenses engaged in by people with narcissistic personalities are sublimation, intellectualization, and displacement.

The danger of what religious people call idolatry (making sacred what is not sacred) in primitive societies, less so in the most primitive hunter-gatherer societies, and more so in the archaic chieftainships on the verge of becoming kingdoms, is where primitive communal solidarity wanes and because of resulting tensions wishful thinking and primitive magic is projected unto the spiritual world, producing greed, lust, and many kinds of wishful thinking exacerbated by

paranoia. Thus here, communal structures cannot contain the tensions caused by weakening communal and even familial solidarity.

The danger of nihilism in modern, especially post-feudal, societies, is based less on projecting greed and lust unto the spiritual world (though it occurs), as much as projecting them, together with all kinds of intellectual fads (our kind of primitive magic; often our version of magic spells) unto the social realm that substitutes for the spiritual realm (which for everyday occurrences is treated as if it does not exist). The result of nihilism in post-feudal societies, but it is sometimes even more true of modernizing authoritarian societies, is that absurd social loyalties and cultural fads, often fantasy-driven, substitute for morally informed loyalties and thoughtful cultural values.

Authoritarian societies in general are built on a base of fatalism, since people often fear that if their group (geographic, religious, social class-based, etc.), usually following the directions of elites, does not control most everything in their society to their advantage (usually in alliance with strategic partners who have their own elites), then their social rivals or enemies will do so and they will end up controlling nothing. In the worst case scenario, it is felt that social anarchy may result from such rivalries, since they have little faith in society's ability to produce spontaneous rebuilding of social order to the advantage of everyone through cooperation and/or through effective market operations.

That is why it is common in Europe, for people to vote according to their social loyalties, and political parties tend to represent particular social strata, so that it is the elites in the legislatures who act in the spirit of compromise, not the average citizen who votes according to relatively strict social loyalties. Admittedly, class consciousness is not as extreme in Europe as it once was, while such class consciousness, with the decline of economic opportunities, seems to be increasing in America.

Faith in the flexibility and the self-healing qualities of society (and the ability for markets to be self-correcting rather than oligopolistic) are more characteristic of societies with an abundance of resources so that they can afford to make mistakes, whose citizens share to a large extent equality of economic and political power, and therefore equality in the value of their social positions, to begin with. Such societies have the ability to recover from damage to their social structures, situations particularly characteristic of frontier societies like the one America has had for much of its history, though such flexibility seems to be declining in America just when maldistribution of income is now increasing.

The history of the institutionalization of social relationships, of the focusing of human solidarity, is the evolution from strong bonds in traditional societies, but limited for the most part to immediate surroundings such as the bonds found in families and in local communities, to its evolution into weaker bonds that are widely dispersed such as loyalty to the nation, and now perhaps eventually an evolution toward a general sympathy for humanity at large. Paradoxically, the immediate bonds of immediate loyalties to the family and community can reflect actual social interactions that constantly reinforce social ties, or can reflect a watered-down version where loyalty takes pride of place, and the joys of actual

social intercourse may be more hoped for than practiced (this is particularly characteristic of more feudalistic social relations).

Feudalistic social relations can arise even in our post-feudal social environment to the extent that some people are desperate for security so that there is a clinging quality to their social relationships, ones that in any case often reflect a feeling that there are few social choices to begin with. This is the common belief of authoritarian personalities. The diffuse social ties of modern societies can also result in a desire for intense "authentic" relationships that are more fantasized about than achieved, sometimes longed for and achieved in ideal form only in the realm of escapist literature (authoritarian personalities may leaven their realities of social clinging by narcissistic fantasizing of such sort). However, true narcissists often try to act on their fantasy-driven illusions, resulting in endless "seductions" of other people that are not followed up by relations of permanence, so that they tend to end badly.

There are of course dilemmas in pre-feudal (patrimonial) societies, in feudal societies, and in post-feudal societies (ideally characterized by checks and balances that return to the common people power that they lost when the previous version of that society became more hierarchical). This tendency toward hierarchy to a certain extent occurs when a society is run like an extended family (patrimonial society) but becomes exacerbated when this society becomes more densely populated and anonymous, both of which leads to division of labor and bureaucratization of society (as in feudal societies, though less so in its early stages). Bureaucratization can become excessively so for reasons of maintaining the power of elites (common in modernizing feudal societies, and in post-feudal societies when the checks and balances are breaking down or are proving insufficient).

The pleasures of intimacy as an ongoing feeling of social solidarity often becomes harder to attain when feudal societies evolve into work-oriented, post-feudal societies where social order becomes the result of the rat-race conditions of endless market competition, which may or may not exemplify the conditions of perfect market competition (equality of power, perfect knowledge among all participants, perfect partitioning of market resources), postulated in classic liberal economic theory. American society because of its frontier origins has cultural traditions that encourage acquaintanceships, that most people hope will ripen in some cases into more intimate friendships and when appropriate into romance, and sometimes they do, but certainly not always. European societies because of their feudal traditions, disappearing but not totally gone, produce social competition but still with some people benefiting from ascribed status so that in many social situations, there are not level playing fields; at the very least those who gain a high level of social status because of bureaucratic power may develop an ethos of aristocratic arrogance. Also intimate friendships are often those dating back to childhood just because opportunities to convert acquaintanceships into friendships in adulthood are considered to be so few, particularly because of the hierarchical and bureaucratic environments surrounding so many acquaintanceships since prestige on the job lends itself to prestige in the community.

14.1 The Functions of Fantasy

Nihilism in authoritarian societies produces escapist fantasies based to a large extent on "identifying with," fueled by fantasies taking the form of mass hysteria. The conformity pressures of these authoritarian societies tend to intensify already-present individual hysterias or even produce through social pressures individual hysterias that otherwise would not have developed on their own and that may coalesce into encouraging cultural norms for the society. Nihilism in narcissistic societies sometimes produces escapist fantasies based to a large extent on "identifying at," a weak sense of self seeking to reinvent social boundaries through fantasies and in a sense starting over because there is no inherent social order to cling (and to be loyal) to. They may talk with people in the sense of rationally gaining information, but they identify at people in the sense that they are much less rational at their identifications than in their communications. This is individualism of a rather primitive and extreme sort, sometimes reflecting fetishes and perversions.

What is most likely is that the narcissism of the adolescent is never outgrown and is carried over into adulthood, based on the simple hedonisms and vanities common to not overly mature personalities prone to recklessness and escapist naïveté, continuing into adulthood feeling as if, as typically taken for granted in the fantasies of an adolescent, the world is fresh and offers endless opportunities. Such a perspective has become a cultural norm in America for many people because for many generations as a frontier society, there were many opportunities to escape the stagnation otherwise characteristic of class-ridden societies, and when such opportunities declined in reality by then there had developed entertainment media that would envelop an audience in fantasies about endless opportunities that could be enjoyed in fiction even if no longer in reality. However, it may yet take them a while to realize the difference between fiction and reality since the mass media to a large extent do not emphasize that difference.

Regarding the functions of fantasy, it serves to relieve psychological tensions, but as in Freud's concept of primary process thought, it tends to involve fulfillment of contradictory goals that are not ordinarily achievable in the real world. That is why fantasy serves as a kind of exploration of alternatives but it does not have rational purposes when acted on directly. When people become dependent on the fantasies sold by the entertainment industry, the appeal is often to people who form a market niche because of their obsessions, often of a sexual or a sadistic sort, which is why fulfilling these obsessions reinforces them and so does not encourage the development of "realistic" personalities, unless the individual ends up "feeling used" and rebelling against this manipulation of his or her feelings.

That is also why when societies have reached a certain minimal level of complexity, the kind that inevitably results in losses in social equality and allows more powerful persons to exploit the less powerful (this can occur even in the

family, which is one common side effect, for example, of polygamy in tribal societies), the means to deal with this are often indirect and governed by ritual just so that this exploitation will not be admitted openly to public consciousness. This is because facing institutionalized exploitation directly, and under these circumstances quite often, is utterly dispiriting and dangerous to continued social stability, to the extent that this exploitation is considered so tempting as to be practically unavoidable by the powerful members of society.

Nevertheless when a society has the means to do so without falling apart, partly because of cultural norms conducive to public morality, the ability to practice what in eighteenth century America was called "republican simplicity" which means the ability to be sincere in one's feelings, not in order to act out irrational desires, but in order to create stronger social bonds and to reason together with one's peers; then, the cultural necessities for moral revival are in place. Otherwise, moral decadence will be hard to overcome and will become perhaps the norm.

My own assumption is that historically, sincerity was once centered in the superego so that self-fulfillment can when it is done right consist of universalistic values tempered by individual idiosyncrasies. This is the historical heritage of those authoritarian societies who originally aimed to anchor social order in a "natural law" approach to morality, though adherence to this is far from being instinctual. Humans, unlike animals more driven solely by instinct, find it necessary to create cultural values and thus the rule of law that supplements the rather loose-fitting instincts that govern human life.

In more modern societies, particularly those that can be described as fostering narcissism in their populations, sincerity is centered in the ego, emphasizing self-fulfillment of individual interests and abilities. There are also individuals whose sincerity arises in the idiosyncrasies of the id, as if self-expression should have no limitations. Sociopaths seem to take this approach, and it is not quite clear whether they have a high degree of anxiety and have high levels of guilt or shame, and because emotions are repressed, there is pressure to release them through acting out, or whether they truly do not have high levels of anxiety and thus are incapable of feeling guilt or shame, so that there are no limits to instinctual release. Perhaps, it is better to call these latter cases examples of impulsive personalities, who are likely to be careless about their relations with others, but are not especially cruel. Also, for some people, there may be ideological reasons, such as anarchist beliefs, that encourage expressions of the id without much remorse or at least without concern for consequences. Cruel people, however, may be vengeful for particular reasons of reciprocity in order to salvage self-esteem because of an attack or merely a humiliation, or out of a sense of social duty to avenge the people one is loyal to, or may have more complex reasons, particularly a superego that is so rigid (and ultimately not especially moral) that the very existence of an alternative social identity in another person is considered a rival to one's own identity and therefore a threat to a relative weak coherence in one's sense of self.

The end result of this modern version of personal identity and coherence in the sense of self is that fantasies in the modern world have much the same social effect

as belief in magic in the ancient world. Our economy and politics are no longer based on a belief in magic, but our dependence on fantasy to overcome alienation is much more developed and extensive than in traditional societies.

14.2 Social Evolution and Personal Character (and Personal Relationships)

To summarize on the relation between social evolution and personal character, in the earliest societies, there was anxiety because of fear and misunderstanding of the forces of nature (religion was filled with animistic tendencies), but personal relationships were direct, somewhat intense, and thus emotionally fulfilling and supportive, for the most part. There were some social rituals (and magical rituals to the extent that religion took this form) to enforce social boundaries, corresponding social values, and to deal with typical psychological tensions. Eventually, religion evolved in a somewhat moralistic direction (after "magical" religion proved to be a dead end as a basis for social order), so that morality began to be conceptualized in more abstract form (often interpreted under the guise of "natural law"), and both community and government became more bureaucratized and made up of specialized components, eventually leading to patrimonial and then to feudal societies.

Under the spurs of competition between rather large, somewhat anonymous, and rather bureaucratized social entities, economic production of commodities and bureaucratic control of social life (and of actual communal structures), outside of the family, became the source of personal identity and the source of individual sustenance in a psychological as well as in an economic sense. Communal intimacy continued to be a bulwark against social alienation, but sometimes more as an ideal than as a living reality. It became the ideal of authoritarian societies, but when these were feudal societies, it worked better in theory than in practice. In more modern times individual achievement, and emotional expression sometimes dependent on attaining and consuming commodities (including the products of the entertainment industries), sometimes based on sharing emotions with social intimates, became the ideal of individualistic, soon to evolve into narcissistic, societies. Nevertheless, the ideal goal of almost all societies, often merely a theoretical goal, is a golden mean between these two extremes of authoritarianism and narcissism.

The buzzword used to describe the cultural expectations of highly evolved, hyper-modern societies that have developed cultures conducive to the expression of narcissism, so far competitive cultures that espouse hyper-authoritarianism like that found in fascist societies have failed to achieve permanence in recent times, is postmodernity. The term postmodernity refers to the belief by some scholars at this time that social progress can no longer be taken for granted, and that narcissism (individualism taken to an extreme degree) must depend on success in competition

and in getting opportunities for consumption of commodities, as well as access to fantasy as a recreational commodity that must now substitute for personal intimacy.

This is partly because in an increasingly anonymous, bureaucratized, *gesell-schaft* society, trust is now increasingly bureaucratically based, as in professional certification, not interpersonally based as in close relationships between people, though there is social backlash against this. Such backlash includes fundamentalist religion that seeks to rely once again on doctrines of "natural law," or perhaps on reminders of religious revelation to regulate society and produce social order.

14.3 Alienation and Vulnerability to Anxiety in Postmodern Society

Vulnerability to anxiety is a critical issue in all kinds of societies, from the most traditional (where anxiety is buffered by social loyalties, but is aroused when the social networks to which those loyalties are bound are under threat) to the most postmodern (perhaps better described as being hyper-modern). In what has been called postmodern societies individuals because of psychological vulnerability often react to a small arousal of anxiety by seeking a great deal of fantasy to cover it up just because the vulnerability to this anxiety is often very great because of personal experience, which itself somewhat reflects the ways such societies are organized and run. This anxiety itself is a result of the aroused feeling that alienation is so threatening just because it is so pervasive in an anonymous, bureaucratized society, so that minor threat (perhaps socially induced fear because of a particular circumstance, or perhaps a chronic circumstance such as ongoing boredom or shame or despair over the future) arouses a great feeling of vulnerability, and the reaction to this feeling is the all-purpose one of postmodern society, that of seeking to cover up anxiety with consumption of commodities or escape into, often purchased, fantasy.

Regarding present-day politics, and its relation to social order, the American polity is a mixed case where intuitive conscience (the hallmark of *gemeinschaft*) and rational calculation (the hallmark of *gesellschaf*t) coexists, often for different purposes and different social roles, and sometimes they coexist more or less simultaneously as when economic behavior is expected to be judged beforehand for its moral consequences (an ideal which may or may not exist in particular cases). Thus, the traditions of *gemeinchaft* and *gesellschaft* in America have intermixed, and one result has been the ideal (often not practiced) that local government should have more *gemeinschaft* characteristics, and thus more understanding in an intimate way, of the problems of the local populace, than the central government. The reality of course is that many local governments exist in areas of high population density and are so bureaucratized that they are more like a smaller version of the federal government than being governments "close to the people."

The American political ideal is that the checks and balances found in government will guarantee that the choices provided by both the political and the economic marketplaces will give important options to people. The European political ideal, taking for granted societies somewhat more authoritarian (at least in a class-ridden, rather bureaucratic sense) than ours, is that "authenticity of feeling" generated by being enveloped in a culture that one is loyal to will produce emotional satisfaction rather than in an alternative (and American) manner endlessly deferring emotional satisfaction until it can be sublimated in a somewhat contrived way. Of course, the typical American response would probably be that this "authenticity of feeling" is not so authentic but is more often than not artificial and contrived the way that nationalism, promulgated by elites rather than evolving out of the national culture naturally, is often contrived.

There is a belief that is common in societies more traditional than America that communities of hereditary loyalty are more "natural" than communities of negotiated social position. Of course, the American ideal is that political rights that allow such negotiations to be fair regarding potential government enforcement and oversight over what amounts to social (and not only economic, though they are often economic in origin) contracts in a sense enables the return to primordial social solidarity based on fairness. On the other hand in many traditional societies (especially those recently evolving out of rather feudal traditions), there is hope not in the primacy of fairness but in the primacy of the anxiety-free state of communal loyalties as the basis for a sense of self because it provides the duties necessary to give structure to that sense of self. On the other hand, most of us in America believe any attempt to conflate such primitive communal feelings with modern nationalism is a case of comparing apples and oranges, it is "fooling oneself," while most traditional societies consider American-style belief in the ultimate efficiency of markets and of elections for developing a sense of community as also "fooling oneself."

14.4 Perversions of Character

The American ideal can be achieved in both moral and amoral ways, as can this more traditional ideal. At the very least, in authoritarian societies, failures of community to enable one to sustain economic success and pride in personal identity are often dealt with by feelings of jealousy and desires for revenge against competitive communities, reflecting failure of repression of feelings and resorting instead to projection of feelings upon these rivals. Perhaps, they have a competitive "identity" as economic rivals or merely have different social loyalties, or even a different philosophy of life. Meanwhile failure in the American individualistic cultural environment, conceived of as failure at being a competitive success as an individual, is more likely to lead to psychological depression, though under conditions of increased personal narcissism, this depression may be exacerbated by more primitive defense mechanisms, including paranoia and the personal

escapisms offered by various addictions, usually a form of bought pleasure, in effect these being extreme forms of displacement. Perversions of character (motivations aiming for uniting with inappropriate objects—nowadays often arising out of narcissism) can result. However, perversions of character are probably even more likely as a reaction to personal failure in authoritarian societies just because feelings of personal efficacy (for most people what makes "rationality" useful and meaningful, though admittedly a religious "leap of faith" can also serve this function) are normally relatively weak (this being the cultural "definition of the situation") in these, nowadays mostly bureaucratized, societies. The loss of true intimate communities worthy of loyalty, partly because of their innate moral qualities, has left bureaucratic coldness and manipulation by unworthy leaders in its wake, yet modernizing authoritarian societies are slow to admit this. Yet de-modernizing narcissistic societies, that are becoming increasingly feudalistic, are also often slow to admit when their ideals of social efficiency, in effect a combination of *gemeinschaft* traits in the family and in the local community and *gesellschaft* traits in the rest of society, are not working out either.

14.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the hallmark of *gemeinschaft* modal personality is hysteria counterbalanced by tendencies toward wanting to be loyal to a just authority (and thus having an authoritarian society worth being loyal to). The hallmark of *gesellschaft* modal personality is neurosis (hopefully a rather successful version that results in successful sublimations) counterbalanced by attempts at having a society characterized by freedom (thus the ideal is a society that offers opportunities for self-fulfillment, often of a rather narcissistic sort). *Since many present-day societies are modernizing authoritarian societies, they tend to reflect mixed situations.* That is why, for example, the modal personality in Germany is closer to being a hysterical/neurotic mix than the more purely neurotic modal personality based on emotional repression that is characteristic of Britain, and its settler ex-colonies, including America.

Fantasies and substitute satisfactions are substitutes for a well-balanced life, especially in one's emotional life, in both authoritarian and narcissistic societies. It is just that the dysfunctions of authoritarian societies tend to revolve around the hysterias common to lack of fulfillment in personal relationships, between neighbors, between friends, and in the intimate relationships of the family, and to the extent that these are hierarchical societies these dysfunctional relationships are often colored by sadomasochistic tendencies, and by the dysfunctions produced by authoritarian followers who are incapable of confronting (though they are capable of unrealistically adoring) their often narcissistic leaders. On the other hand, the dysfunctions of narcissistic societies reflect the escapisms of people who have weak social ties to begin with, and seek to achieve through fantasy-filled romantic longings personal relationships that are no longer very likely to be achieved in

reality, or through addictions (or perhaps through workaholism especially for the middle class), and so avoid thinking about what is missing in their lives, and do not even try to be happy in a holistic sense.

For those narcissists for whom personal relationships are colored by fantasies, just because the realities of the relationships are not communicated because realistic communication itself has become rare in their lives, failure in these relationships can result in acting out fantasies of revenge, perhaps on individuals or perhaps on society, of an extreme sort. This tendency increases of course to the extent that the boundary between fantasy and real life as experienced in everyday life, partly through the increasing pervasive influence of entertainment vehicles that encourage sadistic and/or libertine fantasies, grows thinner and thinner. Nevertheless, individual acting out is more characteristic of narcissistic societies, while narcissistic leaders legitimating the acting out of ordinarily authoritarian followers (because they need social "permission" to act on their antisocial tendencies) is characteristic of authoritarian societies where people hope that their loyalty will be repaid, but are often unpleasantly surprised that there is no guarantee of that because of the general social immorality. This situation is often encouraged by the immorality of leaders, since it can be said of society that like a fish it rots from the head down.

What is especially dangerous in narcissistic societies is that some members of the wealthy classes learn to balance their narcissism by taking the opportunities offered by their class positions to aim for real achievements (such as by offering leadership to society based on their own moral earnestness), but meanwhile the very poor often do not have even a minimal opportunity to have a place of honor in their community or to have a meaningful family life. Because of this, dangerous realities are a day to day occurrence for them. The result is that they often give up and at least some of them do not approach the dangers of their everyday lives with moral seriousness, but only with a desire for escapism. Some of the rich do the same, but at least most of them feel they have a choice.

For the very poor, the methods of tension release that are sold to them, like playing the lottery, tend to be standardized and do not offer or at least do not encourage self-expression based on self-understanding. Yet by living so close to the existential realities of the human experience, in some ways in less buffered ways than the experiences of the very rich, they have the opportunities to develop rationality and a certain kind of wisdom, in some ways even greater than the opportunities offered to the very rich. They may learn from their suffering, or hopefully just enough so that they can nurture the next generation to teach them how to avoid the same or similar problems.

The rationalization that justifies the existence of many authoritarian societies is that these societies have evolved out of family loyalties and that they have many of the qualities of an extended family. However, in reality, this is often wishful thinking. The rationalization that justifies the existence of many narcissistic societies is that these societies have evolved out of communities and that they carry on many of the qualities of friendships that are found in communities, though in reality, this is also often wishful thinking. The anxieties of everyday life in an

existential sense are buffered by social relationships, but when these relationships are far from ideal, the result is not the loving concern of the family as in a well-run collectivistic society (resulting in somewhat authoritarian personalities) nor the mutual comradeship of friendship as in an individualistic society (resulting in somewhat narcissistic personalities), but often a kind of neurotic clinging that can develop into sadomasochistic tendencies in the authoritarian social environment, or into dependence on addictions (rather than on the goodwill of people) in the narcissistic social environment.

Extremely narcissistic and extremely authoritarian societies often have the same effect, resulting in a kind of final common pathway for social evolution. Extremely narcissistic societies can result in winner-take-all economics, and elite rule over society. Extremely authoritarian societies by inducing subservience by society at large to their elites can have the same effect. That is why checks and balances in society have historically been so important in post-feudal societies, in trying to prevent this from ever developing, thus reducing the effects of both excessive authoritarianism and excessive narcissism.

Nevertheless, the two extremes of extreme emotional repression in *gesellschaft* settings and the often great expression of irrationality (the result of frustration and stress in many cases) in *gemeinschaft* settings do not easily produce a morally engaged emotional expressiveness. That is why a functioning *gemeinschaft* needs a few *gesellschaft* virtues to function well, and the same holds true for a functioning *gesellschaft* requiring a few *gemeinschaft* virtues. That is why the latter is the American ideal, though the practice of course can be lacking in particular circumstances and among particular people.

Regarding resiliency of the personality, catharsis (overcoming trauma and its resulting fixations by releasing emotions, in a sense releasing psychic energy) is the common process of childhood and childlike behavior, with cathexis (creating psychic bonds and tying up emotions through emotions) seems to be the most important psychic process of adulthood. Existential angst seems to be more a problem of the educated classes, who intellectualize their problems, while the uneducated deal with their problems more with sheer defensiveness, though obviously there are mixed cases.

Unfortunately, modernizing *gemeinschaft* communities often retain the ideal of emotional expressiveness but lose the checks and balances of intimates to tell people that they are wrong. Obviously the return of checks and balances in bureaucratic form is what makes post-feudal societies into successful *gesellschafts*. A distorted *gemeinschaft*, based on fantasies of social closeness rather than the realities of working out problems, is the result of a *gemeinschaft* failing to modernize effectively, of turning into in reality a delusional *gesellschaft*.

That is the lesson America often tries to tell the rest of the world and often fails at because Americans rarely know how to describe how their social evolution differs from that of much of the rest of the world with their modernizing *gemeinschafts*. Meanwhile Americans often fail to recognize when their own *gesellschaft* is de-modernizing and is developing feudal characteristics so that ascribed statuses and hereditary loyalties, not tempered by the moral duties that

allow well-run *gemeinschafts* to succeed, are once again becoming the rule rather than the exception. When more traditional societies try to warn us of this, they too often do not know how to communicate with us.

At the end of the eighteenth century, America and the more traditional societies of Europe, mostly run by monarchs, were just beginning to learn how to communicate with and learn from each other, though ultimately the transition to modernity in Europe did not go smoothly (too many aristocrats were unwilling to give up their power). Hopefully by now we will more easily learn from each other, and from the other more traditional societies of the world as well.

To get down to basics, a true *gesellschaft* is so oriented toward instrumental rationality that emotional repression can become a permanent condition among much of the population, which prevents arguments from ever arising hopefully (that ideal of American business and German civil society). But if arguments do arise, the means to express oneself emotionally and rationally (as opposed to hysterically) is often discovered to have been lost. However, modernizing *gemeinschaft* communities often retain the ideal of emotional expressiveness but lose the checks and balances of intimates to tell people that they are emotionally close to that they are wrong. Obviously, the return of checks and balances in bureaucratic form in order to represent communal standards is what makes post-feudal societies into successful *gesellschafts.*

A distorted *gemeinschaft*, based on fantasies of social closeness rather than the realities of working out problems, is the result of a *gemeinschaft* failing to modernize correctly, of being in reality more like a delusional *gesellschaft*. In reality, a functioning *gemeinschaft* needs a few *gesellschaft* virtues to function well, and the same holds true for a functioning *gesellschaft* requiring a few *gemeinschaft* virtues, at least at the level of the local community so that they can tell their representatives in the central government what it is that they want, and so that the representatives will listen. This is the American ideal, though the practice of course can be lacking in particular circumstances and among particular people.

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Index