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CULTURAL  
SCIENCES

THEIR ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

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## Preface

Twelve years ago, I planned to write a relatively short introduction to the *future of sociology*, including a survey of the sociological problems awaiting solution and an anticipation of new problems. I realized soon, however, that we cannot foresee the future of a science without taking into consideration not only its present, but also its past. For every science is evolving gradually, and its achievements and problems at any time originate in past achievements and problems.

I decided therefore to prepare an outline of the historical evolution of sociology. But this evolution proved to be inseparably connected with the whole development of philosophic and scientific knowledge, and historians have traced the origin of this development as far back as three thousand years ago. This explains why I begin my outline with the period preceding the growth of Greek theoretic thought, and survey briefly the persistence of certain old philosophic theories and the progress of new scientific theories.

It does not explain, however, the main content of this work, as indicated by its title. Why the term "sciences" in the plural? It conflicts with the ideal of the unity of scientific knowledge, in which many scientists believe. Why the adjective "cultural"? It contradicts the current theory according to which, even if there are several sciences, each of them (including sociology) is a "natural" science.

Well, in my younger days when I was a philosopher, like most other philosophers, I believed in the future unification of all valid knowledge. I did not base this belief, however, on the prevalent doctrine that all valid knowledge will become united because it is scientific knowledge of nature, and the natural universe will prove to be united. I relied, instead, on the doctrine that all valid knowledge is knowledge of culture, since even human observations and theories of nature are cultural products; and it will be-

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come united because the entire world of culture, when studied in historical perspective, will prove to be united.

But, contrary to both doctrines, the development of scientific knowledge of nature as well as of culture has resulted in a growing functional differentiation and multiplication of sciences. I see no reason to regret this historical trend or to hope that it will be reversed. It continually broadens the scientific horizon and enriches the intellectual life of mankind. The main objection against it is the excessive specialization of individual scientists, who know nothing beyond their own fields of research. But this is a practical problem which can be solved by new education and new creative cooperation among specialists.

Are we justified, however, in assuming, as the title of this book suggests, that there is a definite class of *cultural* sciences, different from those sciences which are popularly called *natural*, and that sociology belongs to this class? Here, again, we refer to historical evidence. The more objective, thorough, and methodical the scientific research in the world of culture, the more manifest the essential difference of this world from the natural universe. Many admirers of natural sciences, epistemologists, and metaphysicians do not like this result of scientific progress. But they cannot stop it.

Like every author, I am aware that I have many personal obligations to others. As far as this book is concerned, it would have taken me nearly twice as much time without the collaboration of my wife, Eileen Markley Znaniecki, and some parts of it might be more difficult to understand. J. William Albright did everything possible to encourage and help me complete the work. Robert Bierstedt, who read the manuscript as it was being written, gave me stimulating appreciation, constructive criticism, and significant suggestions.

But some of my obligations began long before this book was started. If William I. Thomas had not asked me to collaborate with him on *The Polish Peasant*, I would probably have remained all my life a philosopher, and never have turned to sociology as an inductive science. I owe to Robert M. MacIver and Theodore Abel an invitation from Dean (now President) William F. Russell of Teachers College which brought me to Columbia University for two years, from 1931 to 1933. Thanks again to Robert MacIver, I lectured at Columbia University in the summer and fall of 1939, and thus escaped a Nazi concentration camp and could join the University of Illinois faculty in 1940.

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## Introduction

### **Knowledge and the concept of order**

In our historical period, knowledge is considered more important than ever before. Never were so many institutions devoted to the maintenance and development of knowledge. Never was so much knowledge imparted by those who have it to those who lack it. But there are different conceptions of knowledge and many controversies as to what knowledge is true.

Most widely spread, indeed almost universal, is the conception that knowledge means knowing how to do what one wants or has to do: how to plant or harvest a crop, how to cook a meal, how to paint a house, how to drive a car, how to perform a certain job in a factory, how to manage a business, how to speak or write, how to accumulate money, how to train a child, how to make friends, how to win an election, how to lead an army to victory. In this sense, it is always somebody's knowledge; somebody proves that he knows how by achieving the results which he intended to achieve, and the final test is success.

We shall call this *pragmatic* knowledge. The proof of its truth does not show how the knower obtained it; he may have learned it from somebody else or reached it by trial and error or derived it from scientific sources. The diversity of this kind of knowledge is very great, and its innumerable varieties are not systematically integrated. Although controversies as to its effectiveness can be easily solved, controversies as to its usefulness often remain unsolved. For knowledge which is useful to the one who has it may be harmful to others; knowing how to win an election or a battle, how to gain money by speculation or by competitive salesmanship is useful to the winner, but harmful to the loser.

A different type is knowledge of good and bad, or, in modern terms, of right and wrong. The test of its truth is the agreement of thinkers who are considered authoritative judges. It has several varieties. The most popular

and the most important, according to general opinion, is knowledge of what is *morally* good and bad. It is now being applied by thinkers all over the world to everything men do individually or collectively, especially in dealing with other men. Their judgments are expressed in many thousands of books and articles and are, of course, highly controversial. Not so much importance is ascribed to the knowledge of what is aesthetically good and bad, although it is also very controversial. It is manifested in judgments about literature, music, painting, sculpture, architecture, clothes, etc.

More inclusive and extremely important from the point of view of those who share it is *religious* knowledge, revealed to men by gods, mostly through the medium of prophets and priests. Divine revelation is the absolute test of its truth. But many different revelations have occurred, and what is true according to one of them may be false according to others.

Relatively few people are acquainted with *philosophic* knowledge. It ranges from inclusive systematic theories about the ultimate essence of everything, through more limited theories about the essence of nature, culture, goodness, beauty, knowledge in general, down to methodical criticism of certain kinds of knowledge—pragmatic, moral, religious, philosophic, scientific—which may or may not lead to special systematic theories. Its truth is judged by principles of logical reasoning, sometimes supplemented by direct intuition. Those who share it consider that it has supremacy over all other kinds of knowledge. But many different philosophic theories have been formulated, and numerous contradictions can be found among them.

Finally, most of the knowledge which is being imparted to youth on higher educational levels is *scientific* knowledge. The recognized test of its truth is, generally speaking, a combination of logical reasoning and empirical or factual evidence. But we find quite a few controversies as to what empirical evidence is and what it proves. In American colleges and universities, we usually discover four divisions of scientific knowledge: mathematics, natural science(s), humanities or humanistic studies, and social science(s). Mathematics is the most exact logically. Though it does not use empirical evidence to test the truth of its own theories, yet it is considered by mathematicians and some philosophers as the foundation of all true knowledge, for it can be applied to various realms of knowledge, and its applications can be tested. Natural science is also now quite uniformly standardized, so far as tests of truth are concerned. Unlike moral, religious, or philosophic knowledge, it has no controversial issues that cannot be solved sooner or later by new scientific tests. And, unlike pragmatic knowledge, it manifests considerable integration, though perhaps not enough to justify the use of a single noun. The humanities have little integration, and much of the knowledge imparted under this rubric is moral, aesthetic, philosophic. That part of it which is considered scientific has standards which differ from those of the natural sciences, but

they are sufficiently uniform to prevent insolvable controversies. The division of social sciences lies somewhere between the natural and the humanistic, in some measure overlapping both, as when psychology and human geography are listed under both natural and social sciences, and history under both social sciences and humanities. It uses sometimes standards of natural science, sometimes standards of the humanities; it strives sometimes for integration, sometimes for separation; and within it are waged continuous controversies as to what is scientific knowledge.

As one who imparts knowledge to the younger generation, I have been puzzled for a long time by the coexistence of those diverse types of knowledge in the modern world, and by the numerous controversies among their adherents. Do they have anything in common? If so, why do they differ so widely? What is the connection, if any, between them, particularly between the four divisions of scientific knowledge, and between scientific knowledge in general and other types of knowledge? What is the significance of the controversies between thinkers, and why are they so prominent in certain types of knowledge, but not in others? And, finally, is it possible to anticipate what will be the future of knowledge?

The answers to these questions might be sought in a philosophy of knowledge. Philosophers—epistemologists, logicians, methodologists—have been investigating knowledge for centuries. From their point of view, only those results of human thinking which can be proved true by universal standards of truth constitute knowledge. According to this principle, most of what is popularly called knowledge is not knowledge at all; it is subjective illusions, imaginations, beliefs, prejudices, wishful thoughts, which are either false or unprovable.

The philosophic approach, however, has certain limitations. First, it does not explain why so many thinkers have continuously and consistently assumed, sometimes for centuries, that what they know is true, in spite of the fact that it conflicts with universal principles of truth. The explanation of this must be sought not in epistemology, logic, or methodology, but in some other realm of knowledge. Second, many judgments of philosophers as to what constitutes true knowledge are controversial, and some of these controversies seem insolvable. Third, many philosophers leave out of consideration the fact that modern knowledge, especially scientific knowledge, is continually growing and changing; some epistemological, logical, methodological principles which were or seemed to be applicable to all knowledge a century ago are inapplicable to the new knowledge which has emerged since then. Thus, as we shall see later on, several philosophers ignore altogether the existence of "social sciences," with their new epistemological and methodological standards, and treat them as if their basic standards were moral. And only half a century ago did philosophers fully realize that the principles of

Aristotelian logic had to be supplemented and modified in consequence of new developments in mathematics and physical science.

Another way of solving these problems is to investigate various types of knowledge not as they are judged by philosophers, but as they are conceived by the thinkers themselves who assume that what they know is true. This is the approach which has been used by historians and ethnologists. Historians have investigated many theories or doctrines which have appeared in writings, and contain various kinds of judgments that the authors claimed to be true—mostly philosophic, but also religious, moral, pragmatic, scientific. They usually refrain from judging these doctrines, as philosophers do, by some universal standards of truth. Instead, their main task is to reconstruct them as thoroughly as possible from written documents and to trace whatever connections may be found between contemporary and successive doctrines. Ethnologists have studied various types of knowledge orally expressed in contemporary nonliterate societies. From a comparative survey of this historical and ethnological material, tentative hypotheses concerning knowledge in general may be drawn.

In the first place, briefly and popularly speaking, every kind of knowledge which its bearers believe to be true is supposed to be knowledge of some intelligible order which exists among the vast multiplicity and diversity of objects and events in the midst of which men live. Knowledge of such order is considered indispensable for men to discover what certain objects are and how they differ from other objects, to explain why certain events occurred, and to foresee certain events which will occur. If they are guided by this knowledge in their actions, it is expected to help them achieve satisfactory results and to avoid events detrimental to them.

Second, the diversity of knowledge found in the modern world is due to different conceptions of order. The primary difference is that between the evaluative and the nonevaluative conception. The former is almost universal among religious and moral thinkers, predominates among pragmatic thinkers, and is accepted by quite a few philosophers. They conceive order as that which conforms with their standards of right; what is wrong is that which interferes with order, disturbs it, or even destroys it. This explains the numerous insolvable controversies between them; for, inasmuch as their conceptions of right differ, what is order in the judgment of some is disturbance of order in the judgment of others. According to the nonevaluative conception, almost unanimously accepted and applied by natural scientists, order includes all regularities which scientists discover by investigating methodically the factual relationships between empirical data, no matter how these relationships are evaluated by thinkers.

Finally, the historians who investigated past knowledge reached certain conclusions of great significance for contemporary knowledge. They found

that some of the pragmatic and moral conceptions now in use already existed at the time writing was invented, and must have existed long before that. The basic conceptions which predominate in present religious knowledge, judging from the evidence contained in "sacred books," were developed four or five thousand years ago, although their development probably began earlier. The basic conceptions of philosophic knowledge were developed in the classical period of ancient Greece. The basic conceptions used by present scientists also began to develop in classical antiquity, but they reached full development only in the course of the last four centuries. Thus, according to historical evidence, new species of knowledge emerged from those which existed before. (We use the word "species" instead of "type" or "class" in order to avoid certain logical controversies.) This is what biologists call "evolution." The term does not imply that with the appearance of new species the old species necessarily disappear; they may continue to exist, and still other species may emerge from them later. Nor does it mean that a new species necessarily continues to exist and remains essentially changeless; it may disappear completely or, if it lasts, other new species may later emerge from it.

Neither the continued existence of earlier species of knowledge nor the evolution of new species can be explained, unless we take into consideration the fact that knowledge is produced and maintained by thinkers. And in the past, as well as in the present, thinkers have manifested conflicting tendencies. The great majority of thinkers to whom knowledge has been imparted by their predecessors and who in turn impart it to their successors are inclined to believe that they truly know everything that is essential about the order to which this knowledge refers. We find this belief in every historical period among bearers and transmitters of traditional pragmatic knowledge, moral knowledge, religious knowledge. Even philosophers, who were the first to assume the function of critics of established knowledge, as soon as they developed systematic theories of their own, were inclined to consider their knowledge as absolutely true and complete.

If these beliefs had been shared by all thinkers, the evolution of knowledge would obviously be inexplicable. But throughout history some thinkers have been searching for and have sometimes discovered various kinds of order previously unknown. They usually met opposition from the bearers of established knowledge who were sure that it was complete; nonetheless, the search went on, though sometimes with long interruptions, and gradually resulted in the development of new varieties of knowledge.

Modern scientific knowledge, the latest result of this slow, age-long evolution may represent the final result. This is not because scientists know everything that is to be known, but because search for the unknown, which was incompatible with older forms of knowledge, has been recognized by scientists

as one of their main functions. Consequently, whatever new knowledge may emerge from this search will remain an integral part of scientific knowledge.

The history of the natural sciences after their basic principles were fully developed and accepted clearly indicates how radically scientific knowledge differs in this respect from older species of knowledge. The continual search of many scientists for various kinds of natural order previously unknown results in new discoveries leading to more research and more discoveries. The range of scientific knowledge about nature is expanding, and its wealth of content is increasing with an unprecedented rapidity. And as it expands and increases, innumerable new varieties of pragmatic knowledge, more efficient and more complex than ever before, are derived from it.

In view of the tremendous dynamic growth of natural sciences and their technical applications, these sciences, taken together, dominate all modern knowledge. This is recognized not only by those who extol their growth as the greatest human achievement, but also by others who resent their power and wish that scientific knowledge of nature could be subordinated to other kinds of knowledge. Ideologists who realize that the pragmatic power derived from natural sciences can be as effectively used for purposes which conflict as for those which harmonize with their ideas of right and wrong want scientists to be guided in their research by "higher" moral authorities. Religious thinkers deplore the skeptical attitude of most natural scientists toward the assumption that the divine origin of natural order can be proved by scientific research. They reciprocate by maintaining a skeptical attitude toward natural sciences, claiming that, because scientific theories are continually changing, their truth is always doubtful; whereas divine knowledge is eternal and absolutely true. Philosophers of culture object to the exaltation of natural sciences to the detriment of other human achievements—art, literature, religion, morality, law, social organization, and of course philosophy itself.

But it is hard to reverse evolutionary trends without destroying their results. Natural sciences gained their independence from older disciplines during a period when their growth was much slower and their practical influence much weaker than it is now. The main reason why they succeeded was that they eliminated the insolvable controversial issues springing from evaluative conceptions of order, rejected dogmatic adherence to established doctrines, and accepted common methodical principles which enabled scientists to cooperate in their search for the unknown as no thinkers had ever done before. How can we expect that two hundred years later, after their cooperation has yielded such historically unprecedented results, they could be induced to submit again to the guidance of authoritative exponents of various conflicting moral, religious, or philosophic doctrines; to become involved in nonscientific controversial issues which would make

cooperation difficult, if not impossible; and to stop their search for the unknown whenever it might result in discoveries which would invalidate rather than confirm some established theory?

And yet, in spite of the marvelous development of natural sciences, wide areas of human knowledge still remain beyond their reach. Natural scientists cannot adequately investigate the content of many varieties of pragmatic knowledge—political, educational, economic, linguistic, etc. Nor can they include in their research that realm to which moral and aesthetic thinkers refer. They obviously cannot study gods and their activities, divine revelations, and mythical events. The very existence of natural sciences raises problems which natural scientists cannot solve, for science itself is not a part of the natural order which scientists investigate. The history of knowledge in general and of natural sciences in particular is not a natural science. The process in the course of which an individual becomes a natural scientist, by learning through communication with others the agglomerated results of previous scientific research and the use of scientific methods, is entirely different from those natural processes which he learns to investigate. The economic and social conditions upon which the existence and development of scientific knowledge depend differ very much from the physical, chemical, and biological conditions under which scientists work; and they are not being studied by physicists, chemists, or biologists. The present impact of political groups upon the practical application of the results of physics and chemistry by scientists is certainly not a physical, chemical, or biological fact.

Of course, all the areas which are not included within the realm of natural science are considered by pragmatic, religious, moral, aesthetic, philosophic thinkers as their own. Many of them still claim that they know all that is essential about these areas. Four hundred or even three hundred years ago, almost the only challenge to their claims was given by skeptics and critics who pointed out the numerous insolvable controversies among them and their inability to reach any general agreement whatsoever.

But, as we know, certain important changes have occurred since then. During the last two and a half centuries an increasing number of students began to apply an approach, partly modeled on that of natural sciences, to those areas of knowledge which natural sciences left out. They ceased to evaluate positively or negatively that which they studied, began to question the ultimate truth of established knowledge, assumed the function of searching for new knowledge, and accepted the principle of factual evidence in testing their conclusions. This is how the present humanistic and social sciences gradually developed. The progressive use of historical evidence during the last hundred years in studying the evolution of knowledge itself is one of the results of this development.

However, the use of the scientific approach in these areas of knowledge



has apparently been less successful than in the natural domain. Many epistemologists, logicians, and methodologists who compare the results of this approach with those of contemporary natural sciences doubt whether these new studies can ever become "sciences," in the sense in which this term is applied to the methodical investigation of nature, and sometimes even explicitly deny this possibility. In surveying works of historians, cultural anthropologists, political scientists, economists, sociologists, and studies of literature, art, religion, law, those critics emphasize how defective such works are from the scientific point of view. And indeed many of them are still full of evaluative judgments implying the age-old antithesis between good and bad, right and wrong, and resulting in insoluble controversies. Quite a few of them are dogmatic, contain only that empirical evidence which confirms the theories of the authors, and omit any evidence which might invalidate their theories. Some of the most famous works include speculative doctrines which can be neither proved nor disproved by empirical evidence. And numerous monographic works which do conform with the elementary principles of scientific research are mere descriptions of particular empirical complexes, unconnected with other descriptions and opening no way for new general hypotheses to be tested by comparative research.

All this seems to justify the pessimistic attitude of the critics and leads some of them to assert that social and humanistic studies can reach the scientific level only if and insofar as they become integral parts of natural sciences. Whatever cannot be incorporated into the latter is not science at all; its most respectable designation is "art." This distinction is expressed in the term "College of Liberal Arts and Sciences." But if these same critics had lived two and a half centuries ago and surveyed the chemical, botanical, zoological, even the physical and astronomical works published at that time, they would have found that many, perhaps the majority, of them had similar defects. By now, of course, such works have either been destroyed except for brief summaries or are buried in libraries, where they are occasionally dug up by historians; only those are remembered which made some contributions to later scientific developments. If the achievements of natural sciences are dynamic, not static, and can be fully appreciated only if considered in their historical growth, should not the newer "sciences" be also viewed in historical perspective? If their present condition is no better than that of chemistry or biology some centuries ago, it may simply be because their development began later; and this late beginning, in turn, may be explained by methodical difficulties greater than those which natural scientists had to overcome. A study of their development may prove that the pessimists are wrong, that these "sciences" are on the way to becoming sciences in the full sense of the term.

Recent historical surveys of some of these sciences already provide con-

siderable evidence in favor of this supposition. Thus, during the last twenty-five years, a number of works, individual or collective, dealing with the development of sociology have been published. Although some disagreement appears as to the range of sociological research and the relative effectiveness of methods used in this research, the agglomerated results of these studies leave no doubt that sociology has achieved considerable scientific progress since Comte's first attempt to lay its foundations as a new systematic science.<sup>1</sup> Historical surveys by specialists in several other divisions of social and humanistic studies show that a parallel development has been going on in their respective realms. And, significantly, most of this scientific progress seems to be due not to a gradual absorption of these studies by natural sciences, but, on the contrary, to their increasing independence of natural sciences, on which some of them (particularly sociology, economics, and anthropology) were originally dependent to a considerable degree.<sup>2</sup>

This apparently indicates that the scientists who contribute to this progress are searching for and discovering among the specific data and facts which they study some kinds of objectively ascertainable order, different from those kinds of order which natural scientists have been discovering in their research. Is this search going on, or at least beginning, in *all* the areas of study which are included under the concepts of social sciences and humanities? If so, what, if anything, do the various kinds of order which they are discovering have in common?

Nowadays, the data which social scientists and humanists are studying and which natural scientists—astronomers, physicists, chemists, biologists, geologists—ignore are designated by the general term "culture." The concept which this term symbolizes includes religion, language, literature, art, customs, mores, laws, social organization, technical production, economic exchange, and also philosophy and science. Suppose we call all these special divisions "cultural studies" or, insofar as they become scientific, "cultural sciences."

But what's in a name? The name "natural sciences" is meaningful, for its use postulates a universal category of natural order including all specific orders or regularities which students of nature—astronomers, physicists,

<sup>1</sup> The best general survey of the history of social thought is given by Harry E. Barnes and Howard Becker, *Social Thought from Lore to Science*, 2 vols. (Boston: Heath, 1938). I owe much to this work. A brief but excellent outline of the history of sociology is that of Floyd N. Housser, *The Development of Sociology* (New York: McGraw, 1936).

<sup>2</sup> Pitrim Sorokin's *Contemporary Sociological Theories* (New York: Harper, 1928) is much more inclusive than the title suggests, and the approach is predominantly critical, from the point of view of the author's own theory.

<sup>3</sup> Quite a few cooperative works on recent developments in the social sciences in general and especially in sociology have been written since 1930: *Fields and Methods of Sociology*, ed. L. L. Bernard (New York: Farrar, 1934); *Contemporary Social Theory*, eds. Harry E. Barnes, Howard Becker, and Francis B. Becker (New York: Appleton, 1940); *Twentieth Century Sociology*, eds. Georges Gurwitsch and Wilbert Moore (New York: Philosophical Library, 1945).



chemists, biologists—have discovered or will discover in their special realms of research. This postulate has been continuously validated, though the conception of the universal order changed somewhat during the last century. The name "cultural sciences" will be meaningful only if we postulate the existence of a universal category of *cultural order* including all specific orders which students of culture have discovered or will discover.

I believe that such a postulate is necessary for continuous scientific progress in the whole domain of cultural studies. As a student of sociology, I came to the conclusion some time ago that sociologists already have a workable conception of cultural order in their own realm of research; it is an order of relationships among that kind of human actions which are called "social."<sup>3</sup> About the same time a somewhat similar conclusion was reached, though in a different way, by Talcott Parsons.<sup>4</sup> This led me to the tentative hypothesis that cultural order in general is an order of relationships among all kinds of human actions.

But what is the significance of this hypothesis from the scientific point of view? One does not need to be a scientist to know that some order exists among human actions. Indeed, a six-year-old child of average intelligence is aware that human actions are normatively ordered or regulated; and as he grows up under the guidance of adults, he learns more and more about this order. He finds that most of the actions dealing with men are expected to conform with moral norms and in fact usually do so. Most actions dealing with material objects regularly follow technical rules. Speech is phonetically, semantically, and grammatically ordered.

If the function of cultural sciences is to investigate the kind of order which has been for thousands of years a matter of common-sense knowledge, why did they develop so late? There must be something new in the scientific approach to this order which makes it essentially different from the common-sense approach. I thought that the origin of this new approach had to be traced before my hypothesis could be tested.

Such was the starting point of the present work. It would be very difficult and of little use to the reader to summarize here its total content. May the following hint as to its main conclusions suffice!

To explain the late origin of the scientific approach to culture we have to take into consideration the sequence in the evolution of new types of knowledge which historians have discovered. The development of cultural sciences was preceded by the development of natural sciences; the development of natural sciences was preceded by the development of philosophy. To find some explanation for this sequence, we went still further back, to the historical period which preceded the development of philosophy. And then we learned

<sup>3</sup> Florian Znaniecki, *Social Actions* (New York: Farrar, 1936).

<sup>4</sup> Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action* (New York: McGraw, 1937).

that the development of philosophy was an essential condition of the emergence of natural as well as of cultural sciences, and that the development of natural sciences was an essential condition of the emergence of cultural sciences.

But then, in surveying the later development of natural sciences, we noticed that their subsequent progress was conditioned by their growing independence from philosophy. And a survey of the later development of cultural sciences showed that their progress is conditioned by their growing independence, both from philosophy and from natural sciences. A brief study of some results of several sciences, each specializing in its own realm of culture—material technique, economy, art, literature, music—indicates that this independence is gained, and scientific progress is achieved in the very measure in which these sciences concentrate (just as sociology is now doing) on objective, comparative investigation of specific human actions and their relationships. This seemed to confirm our hypothesis.

Then the problem arose: Is there any connection between these sciences? The failure of all attempts to integrate them into one all-inclusive science of culture proves that their specialization is objectively justified and cannot be overcome. But an analysis of the connection between them and sociology leads to the conclusion that sociology, although it has also specialized, is the basic cultural science, just as physics is the basic natural science.

## Order as Intentional Creation of Conscious Agents

CHAPTER

1

### Popular conceptions of order

If we compare the various meanings of the word "order," and of the words in other Western languages etymologically derived from the Latin *ordo*, we find that most (though not all) of these meanings imply that order is something that human agents introduce among the objects of their activities.<sup>1</sup> Translators and lexicographers who seek for equivalents of this word in languages which have not adopted the Latin terminology select words which have the same implication.<sup>2</sup>

The wide use in common speech of the word "order" and of its equivalents with the same meaning suggests that the idea it symbolizes is not a product of philosophic or scientific development, but a result of that common-sense reflection about practical activity which historically preceded systematic philosophy and science.

Order in this popular sense is a positively evaluative concept. It is judged "good," from the point of view of the agents who create it, either for its own sake or because it helps achieve some of their purposes. It is implicitly or explicitly contrasted with disorder, a negatively evaluative concept, which may mean either disturbance of an existing order or absence of order where it ought to exist.

Take a few familiar examples. A room is in order when all the objects it contains have been intentionally selected and arranged according to a certain pattern, each object occupying a definite position in relation to other objects. The arrangement depends upon the purpose for which the room is to be used and the nature of the objects available for this purpose. Disorder means devi-

<sup>1</sup> Here we use the term "agent" in the indefinite sense of "any X who acts." Later (Chapter 7), we shall limit the application of this noun and define more exactly what we mean by the verb "to act."

<sup>2</sup> Out of the sixteen meanings of the word "order" listed in Webster's *Universal Dictionary* (Cleveland: World Syndicate Publishing Co., 1937), fourteen have this connotation, while one symbolizes a biological and one a mathematical concept.

ation from the pattern, due to the presence of objects which ought not to be there, or the absence of objects which ought to be there, or disturbance of the regular spatial arrangement. There is a specific kind of order for a Mongolian *yurta* and Eskimo *igloo*; a Polynesian men's house; a Western middle-class bedroom, kitchen, living room, dining room; a workshop; a store; a restaurant; a church; a court room; a lecture hall; an art museum; a public library. Obviously, the pattern of order for each kind of room differs in different cultures and changes in the course of history. The order of an American kitchen differs from that of a traditional Chinese kitchen; the arrangement of a modern department store differs from that of a medieval shop; the arrangement of furniture in a Louis XV salon was different from that of a late Victorian reception room.

A garden is in order when each plant or species is growing where it has been purposely planted or preserved; on the other hand, weeds growing among the cultivated plants and insect pests eating leaves, flowers, or roots mean disorder. Here also the pattern of order may vary considerably, according to custom; the utilitarian order of a fruit orchard differs from that of a vegetable garden, and both differ from the aesthetic order of a combined park and flower garden. And how widely parks and gardens can vary may be seen by comparing the French, English, Persian, and Japanese patterns.

Another type of order, sometimes verging on the spatial arrangement of objects, is that of interconnected parts of an artificially constructed whole. A complex object which possesses this type of order can be successfully used for certain practical purposes. Disorder interferes with its use; it may mean that some essential parts are missing or spoiled, or that something is included which disturbs the connection between essential parts, or that the arrangement of the parts deviates from the pattern necessary to make the whole useful. A kitchen stove, a suit of clothes, a boat, a building, a machine is supposed to possess such an order.

Still another type of intended order is that of moving objects. It is both spatial and temporal, involving either a prearranged succession of places through which a certain object must pass, or a prearranged succession of objects passing through a certain place, or both. Such an arrangement may serve various practical purposes, and disorder (in the sense of disturbance of such an arrangement or lack of an arrangement when it is expected) interferes with the achievement of these purposes. This order is exemplified, with various degrees of complexity, by the movement of a plow in a field, the sailing of a boat, the grinding of flour in a water mill, the progression of objects along an assembly line in a factory, scheduled transportation of goods by railroads, regulated motor traffic in urban centers.

The objects which an agent arranges in space and moves in a certain succession may be human bodies. We are familiar with many examples of such

arrangements of human bodies, to which the term "order" may be applied: In a dining room during a ceremonial dinner, guests are seated in a certain prearranged order; a company of soldiers stands at attention in serried ranks on command of an officer; in a church, a school, a court, individuals are placed in accordance with a definite spatial pattern; in an opera house during a public performance, every member of the audience has a seat appointed in advance and is supposed to stay in that seat; at a royal reception, guests stand and move in a definite order of precedence; participants in a religious procession move in an orderly series along a designated route at a uniform speed. The general pattern of order for political or religious purposes is established by a tradition, sometimes centuries old, and it is applied in each particular case by a master of ceremonies or other special agent. Those who participate in the reception or the procession are informed of their places in the order and are expected to stay or move when and where the pattern requires it. Every deviation is viewed as a disturbance of order and negatively valued by the agents who have made the arrangements.

Somewhat different from this kind of order is the purposive direction of the physical behavior of human beings in the handling of inanimate objects. In a factory there is not only an orderly arrangement of things, stationary or moving, but an order of physical behavior among workers; it describes workers as "hands," performing the kinds of movements which, according to the division of labor planned by technologists and managers, are needed for the technical mass production of certain goods. Disorder means any outward behavior of workers which disturbs this prearranged combination of technical performances. Likewise, the order of movement of motor cars along roads and streets is maintained only if and insofar as their drivers, whose hands and feet control the machinery, follow certain regulations.

In other cases, the concept of order includes both physical and symbolic behavior. The chairman calls a meeting "to order," thus requesting that from then on the persons attending the meeting will behave and speak only in accordance with well-recognized rules. The order which a teacher introduces among the pupils of a class consists in their doing whatever, according to the teaching-learning pattern, they are expected to do at a given time—listen to the teacher, look at what the teacher shows them, answer questions, read, write. Disorder is whatever they do which interferes with this order; for instance, fighting, quarreling, talking instead of listening, playing instead of studying.

While in these instances order is connected with a spatial arrangement of human bodies and a temporal succession of human behavior which the ordering agent can observe, in other instances it consists in having certain human beings behave according to certain rules whenever they encounter specific situations in any place at any time, whether the ordering agent

observes them or not. Disorder means any behavior which conflicts with these rules.

One of the most inclusive conceptions of order in this sense is denoted by the well-known term "legal order." As viewed by the agents who tend to control by law the behavior of human beings living in a certain territory, it is an order instituted and maintained by these agents themselves—the legislators who promulgate laws, the judges who apply them in particular cases, the executive officers who exact conformity with them—who together constitute a collective agency called "government." The government determines in advance how specific categories of human beings under its control ought to behave and/or ought not to behave in certain kinds of situations defined in advance. Order means conformity with law; disorder, transgression of law. From the standpoint of governmental agents, order is good because it is needed for the realization of certain purposes; disorder, bad because it interferes with their realization. Therefore, according to governmental agents, legal order is usually good and disorder bad for the people who are subjected to it, inasmuch as one of the main purposes of the government in establishing legal order is collective security, without which the people cannot satisfy their basic needs regularly. Similarly, the order of the schoolroom is good for the pupils, the order of motor traffic good for the drivers and the cars, the order of household furniture good for the furniture and the home.

#### Difference between popular and scientific ideas of order

In comparing these various examples of order, we notice that all of them have one fundamental implication in common. The agent who produces order is not conceived as a participant in the order produced by him; the order includes the objects which he experiences and upon which he acts, but not himself. This is, of course, taken for granted when his objects are nonhuman: The housewife is not a part of the orderly arrangement of things in her living room or kitchen; the gardener not a part of the botanical order of the garden which he cultivates; the builder of a boat or a house, not a part of the structural order of the boat or house which he builds. But the implicit assumption remains the same even when the objects upon which the agent acts are human: The teacher, the master of ceremonies, the commander of a military company, the manager of labor, the legislator, the judge, while functioning as maker and guardian of order, is not a participant in the orderly behavior of the pupils, or of the people joining a parade, or of the soldiers drilling in formation, or of the citizens who are governed by law. Obviously, he may include himself among the objects of his activity: A master of ceremonies, having arranged a parade, may himself take part in it; a legislator, having promulgated a law, may become subject to it himself as a citizen. But this is not considered essential to his function; while

dealing with the objects of his activity, he acts unreflectively, sometimes reflectively, as if he were a creator of order and, as such, outside and above his creation.

This popular conception is not altogether invalid. Undeniably, the kind of order exemplified above is real, in the sense that it can be observed. We may even agree that human agents create it, if creating means producing something new which did not exist before within the range of human experience. But in the creative process as empirically known, no human agent creates order out of absolute chaos.

Philosophy and science have developed conceptions of order different from this popular conception. According to most philosophic and scientific theories, the possibility of a human agent's creating and maintaining what is called "order" in popular language depends on the existence of other kinds of order.

Thus, a theory of *natural order* has been developed by philosophers of nature and physical and biological scientists. This order is conceived as existing independently of human agents; human organisms are included as specific parts of it, and all human activities which deal with natural objects are supposed to be dependent upon this order.

Another theory is concerned with *logical order* (including the order of mathematics). According to many logicians and mathematicians, this is also independent of any human agency; man merely discovers it. And man as conscious agent cannot produce order unless his activity is rational, guided by thinking which conforms with the principles of logic.

The conception of *social order* used in modern sociology differs from the popular conception. While we must postpone its definition, we should state at this point that according to sociological theory no single individual or group—chairman, teacher, or government—can introduce a new order into a collectivity (a meeting, a class, or the people of a state) unless some order already exists among the participants of that collectivity.

Such theoretic conceptions of order are nonevaluative. They do not contrast the goodness of order with the badness of disorder, but are mere assumptions of investigators who are trying to discover what kind of order, if any, exists in a specific field of research, independently of their feelings and desires. But these several theories of order are late historical products. Nowadays, of course, the conception of natural order is fully and consistently developed and known to many people who use the word "order" in the popular sense. Thus, every scientifically trained horticulturist knows that the possibility of making a well-ordered garden depends upon the existence of an objective, permanent order in the structure and functioning of plants, the chemistry of the soil and the air, the physics of light and heat, the movements of the earth within the solar system. But even this knowledge is of relatively recent origin

and limited usage. The scientific conception of cultural order is not yet fully developed and is seldom consistently used.

There is considerable evidence that the idea which originally dominated human thinking and still dominates the thinking of the majority of mankind is that *all* order is an intentional creation of conscious agents. We find this idea prevalent in nearly all nonliterate cultures which have been studied by anthropologists and ethnologists and in most written documents from earlier historical periods. It would be a lifelong task to investigate thoroughly its multiple and various expressions. And yet without some knowledge of its past and present application, it is impossible to understand the origin of modern scientific thinking. Such knowledge is especially important for the present and future of cultural sciences, inasmuch as the persistent influence of this age-old idea has been the main obstacle in the way of their development. We shall try, therefore, to outline briefly those typical manifestations of this idea which seem most significant for the history of the scientific approach to culture.

#### Basic implications of primitive practical thinking

The idea that all order is an intentional creation of conscious agents is rooted in a still broader, more inclusive assumption: belief in the original causative power of the will of conscious agents in general. This belief sometimes goes so far as to ascribe to desire—not actively manifested, not verbally expressed, perhaps not even conscious—power to produce the desired effect. For instance, wishing somebody's death may bring about his death; an evil eye may unconsciously cause evil;<sup>3</sup> coveting a neighbor's property may be considered as bad as stealing it.<sup>4</sup> When an agent acts upon objects of his experience with the intention of producing certain changes and the changes he intends to produce actually occur, it is taken for granted that all the changes are effects of which his active will is the primary, determining cause. The assumption is the same whether his objects are inanimate or animate, unconscious or conscious, whether his action involves the use of physical instruments or is only a meaningful symbolic expression of his will—a command, a prohibition, a request, a promise, a threat, an advice. It is the same whether the changes in his objects are physical changes in position, in external appearance, in composition and structure, or symbolic responses, or later facts of presumably conscious behavior in predefined situations.

At first implicit and unreflective, this assumption becomes explicit in the primitive reflection of agents themselves, who remember their past actions and anticipate their future actions, and in the reflection of practical thinkers, who as potential agents compare the actions performed by others and reach such

<sup>3</sup> Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *La Mentalité primitive* (Paris, 1922), pp. 392-404.  
<sup>4</sup> Cf. the Tenth Commandment.

common-sense generalizations about their effectiveness as are expressed, for instance, in popular proverbs and maxims.

This common, unreflective reflection is concerned only with changes which follow actions and are judged to be desirable or undesirable from the point of view of the agent; the occurrence of desirable changes is conceived as success, the occurrence of undesirable changes as failure. Since the agent intended to produce desirable changes, success merely confirms his belief in the causative force of his action; it needs no explanation and does not raise any problem unless it is exceptional, greater than the success normally achieved by similar actions. In such a case, primitive thinking assumes that some other causative force must have been added to that which the agent put into his action. Failure, on the contrary, always raises a problem, unless the action was abnormal, so different from other actions which have been found successful that it can be assumed to have been devoid of causative force. If it was normal and nonetheless failed, this indicates to primitive thinkers that some other causative power conflicted with that which the agent put into his action.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, agents and practical thinkers who take the point of view of agents problematize failures much oftener than successes. The great majority of problems about which members of nonliterate societies explicitly reflect, especially those which are solved by resorting to mystical explanations, are raised in connection with failures or undesirable events in general. To this very day, especially in the social field, a problem as defined in practical thinking, even in works devoted to the guidance of practical agents, commonly implies something undesirable, conflicting with the normal.

Such a causative force, extraneous to the agent's will and resulting in either exceptional success or unexpected failure of his action, is evaluated positively or negatively as good or bad from the point of view of the agent's purpose; and evaluation is apt to be accompanied by an unreflective or reflective supposition that the effect of this extraneous force upon the agent's purpose was intentional, that there was some causative power analogous to that of the agent's own will which helped or hindered him. This supposition seems obvious and easily becomes rationalized when an agent's exceptional success or unexpected failure can be ascribed to the causative power of intentional activities, good or bad, of other human agents with whom he is in social contact. We are familiar with such explanations, especially of failures. Many a parent who fails to make his child behave well ascribes this failure either to the bad will of the child or to the demoralizing influence of some other child or adult. Many a college professor explains his failures by the badness of the students, while many a student ascribes his failure to the badness of the faculty. A person who fails to gain or maintain status in a community explains it by

<sup>5</sup> Lévy-Bruhl, *op. cit.*, pp. 353-405; Raoul Allier, *The Mind of the Savage*, trans. by Fred Rothwell (London, 1929), *passim*.

malicious gossip; a politician ascribes his failure to machinations of his opponents; competitors are guilty in a businessman's failure. During an economic crisis, various types of human agents—speculators, bankers, merchants, industrialists, government officials, political party leaders—are sure to be accused of having caused the crisis.<sup>6</sup> And almost every kind of unexpected unsatisfactory change in the life of a collectivity may be ascribed to foreign influences; Hitler's accusation that Jews, communists, and foreign powers caused all the troubles of the German people is a typical example.

It is a well-known fact, however, that belief in causative powers intentionally helping or hindering a human agent in achieving his purposes is not limited to observable, or presumably observable, actions of other human agents who, like himself, pursue their own purposes and in so doing influence favorably or unfavorably the results of his actions. Even when an agent deals with non-human objects, he may be inclined to explain exceptional success or unexpected failure by the causative power of some hidden agency whose actions he cannot observe, but infers from their apparent results. This explanation underlies most of the mystical beliefs prevalent in preliterate and earlier historical cultures. Nor has it yet disappeared from modern Western cultures. It is generally considered, by students of culture, to be a survival; but, for a survival, it shows unusual vitality.<sup>8</sup>

A number of recent studies of children indicate that children develop mystical beliefs of their own without any noticeable influence of cultural tradition.<sup>9</sup> This suggests the hypothesis that such beliefs represent an extension of early social experiences of the child. In infancy and early childhood, most objects of the child's experience are controlled by adults whose causative power—often mysterious, unforeseen, and apparently almost unlimited—can be stirred into action, favorable or unfavorable, by various manifestations of the child's attitudes. Therefore, when left to himself in contact with nonhuman objects, the child continues to assume the existence of causative forces similar to those of adults, capable of controlling those objects and of being influenced by the expression of his attitudes.

In any case, whether this hypothesis can be validated or not, mystical forces in nature or beyond nature which are believed to cause exceptional success or

<sup>6</sup>In a study of the unemployed carried on in 1936-39, the Polish Sociological Institute collected more than 300 autobiographies of unemployed persons and interviewed the members of nearly 1,000 families. The great majority of these accused various kinds of economic and political agents of causing the depression.

<sup>7</sup>We use the term "mystical" in this wide sense following Lévy-Bruhl in his work *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (Paris, 1910). Whatever the weaknesses of Lévy-Bruhl's theories, his material remains valuable.

<sup>8</sup>Cf., e.g., Allier, *op. cit.*, chap. IV, pp. 120-60.

<sup>9</sup>E.g., Jean Piaget, *The Child's Conception of Physical Causality* (New York: Harcourt, 1930); Stefan Blachowski, "The Magical Behavior of Children in Relation to School," *Am. Jour. Psych.*, Vol. 50 (1937).

unexpected failure are generally conceived as analogous to those active tendencies which an agent experiences in his social interaction with human individuals or groups. Because of this analogy, older religionists have called all mystical agencies *anthropomorphic*. We suggest instead the term *sociomorphic*. For the term "anthropomorphic" suggests a belief in personal active beings, whereas not all mystical agencies are personal. *Mana* is an impersonal force; so is *fate*. And yet mana and fate are not like physical forces; their activity is directed, destined in advance to produce desirable or undesirable effects. They are analogous to certain social agencies which are not experienced as personal. As Durkheim has emphasized, even overemphasized, in his works, the social group as a collective agency is one of the most important sources of mystical beliefs, and the impersonal pressure of group sanctions is often felt by the individual as a more powerful force than the personal influence of another individual.<sup>10</sup>

#### Primitive conception of the relation between the cultural and the natural order

This extension of the idea of causative force as an intentionally active force conditions in two ways the primitive conception of order. Most human actions, especially in preliterate collectivities, are culturally patterned, follow certain folkways. Folkways make collective life orderly, give it regularity and predictability. Actions which conform with the pattern are positively valued as right, normal; their performance is considered necessary for the maintenance of the established order, and the agents who perform them are thus contributing to its maintenance. Actions which deviate from the pattern (beyond a certain range of permissible variations) are wrong; abnormal, destructive; and agents who perform them disturb collective order. Thus, every action by itself is a causative force which affects, positively or negatively, the orderly life of a collectivity.

On the other hand, the persistence of a pattern indicates that the actions which conform with it are usually judged to have been successful, whether they dealt with natural objects or with human beings. From the point of view of an anthropologist like Sumner, this success is explicable by the fact that the folkway in question has evolved by a trial-and-error process in adaptation to a pre-existing natural order,<sup>11</sup> but this is not always the view of the people who follow the folkway. When they reflect about the relationship between folkways and nature, they often manifest the belief that it is the order of

<sup>10</sup>Émile Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. by Joseph W. Swain (London, 1915).

<sup>11</sup>A brief summary of this view is contained in William G. Sumner and Albert G. Keller, *The Science of Society*, I (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927), 31-33. See criticism by Florian Znaniecki, "Social Organization and Institutions" in *Twentieth Century Sociology*, eds. Gurwitsch and Moore (New York: Philosophical Library, 1945), pp. 191-92.



nature which has been adapted to folkways or at least that the adaptation is mutual.

This idea finds an explicit, significant expression in myths which explain the origin of order. In many of these myths, the same powerful beings are initiators of cultural patterns and also of a natural order which makes these patterns effective. Nature is ordered for the service of man, provided man's actions conform with the patterns which have been imparted to him.

A few examples will illustrate this point. In the mythologies of most Australian tribes, the totemic ancestors who initiate the social organization of moieties and clans create a natural order to fit this organization; they classify natural objects by clans and moieties, giving each clan or moiety a power of control over the objects which belong to it and teaching the human ancestors of the clan ways to use this power.<sup>12</sup> The great gods of Dahomey, after creating nature, saw that man was helpless and "made the earth habitable for man," endowing him with instruments and techniques necessary to control nature.<sup>13</sup>

#### Human magic

Whoever discusses magic must take into consideration the general conception of magic formulated by Sir James Frazer in his great work *The Golden Bough*. He distinguishes between "practical magic" and "theoretic magic." The latter involves a theory of nature by which magical activities are guided. Magic "assumes that in nature one event follows another necessarily and invariably without the intervention of any spiritual or personal agency. Thus, its fundamental conception is identical with that of modern science; underlying the whole system is a faith, implicit but real and firm, in the order and uniformity of nature."<sup>14</sup>

But the relation between theoretic magic and practical magic differs from that between modern science and modern techniques or "arts," as Frazer calls them. Nowadays scientific generalizations precede technical activities. Technique is the practical application of theory, whereas magic is primarily a specific kind of action which human agents either perform themselves or ascribe to other agents, human or nonhuman. Comparative reflection about such actions does lead to certain generalizations concerning their effectiveness. These generalizations, however, do not constitute a theory of nature, for they

<sup>12</sup> See Durkheim, *op. cit.*; Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (London, 1899). A somewhat different totemic myth is analyzed by W. Lloyd Warner, *A Black Civilization* (New York: Harper, 1937), pp. 371-411. Here the disorder of nature has been occasioned by the bad conduct of totemic beings, but from them also comes the ritual which can counteract this disorder and make nature conform with human needs.

<sup>13</sup> Melville J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II (New York: J. J. Augustin, 1938), 101-28.

<sup>14</sup> James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 3d ed., Part I, Vol. I (New York: Macmillan, 1955), p. 220.

are mostly mystical, in the sense that they assume the existence of hidden causative powers which intentionally influence natural objects and can be intentionally influenced by other causative powers, including the causative power of the magician's own will. The very essence of practical magic consists in an interference of the magician's personal agency with the natural order. This interference may disturb the usual order of natural events or re-establish an order which some other agency has disturbed or even create a new order. Undoubtedly, the magician's own action to be effective must conform with a certain pattern, follow a certain order of its own; but this is a specific order, very different from the uniformity of nature.

All varieties of magical actions have in common one basic characteristic: They include explicit, symbolic expressions of the agent's will. These expressions must be clear and unequivocal, so as to prevent any misunderstanding of his intentions on the part of those agencies which he is trying to control. If he gives a verbal command, as he usually does, it must be expressed exactly, in accordance with an established formula. Verbal commands are often supplemented by a ritualistic imitation of the events which are meant to occur—imitative magic. This makes the command more obvious and compelling. Occasionally the ritualistic imitation alone is sufficient to make the agent's intention clear.

When the magician, to produce changes in an object, uses as instrument a detached part of this object or some other object which was, but is no longer, connected with it (contagious magic), there is indeed an underlying belief that the original connection is not completely broken, but to some degree mysteriously subsists: for instance, that hair or nail parings preserve some connection with the body even after they have been cut, or that the personal property of an individual is still connected with him even after it has been lost or given away. But this connection is not sufficient to make a change in the one object produce a change in the other by natural causation. The hair or nail parings may rot without affecting the body from which they have been cut. A lost personal ornament may be accidentally destroyed without any physical injury to its owner. But if a magician takes hold of the hair or of the ornament and uses it in performing a rite intended to injure the individual with whom it was originally connected, it makes the rite more effective, because it helps direct the mystical power which the magician controls toward the intended victim.<sup>15</sup>

Of course, the practical magician did not distinguish clearly between mystical causation and natural causation. A medicine man in curing sickness often combined magical rites and natural remedies, ascribing causative power indiscriminately to both. He was primarily a man of action, not a thinker; and, as Paul Radin points out, even in primitive societies there is a difference be-

<sup>15</sup> See, for data, *ibid.*, II, 170, 399-424, 494-538.



tween the two. The man of action does not theorize about the natural order; he is interested primarily in practical results. He accepts the power of deities and magical rites "as aids for the proper functioning of a series of traditionally connected individual and social events."<sup>16</sup>

This confusion between mystical causation and natural causation persisted among inventors and scientists with practical interests throughout ancient and medieval history, as Lynn Thorndike conclusively shows.<sup>17</sup> But it does not indicate that magic and science share a similar basic conception of natural order. The bond between magic and science during this period was "experimental search for new practical results. The medieval alchemist seeking for the philosopher's stone or the elixir of life combined magical attempts to influence natural processes, by compelling the mystical powers which controlled them to do what he wanted, with scientific attempts to control natural processes by other natural processes. This is the difference which Francis Bacon had in mind when he formulated his famous slogan, "Nature does not obey unless it is followed." The word "obey" (*obtemperat*) was not a mere figure of speech in his time; it expressed the point of view of the magician who literally commanded natural phenomena to behave according to his will.

The mystical agencies which the magician tries to influence by the manifestation of his will are of various kinds. According to Lévy-Bruhl, they can be summarily ranged into three categories . . . the spirits of the dead; the spirits—taking this word in the widest sense—which animate natural objects, animals, plants, inanimate beings (rivers, rocks, sea, mountains, artifacts, etc.); and finally charms and spells coming from the actions of sorcerers.<sup>18</sup> In any case, they have the capacity of teleic intentional activity which can help the magician achieve success or cause his failure and can be made to act as he wants them to act, if he is powerful enough.

The difference between evil magic (black magic) used to raise disorder and good magic (white magic) used to defend order against the disturbance of evil magic or to re-establish it after it has been disturbed is fundamentally a matter of social function rather than of magical technique. The good magician protects the natural order from disturbance for the benefit of the group and its members, inasmuch as this order is essential for collective and individual success. The evil magician in disturbing order cuts against the interest of the group and of its members. The distinction is, of course, relative; in conflicts between groups, what is good magic from the point of view of one group is evil magic from the point of view of the other.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Paul Radin, *Primitive Man as a Philosopher* (New York: Appleton, 1927), p. 23.

<sup>17</sup> Lynn Thorndike, *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, Vols. I-IV (New York: Macmillan, 1923-34).

<sup>18</sup> Lévy-Bruhl, *La Mentalité primitive*, p. 51.

<sup>19</sup> Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, "Préface," *Mélanges d'histoire des religions* (Paris, 1909).

Comparative reflection about actions indicates that the appeal to magic can fail. This does not mean that magic as such has proved ineffective, only that the particular magical action performed by the particular agent, whether its purpose was socially good or socially bad, had less causative force than the action of some other agent whose intention conflicted with this purpose. There is always a struggle between agents of order and agents of disorder, human and nonhuman; and the agents with greater causative power are bound to win in the end, to impose their will upon agents who have less power. Where a weak agent fails, a sufficiently powerful one will succeed. The difference may be personal or ritualistic or both. Some agents, men or spirits, have an inherent power which others lack; their power may be so great as to radiate from them without any explicit ritualistic performance. On the other hand, certain ritualistic patterns of magical action are much more effective than others, because through them the magician can enlist the cooperation of other powerful agencies against common antagonistic powers. In most nonliterate collectivities, only a few individuals—experienced old men, shamans or "doctors" trained by their predecessors, sorcerers inducted into secret societies—know the most effective ritual, for it would be dangerous to let ordinary members use it; any error, any deviation from the pattern, might turn the powers which the ritual invokes against the performer and perhaps injure his whole group.

In view of the interdependence between the cultural order of collective life as expressed in folkways and the order of nature, the function of guarding the first against transgressions of members of the collectivity and the second against nonhuman agencies of disorder or evil magicians were closely connected. Thus, in Australia the same old men who, through regular magical performances, prevented the order of nature from being disturbed had also the function of preserving cultural order within the tribe and the clan. Later, the two functions together became most fully developed in the role of the sacred king.<sup>20</sup> This change, so significant for the history of cultural thought, should be viewed in connection with another important change—the progressive substitution of gods for men as the supreme magicians who by expressing their will could control the order of nature as no human magicians were able to do.

#### The magical powers of gods

Development of the belief in gods as personal beings with magical powers superior to all human powers undermined the very foundations of human magic. But, far from upsetting the earlier ideas of the regularity of natural

<sup>20</sup> Frazer, *op. cit.*, I, 322 ff., and Vol. II. See also Géza Róheim, *Animism, Magic and the Divine King* (London, 1930), chap. IV, pp. 203-310. We may ignore Róheim's Freudian explanations.

events, as Frazer claims, this development gave the conception of a natural order greater stability and consistency, in the very measure in which the powers ascribed to gods increased and became eventually centered in one highest god.

Of course, the development of this belief was rather slow. In many earlier religions, the will of the gods could be controlled by exceptionally powerful spells of human magicians. Furthermore, since there were conflicts among the gods just as among men, divine magic, like human magic, could be used to disturb order as well as to maintain order; and some divine beings, like "black" magicians, were mainly agents of evil.<sup>21</sup> And no sharp dividing line originally separated human magicians, who lived only through the ordinary life span of a generation, from gods incarnated in human bodies, who passed from body to body through many generations; or from gods with superhuman bodies of indefinite, though not infinite, duration; or from the eternal, spiritual gods without bodies. Yet certain significant differences grew up in the course of history. Whereas a magician with a human body, living in the same natural environment as other men, was susceptible to influences which might deprive him of his power or destroy his body, a god with a superhuman body could escape most of these influences; and a purely spiritual god was entirely inaccessible to them. Moreover, most of the actions of a human magician could be observed by other men, but a god could keep his actions shrouded in mystery. This meant that men could not always judge whether a god was successful or not; unknown to them, he might be working for a purpose beyond their understanding, which would be disclosed only in the final, triumphant result.

But the most important difference was that between men and those gods who were the original creators of natural order. Living human magicians, even the best and most powerful, were usually only continuators of an ordering process which had been initiated before they were born by agents who were better and more powerful than they; that is, by their divine ancestors or other gods. Even when the order was actively maintained by living magicians, even when they had to defend it continuously against the agents of disorder who were always trying to destroy it, such activities were not original; they merely reproduced the activities of the first creators. Their activities were, of course, indispensable whenever the first creators disappeared or withdrew from the empirical world after transmitting their wisdom and power to human successors. But as religious beliefs developed, the original divine creators came to be considered as permanently active in maintaining their supreme authority over the order they had created; then human magicians became

<sup>21</sup> See François Lenormant, *Chaldean Magic, Its Origin and Development*, trans. from the French (London, 1877).

sacred priests, with delegated powers, helpers of the gods, divinely guided and controlled.

Finally, the powers attributed to the gods became illimited, and they assumed full and exclusive responsibility for the maintenance of the order of nature. As a result, interference with the order decreased; human magicians could do little either to help or to hinder the gods. The chief function of the priest was not to guard the order of nature directly by his magical power but to propitiate the gods and by religious cultus<sup>22</sup> to induce them to make nature continually behave in a way beneficent to man. Though superhuman powers of evil were still active and "black" human magicians sought their help, the divine creators and guardians of the natural order were fully competent to keep them from disturbing this order. If they did not do so, if they permitted disorder to triumph for a time, it was a penalty for the wickedness of men who had neglected or offended the gods. After men had expiated their guilt, the gods reinstated the order. Normally, however, so long as men took care to propitiate the gods by regular cultus and did their best to avoid offending them, gods would not allow the order they had created to be disturbed. And so long as the order of nature remained stable, it was for men to use it to their own advantage.

#### Sacred kings as guardians of order

Frazer's famous theory of the king emphasizes mainly, almost exclusively, the magico-religious aspect of the role of king, rather neglecting the political aspect as ruler and war lord. It is true that in some cases the king was too sacred a person to engage in secular activities, and consequently the functions of political ruler and war lord were performed by somebody else. But in many other cases known from historical and anthropological research, the kings combined in their persons sacredness with political power, and this is what made their roles so influential historically.

Originally, it seems, the king was a most powerful human magician who controlled everything that was practically significant for his subjects. He was the guardian of the entire natural order within the area of his kingdom. He controlled the weather; he protected his people against sickness and death; he caused desirable plants, animals, and human beings to multiply and grow; he prevented or counteracted the multiplication and growth of noxious plants and insects, dangerous animals and humans; he strengthened his own warriors and weakened the enemy's. He did all this partly by his personal magical power and the exclusive use of certain secret rites, but partly also by enlist-

<sup>22</sup> We use the term "cultus" in the specific sense of ritualistic active propitiation of divine beings, intended to achieve definite desirable reactions of those beings; "cult" in the more general sense of any kind of "worship" or collective "admiration of superior beings," including men, which may be unregulated and have no definite purpose.

ing the cooperation of other agencies of order—minor "white" magicians among his subjects and good mystical powers, such as ancestral spirits and helpful forces animating natural objects. At the same time it was his function as ruler to maintain an order among his subjects that was good for all of them. We shall call this kind of order *moral*. The king fulfilled this function by making all his subjects conform with established customs and mores and counteracting nonconformity; for nonconformity was bad, both because it had a disorganizing effect upon the collective life of the people and because it disturbed the order of nature upon which this life depended.

Since, however, religious beliefs were also relatively developed in those cultures in which the functions of the king in an organized collectivity were definitely standardized and regulated, the magical power of the king was in part at least derived from the superior magical power of a god. The king might be the temporary incarnation of a god who had existed and acted before he entered the king's body and would continue to exist and act after he left it. Sometimes, indeed, the god was only partly present in the king and, while animating his body, continued to exist and act above the realm of mankind. Or the king might be a descendant of the god, with divine nature and mystical power, but with a mortal human body and obviously inferior to and dependent upon the god from whom he descended. Or he might be a new minor god, raised to the level of the deities by some greater god. In any case, even though he did control nature, this control was due not to the causative power of his actions as a man, but to the divine essence inherent in him. And he could lose his essence and become purely human: The god incarnated in him might leave his body, or his will might conflict with that of his divine ancestor, or the great god who deified him might push him back to the human level. All this could happen because of his human frailty; and if it happened, he could no longer control nature for the benefit of his subjects.

Gradually the king became less and less of a magician and more and more of a priest; he might still retain some inner power which enabled him to control certain natural events by his own acts, but in the main he had to rely on the willingness of divine creators to guard actively the order of nature against evil powers. And when the direct responsibility for maintaining the natural order passed entirely to the gods, the function of king, so far as the natural world was concerned, became exclusively that of high priest, supreme mediator between his subjects and the gods. The natural order necessary for the prosperity of his people depended on his ability to gain the good will of the gods in their behalf. If natural conditions within the realm of his kingdom were favorable, this meant that he had been successful, and the gods were well disposed toward him and his subjects; notable disturbances in the order of nature proved that he either provoked the anger of the gods or at least failed to propitiate them. But even this responsibility became gradually delegated,

at least in part, to organized religious groups guided by a professional priesthood.

No such decrease in power and shifting of responsibility occurred in the function of king as ruler of men and guardian of moral order; he still enforced general conformity of the people over whom he ruled with definite patterns of right behavior in definite situations. Even if the moral order was originally introduced by the gods, it was the task of the king to maintain it and to prevent or repress all disorder among his subjects. The gods might help him in this task by punishing his subjects for nonconformity or rewarding them for conformity, through interference with the natural conditions on which their welfare depended. But essentially the task was his, and he was responsible before men and gods for the behavior of his people. A famous instance of this responsibility was the traditional role of the Emperor of China. Moral order within his empire was inseparably connected with the mystical order of nature and was an essential condition of its normal functioning.<sup>23</sup> An emperor's failure to maintain moral order affected nature as well as human lives; and as a consequence of his failure he and his descendants lost the support of mystical powers as well as the right to demand obedience from his subjects. This is how a change of dynasty was justified.

Indeed, in the course of history an even more important social function evolved from the original function of the king. For, although the natural order, once created by the gods, generally remained the same except for temporary disturbances, the moral order of which kings were in charge was constantly changing; as politically organized collectivities grew in size, developed distinct cultures, and expanded their intercourse with other collectivities. Moreover, when written historical records supplemented verbal tradition and enabled men of learning to trace the history of their collectivities back through the centuries, comparison between the past and the present brought an increasing consciousness of social change. If changes were evaluated positively, if they appeared to result in a new order which was considered better than the old one, their authorship was ascribed to the creative ability and power of some exceptional individual. And a king, by the very nature of his role, seemed best qualified for such a great achievement.

The creator of moral order among a mass of people must obviously be supported.<sup>24</sup> The Chinese always believed in a universal natural order existing in the heart of man as well as in the physical universe. There is an interaction between the natural order of the universe and that of the moral world. . . . Through the Chinese history the bad sovereign is precisely the one who by his misconduct troubles the universe." Jean Escarra, *Enycl. of Social Sci.*, V, 250.

The mystical order of nature was manifested in the divinely instituted and maintained order of heaven. "Chinese astronomy was closely connected with Chinese state religion . . . based on the conception that between earthly and heavenly events, viewed spatially and temporally, a perfect agreement existed. The Emperor was the 'Son of Heaven.'" Ernst Zimmer, *Die Geschichte der Sternkunde* (Berlin, 1931), pp. 201-02.

posed to have supreme authority over these people so as to make them follow his guidance and obey his command—the more so, the newer the order, the more it differs from traditional patterns. His authority must be primarily moral, founded on a general belief in his personal superiority over everybody else and a faith in his ability to create successfully an order that will be good for those who follow and obey him. But it is well if he has also the power of physical coercion to deal with enemies and rebels. Kings satisfied these conditions, inasmuch as they were sovereign rulers with no human ruler above them; their sacredness gave them moral authority and their military status as leaders of warriors enabled them to exert physical coercion.

Consequently, most of the creators of moral order whose names are preserved in legend and history were kings; but, of course, only the most famous kings had this supreme achievement ascribed to them. On the other hand, we find creators who originally had only moral authority (superior individuals, divine, or divinely inspired), who promulgated the principles of a new order. Some of them became rulers later and ordered the lives of their subjects in accordance with these principles, while others left this task to rulers who followed their moral guidance. In a few cases a war lord who became king after gaining supreme military power constructed a new order, thus acquiring moral authority and prestige.

#### Creators of moral order as political heroes

Although some oral tradition has been preserved in folklore concerning creators of new moral order, most of our material is written. It consists of inscriptions on monuments; sacred books; epic, lyric, and dramatic poetry; chronicles; biographies written by followers and worshippers; many historical works, for historians only quite recently discarded belief in great men as absolute creators;<sup>24</sup> and publications of contemporary writers propagating faith in creative leaders among the masses.

Some of the creators whose names are transmitted in literature are purely mythical persons: Gilgamesh of Babylonia, Minos of Crete, Fu-hi of China, Mann the lawgiver in India, King Arthur of England, Lech of Poland, etc. Others are men who probably or even certainly did live, but whose personalities and achievements are largely legendary: Sargon of Agade (Babylon), Menes of Egypt, David and Solomon, Numa Pompilius. Most of those, however, whose names are familiar from history are personalities whose more or less authentic biographies are connected with historically ascertained processes of social organization and reorganization. A few are world-known figures of the twentieth century.

But whatever the historical evidence or lack of evidence concerning their

<sup>24</sup> See Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes and Hero Worship*; and Ralph W. Emerson, *Representative Men*.

personalities and performances, if considered from the point of view of the kind of thinking which accepts their creative achievements as real and evaluates them positively, they belong to the general class which in French is called "héros civilisateurs," in English "culture heroes." This same class includes the mystical, the legendary, and the historical persons supposed to have initiated mankind into various material techniques, as well as the founders of religious systems. The term "hero" originally denoted a divine or semidivine personality who lived for a time among men; later it was extended to great men of the past, and finally to great men still alive.<sup>25</sup> A personality is a hero if he is an object of collective cult, as symbolic representative of the highest common values of a social group.<sup>26</sup> We call "political heroes," as distinct from other heroes, those personalities that are objects of collective cult as sovereign creators of a new moral order by political methods (with or without military force).

A few examples of political heroes drawn from various cultures and various historical periods will show the essential uniformity and persistence of this conception.

Take, first, the creators of new states. Their achievement is unification of human collectivities with no common order or a wrong order under a supreme authority which imposes a common right order upon all of them.

Sometimes the same hero begins and completes the task; sometimes the first hero is succeeded by another or even by two or three others who expand the state he created, strengthen it, and perfect its order. Most heroes in creating new states use military force. They are conquerors, or leaders in organized defense against a common enemy, or liberators of the people from foreign oppression. Sometimes, however, only peaceful methods are used when the inhabitants of a country want their lives to be ordered by a sovereign ruler.

Thus, Sargon I of Babylon, Menes of Egypt, Assur-nazir-pal of Assyria, Cyrus, Alexander, and the first Incas were mainly conquering heroes; Genghis Khan, and Tamerlane were exclusively so. Charlemagne, according to French tradition, was both a conqueror and a defender; the latter function is emphasized in the *Chansons de Geste*. Alfred the Great is extolled primarily as a defender. The builders of western Slav states were considered mainly as defenders against Teutonic expansion; thus Mieszko, the first historical ruler of Poland, was primarily a defender, but his son and successor, Boleslav I, a conqueror. Though liberating heroes are found at various historical periods, they have become especially popular in modern times (e.g., Washington, Bolivar, Pilsudski).

Most instructive, perhaps, as a source of information about the old concep-

<sup>25</sup> "Heroes and Hero Worship," *Encycl. of Rel. and Ethics*, VI (1914), 642-60; Gottfried Salomon, "Hero Worship," *Encycl. of Social Sci.*, VII, 336-38.

<sup>26</sup> Stefan Czarnowski, *Le Culte des héros* (Paris, 1919).

tion of moral order as the creative product of rulers, are the legends and stories of state builders who were invited to perform this task either because the people wanted order or because priests or prophets thought that the people needed the kind of order which only a ruler could create. A highly significant legend is contained in the work of the first Russian chronicler and historian, Nestor. According to him, the people of Russia sent to the Varangians (an old Norse group) a delegation which said, "Our land is great and plentiful, but there is no order in it. Come reign and rule over us." And three Varangian brothers, Rjurik, Simeus, and Tuvor, in response to this request came with their followers.<sup>27</sup>

The stories of Saul and David furnish good illustrations of state builders who started to perform this task at the initiative and under the sanction of religious leaders. Later historical examples are the war lords or competitors for secular power in the sixth and seventh centuries whom the Western Church made into sacred kings, hoping that they would succeed in creating and maintaining lasting order within certain areas after the inclusive Roman order had broken down.

Another familiar type of political hero is one who creates or perpetuates order within a state already in existence after a period of disorder. During such a period the popular demand for order is particularly manifest, and popular worship of the hero who seems to satisfy this demand develops most easily. The only king of Poland called "great" was Casimir III, who certainly was not a military hero (he ceded Silesia to Austria and left Pomerania to the Teutonic Knights), but whose reign was marked by inner peace and prosperity after a long period of dissension and poverty. Henry IV was exalted for ending the long inner conflicts within France. Louis XIV was considered by his admirers a great unifier and organizer, who made France the political and cultural center of Europe. Frederick the Great transformed the weak Prussia into a conquering power. Bismarck was the hero who not only welded many states into one German Empire, but modernized the inner order of Prussia. Napoleon, though primarily a military hero, was generally accepted by the French people as a maker of new order after the disorder of a decaying monarchy had been followed by a period of revolutionary terror; indeed, the "Code Napoléon" survived his downfall for a hundred years. A similar demand of the French people for an order-making ruler made Louis Napoleon their emperor. Recently, Mussolini and Kemal Pasha were heroized on similar grounds. Unfortunately for his heroic status, Mussolini later tried to become a conqueror and empire builder. Highly interesting is the fact that two periods

<sup>27</sup> A popular Russian revolutionary poem which circulated about fifty years ago (I do not know the author) summarized the history of the Russian rulers in a number of stanzas, each ending with the refrain "and still there is no order." Only two rulers were ironically referred to as real lovers and efficient makers of order: Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great.

in English history, notable for political order and economic prosperity after periods of disturbance, were symbolized by the names of queens—the nearest approach, since the legendary Semiramis, which women have made to the role of order-making heroines, outside of Catherine the Great of Russia.

The greatest political heroes, however, are those whose achievements are not limited to the construction or reorganization of particular states among other states, but are intended to influence all mankind. They are creators of an order which is believed to include or expected to include all the peoples of the world as the world is conceived at the time, or at least all the peoples who are worthy to participate in it. Such a hero is above kings; if kings have any place in the order which he creates, it is only as subordinates or vicarious rulers of minor parts of the world—especially peripheral territories—and they all owe allegiance and obedience to the hero. Some emperors of China might be included in this category inasmuch as China was at one time the Central Empire and its order the only good and true moral order in the universe. However, this conception was more fully and explicitly developed in the West and reached its culmination in our own time.

#### Creators of a world order

Alexander the Great may perhaps be considered the first world hero in Western history, even though his attempt to unify all the states of the known world into a coherent whole was not completed, and whatever unity he did create broke down after his death. The idea of a world order was a product of philosophical theory, not of practical political thought. But it did acquire a practical significance with the growth of the Roman Empire and became associated with the worship of Roman political heroes.

Already Polybius conceived the Rome of the second century B.C. as a world state in formation and pointed out that because of this he was the first man who could write a universal history instead of (like his predecessors) histories of particular states and their interrelations. A century later the Roman state expanded still further; and the belief gradually developed that Roman order was practically a world order, that only under Roman rule was universal peace possible and only under Roman law could universal justice be attained. And with this belief there grew a popular cult of individual emperors as heroes to whose creative powers the maintenance, expansion, and development of this world order was due.

The first of these heroes was Caesar, who spread Roman domination to the western limits of the habitable world and who started to rebuild Roman unity and peace after a long period of political divisions and civil wars. The same kind of heroic achievement was expected of his successors individually, each of whom adopted Caesar's name, together with the term "imperator," indicating that order was maintained, expanded, perfected in a triumphant strug-



gle against the forces of disorder, whether they arose inside or outside the Empire. The expectation became expressed in religious cult—typical heroic cult. Disappointments with particular emperors did not destroy the popular faith, for the idea that a sacred ruler could lose his power had an old tradition, going back to prehistoric kings. In the course of time more and more idealized dead Caesar-Emperors who had been successful up to the end of their earthly lives were added to the list: Augustus, Vespasian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, "the beloved of all peoples," Septimius Severus, Alexander Severus, and others.<sup>28</sup>

After the partition of the Empire, the cult of emperors decreased. However, Justinian was one of the great heroes, mainly because of his legislative achievements. But the later Eastern emperors were mostly shadows of the original world heroes. The revival of the role of Caesar-Emperor in western Europe was not a complete return to the Roman ideal of a creator of world order, not so much because of the competing status of the Byzantine emperor as because the new conception differed from that of imperial Rome. While the Roman order was one, the true order of the Christian world was dual, religious and political. The first was sacred, created by God, maintained and expanded by the Church under the leadership of the Pope as earthly representative of God; the second was secular, which the Emperor could create, maintain, and expand, but only if empowered by God through the medium of the Church and if acting in harmony with the Church.

Still, some Western emperors became in legend and literature independent builders of a political world order. Although Charles the Great in the French tradition of the eleventh and twelfth centuries was a French hero, he became a world hero as Caesar (Kaiser) in German tradition. Frederick Barbarossa was an even more popular hero in German folklore. Thus, the ideal of one universal political order under a supreme monarch persisted and found expression in political writings, such as Dante's *Monarchia*. Along with it went the hope that some day a political hero or a succession of political heroes would appear and create this order. When a famous military conqueror and political organizer arose, some of his admirers expressed the hope that he was the one destined to unify mankind under one order or at least to initiate this creative achievement. Charles V, Louis XIV, and Napoleon had such admirers.

Nowhere, perhaps, was this hope so markedly expressed as in Russia after Peter the Great. Russian rulers had no religious competition, for they controlled the Church; they were the only ones in modern times who combined the two titles derived from ancient Rome: Caesar (Tsar) and Emperor. As Caesar the Russian ruler was the father of his people; as Emperor he was

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. XI, *The Imperial Peace*. The extension of the cult from dead to living emperors was apparently initiated by Domitian, who enforced his own worship as "Dominus et Deus" (p. 411).

the triumphant victor over foreign enemies, and the rapid expansion of the Empire led to the expectation that eventually all mankind would be brought under his rule. As a Russian poet wrote a century and a half ago, the time must come when every man will be able proudly to say, "Maybe I am a slave—but a slave of the Tsar of the universe."<sup>29</sup>

In our times, several persons have seemed to their followers even during their lives to be supreme political heroes, each the creator of an order destined to become a world order.

It is uncertain whether Hirohito, the Emperor of Japan, should be included among them. The traditional role of the Mikado goes back to the old one of divine king, supreme guardian of order among his divinely chosen subjects. Although he and his people were supposed to be unique, absolutely superior to the rest of mankind, there was no idea of his actually becoming the ruler of mankind, for there was no conception of a world order. Only during the last half century, under the influence of Western political thought, this idea developed, became explicitly formulated, and began to be put into action after the invasion of Manchuria. The expansion of Japan was conceived as the creation of a new universal order progressively extended over Asia and intended finally to cover the rest of the world. Since the whole process was carried on in the name of the living Mikado, presumably by his will and under his sovereign guidance, the living Mikado became exalted as the supreme creator of the new order. Little emphasis was, however, placed on any exceptional ability of his as a great man; since every Mikado is divine by descent, his greatness is above all human greatness; only among his helpers do differences in ability and energy seem important.

Much more significant for the history of social thought is Hitler's rise to the status of a political world hero. He was not at first explicitly conceived as a creator of world order, but as a national culture hero, a liberator, unifier, reformer, organizer of all people of German descent and culture, including the millions of Germans who lived outside of Germany, most of them under foreign rule. According to him and his followers, Germany itself was not free, but controlled by foreign powers; its people were impoverished, weakened, divided among themselves, dominated by politicians who were either egoistic fools or servants of Jewish Marxism; their culture was deteriorating, the purity of their racial stock becoming contaminated. Hitler created a *Weltanschauung* which included a conception of the "mission of the German people upon earth" and an ideal of German racial purity, cultural greatness, and social unity. For the realization of this ideal, he created the Nazi Party

<sup>29</sup> I read this poem in secondary school in Warsaw under Russian domination, but I have forgotten the name of the poet. It certainly was not Pushkin, however much he exalted certain tsars (Peter the Great and Alexander I) and Russian imperialism in general.

and with its help obtained control of the German State. The state was to him "not an end but a means, a presupposition for the formation of a superior human culture, but not its cause. The latter lies exclusively in the existence of a race capable of culture."<sup>30</sup>

As early as 1923, this function of a national hero was ascribed to him. "His fire spread from him upon his listeners and planted a strong faith again in their hearts after the break-down of all previous ideas. Crowds of despairing people found in him a support for their lives, and men who were seeking for a leader of the German people looked more and more hopefully upon the *Man in Munich*. . . . We can say already today that the name Hitler has acquired a mystical sound and not only for us. . . . This name goes as a symbol over the entire world. He is hated and beloved like everything great. The honor of Germany, social justice, the freedom of the entire German people are leading motives of the Man. . . . Victory will be ours, because at the head of the German will to live stands *one man*. . . ."<sup>31</sup>

Ten years later this is how Goebbels described Hitler's achievement: "Like one man, all Germany is rising. Millions in the East and the West, in the North and the South are stretching their hands across the borders and forming a union which can never more be destroyed. In this solemn hour, they lift their hearts up to the Man who has roused them, brought them together, united them, fused them into one nation again."<sup>32</sup>

However, this was only the first step. Hitler in *Mein Kampf* anticipated a further development. The German people are Aryans, and Aryans are the only race capable of creating a truly great culture. They have always used inferior peoples as "technical instruments" in the service of this culture. "The Aryan conquered lower races and regulated their practical activities under his order, at his will, and for his ends. But, while he thus made them perform a useful, even if a difficult activity, he not only spared the lives of his subjects, but gave them perhaps a lot that was better than their previous so-called freedom."<sup>33</sup> Such is still the mission of the German people upon the earth. If the German people had been sufficiently solidary in the past, "the German Reich today would probably be master of the earthly sphere. . . ."<sup>34</sup> The result would be "a peace, supported not by the handwaving of tearful, pacifist, complaining women (*Klageweiber*), but founded by the victorious sword of a *Herrenschloß* that reduces the world to the service of a superior culture." The supreme pur-

<sup>30</sup> Adolph Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 60th ed. (Munich, 1933), p. 431.

<sup>31</sup> Alfred Rosenberg, "Deutschlands Führer," *Völkischer Beobachter*, zum 34. Geburtstag des Führers am 20. April, 1923.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph Goebbels, "Hitler über Deutschland," Rundfunkreportage aus Königsherg zum Tage der erwachenden Nation am 4. März, 1933, in *Sünden der neuen Zeit*, 2d ed. (Munich, 1934), p. 112.

<sup>33</sup> Hitler, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 438.

pose of the German state is "not only to unify and protect all the Germans, but slowly and surely to lead them up to the dominant position."<sup>35</sup>

Also highly significant, though different, has been the evolution of the role of Stalin, who followed Marx and Lenin as the third great hero-creator of the world order called "communism."

Unlike older types of moral order, communism as a world order *in statu nascendi* was originally conceived not as the intentional creation of conscious agents, but as a result of historical necessity determined by material forces. And yet Marx after his death became for his intellectual and practical followers a hero who promulgated the first ideal principles of this new order—a combination of prophet and legislator, a Buddha and a Mann, though a purely historical person, acting by his own human genius not by divine inspiration. The few principles he promulgated are absolutely valid; his opponents and critics are spokesmen of evil who want to perpetuate disorder and injustice.

Lenin gained followers as the thinker who developed further the "true" principles of Marxian communism, in opposition to those thinkers who deviated from the teaching of the master and falsified his ideal; this ideal is now often called "Marxism-Leninism." After the October Revolution of 1917 Lenin became recognized as the leading man of action and gradually was exalted (especially after his death) as the greatest revolutionary hero in history, who actually substituted the new good order for an evil, decadent order in the largest country of the world. For such an achievement it was necessary to overcome the resistance of adherents to the old regime and to impose the new order upon a hundred and fifty million people who were not ready for it.

This required dictatorial power. It is interesting to note how in the course of this process the Marxian idea of "dictatorship of the proletariat" became first interpreted as dictatorship of the Communist Party acting in the interest of the proletariat and later, in response to the age-old demand for an individual creator, was impersonated in the leader of the party. This impersonation was not quite completed during Lenin's lifetime, but only after Stalin took over the leadership of the party. However great Lenin's achievements were, he had no time to consolidate the new order, still less to extend it beyond Russia. Its extension to the whole world was expected to come when other peoples would follow the Russian example under their own leaders.

Stalin began as Lenin's successor, continuing his creative activity, developing, perfecting, stabilizing the new order. In less than ten years, he achieved heroic status in this role. To quote Henri Barbusse, one of his admirers:

These thoughtful parades which last for hours, and the enthusiasm which is reflected by the crowd massed tier upon tier in the stands erected before the red, crenellated wall of the Kremlin, form a vortex of muttering and roaring centred around a single point. The clamour assumes a human form: "Stalin!"

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 439.



... That man is the centre, the heart of everything that radiates from Moscow on the surrounding world. His portrait, either in the form of sculpture or as a drawing, or as a photograph, is to be found everywhere throughout the Soviet continent, like that of Lenin and beside that of Lenin. There is hardly a corner of any factory, military barracks, office or shop window in which it does not appear on a red background, between a list of striking socialist statistics (a sort of anti-religious ikon) and the emblem of the crossed hammer and sickle. Latterly, a poster of enormous dimensions has been put up on the walls, all over Russia and the Soviet Republics, representing the superimposed profiles of two dead men and one living: Karl Marx, Lenin and Stalin. And we may multiply these a thousandfold; for there are not many rooms, whether occupied by working men or by intellectuals, in which Stalin does not figure.

Whether you love or hate this nation which occupies one-sixth of the world's surface, that is the man who is at the head of it. And in this country, if the cobbles in the streets could talk, they would say: Stalin.<sup>36</sup>

Gradually, however, his role expanded beyond that of Lenin. For, although the revolution was officially considered to be unfinished so long as some counterrevolutionary activities remained unexpressed, as a matter of fact the forces of reaction presumably still rampant in Russia had ceased to be seriously dangerous, except when used by enemy powers who wanted to destroy the new order. The real threat came from the hostile environment of capitalistic nations. According to this belief, what Russia needed was not so much a revolutionary leader as a hero who, besides his main function as builder of a communistic society, would also act as protector of his people against foreign enemies. This was the old function of the tsars who, however ineffective they may have been as "fathers" of their subjects, however unjust the order of which they were the guardians, nonetheless up to the beginning of this century usually triumphed over external foes not merely by defending the Empire, but by extending it and subjecting dangerous foreigners to their domination.

Stalin assumed this function of the tsars. First, the peoples of Russia were taught to mistrust all foreign powers as actual or potential enemies and to avoid all contacts with outsiders. Next, preparation for defense against foreign aggression became a highly important task, second only to the development and stabilization of the new order; and Stalin was recognized as the leader in control of this task, especially after it was apparently proved that not all military leaders were to be trusted. Without waiting to be attacked, Russian armies reconquered nearly all the foreign countries formerly conquered by the tsars which had regained independence after the fall of the old regime. When the expected aggression did come, Stalin became the supreme and incomparable defending hero. And after successful defense, he extended his control over several foreign countries which the tsars had never controlled,

<sup>36</sup> *Stalin, A New World Seen Through One Man*, trans. by V. Holland (New York: Macmillan, 1935).

and subjugated a large part of the aggressors' land so as to eliminate all danger of future aggression.

And he is doing all this not only as the ruler of Russia and of its people; his function as heir of the tsars is merging with his highest function—that of creator of the communistic world order. Unlike Lenin, he does not wait for this order to be introduced into other countries by their own revolutionary leaders, but introduces it through the medium of chosen foreign assistants, helping them eliminate opponents (landlords, capitalists, reactionaries, fascists) who obstruct the process. Since communism is supposed to be the best possible order, created for the benefit of the inhabitants of those countries, they are expected to exalt him as their great benefactor, just as the peoples of Russia have exalted him.

#### Incontrovertibility of the dogma of the political hero

These various instances, especially those of Hitler and Stalin, indicate how belief in creators of moral order, just as belief in creators of natural order, persists notwithstanding the development of inductive, scientific thinking. Once accepted, it cannot be invalidated in the eyes of the believer by factual evidence, for the believer can always explain away to his own satisfaction any facts that appear to disagree with it. When it is rejected, this is not because it conflicts with scientific knowledge but with some contrary belief. Of course, the same individual who is worshiped as a creator by his adherents may be hated as a destroyer by his opponents; but the evil power which is ascribed to him by his opponents is often as great as the good power with which his adherents endow him.

So long as the hero is considered successful and seems to produce an order which he and his followers judge desirable, the believers' faith in his creative power remains unshaken; and if he achieves something unexpected, overcomes apparently insuperable obstacles and produces unforeseen positive results, the faith in him is strengthened, and even unbelievers may be converted. The significance of such an achievement in the social field is similar to that of a miracle performed in the natural field by a prophet who claims supernatural powers. Problems are raised only by failures, and there are several old and easy ways of solving such problems without disturbing faith in the creative power of the hero.

First, the hero is wiser and more far-seeing than others, but does not always disclose his plans. What appears at the moment to be a failure to the ignorant, the stupid, the shortsighted, may be really the best if not the only way to unexpected success. In war and in politics, the hero may intentionally mislead his opponents into thinking that he has committed a mistake. Or else he may test the loyalty of his adherents by seeming errors. The faithful must trust their hero, be always aware that his wisdom is above

their understanding, and refrain from criticizing that which they do not understand.

Second, the hero cannot organize large masses of the people from a distance, by immediate psychic control, or compel them to behave permanently in an orderly way, or protect them against evil influences, even though he often is endowed with the power of hypnotic control over the minds of those who meet him face-to-face and listen to him. He needs loyal assistants who will absolutely obey his commands, who can be delegated with some of his authority, and who can be entrusted with the realization of specific parts of the total order he has planned. Their task is to make smaller groups of the people under him behave as he wants them to behave.

Within the limits of their appointed tasks, such assistants are also makers of moral order, though not original creators. It is their superior who makes them order makers, enlightens them as to their functions, and gives them the power to perform these functions. They are responsible to their superior for the behavior of their subordinates. If the assistants succeed in making the subordinates behave as the superior wants, the original merit for their success goes to their superior, and it is for their superior to grant them a share of this merit. If they fail, the fault is their own, for the superior could never fail in their place; and in appointing them, the superior gave them in knowledge and power all that they needed to succeed.

Such an assumption by the superior of primary merit for all successful performances of his subordinates, while putting upon the subordinates all the responsibility for their failures, is not merely an arbitrary expression of the personal ambition of superiors. It satisfies the popular need for hero worship and is indispensable for the preservation of the unshaken authority of the hero. The creator of order cannot be responsible for disorder. This is a very old and general principle. It is perhaps most clearly manifested in the Japanese tradition of obligatory suicide of any subordinate—from the immediate subordinates of the Emperor on down—who fails to fulfill the orders of his superior. Hitler became and remained the supreme hero and creator of the new order only so long as responsibility for all failures to introduce and maintain order was put upon subordinates who could be removed from their posts. Stalin's wisdom and power as builder of the new political and economic order remain unchallenged because subordinate officials of the party machine have been held responsible for all defects and deviations in the functioning of the machine, and because all economic deficiencies and failures are ascribed not to him but to planners, organizers, and managers of economic production. Successful subordinates are openly praised and given honorific awards or promotions; Stalin was particularly lavish in praising military commanders during the war. But the very fact that public praise came or was supposed to come from the supreme hero indicates that the

primary merit was his, and it was for him to decide to whom a share of this merit was to be granted and how large the share was to be.

In such a complex moral order as that of a modern totalitarian regime, with a long hierarchical ladder of superordinates and subordinates, a similar division of positive and negative responsibility is found on every level of the ladder. All leaders, heads, or managers at a given level are responsible to their superordinate leader for the behavior of all those over whom they have been given authority; but each of them, while letting his superior assume the primary merit for his success, tries to shift the demerit for his failure to his subordinate leaders. In short, while the supreme leader is exclusively an active creator and the mass of the people exclusively passive objects which are being ordered, all intermediate leaders are both passive objects ordered by their superiors and creative agents who give orders to their inferiors.

Even under this system, however, if failures are important and frequent, a superior—even a supreme creative hero—may be blamed for having delegated authority to an assistant incompetent of performing his function. But there is a well-known way of justifying the hero. Even an incompetent assistant, if he loyally tries to obey the hero, will promote order, though his work may be imperfect and have to be supplemented and corrected. An essential difference exists between imperfect order and disturbance of order; though it may not be noticeable at once, it will manifest itself eventually. Serious and unexpected disturbances indicate that some agency is at work which intends to foment disorder, some force of evil trying to destroy the good which the hero is creating. When the failure of an assistant can be traced to willful disobedience, to conscious transgression of rules promulgated by supreme authority, it means that he is disloyal, an agent of destructive forces, a traitor.

This principle has been applied in all dictatorial regimes; Hitler's elimination of traitors in 1934 is a well-known example. But probably never has its application been so consistent as in Russia after the Communist Party gained complete control and Stalin rose to the role of the supreme political hero. Once all defendants of the old regime had been eliminated and organized opposition to the ruling group broken down, treason within the ruling group was the only serious threat, apart from the permanent danger of foreign invasion. Any unexpected and notable failure in technical production might be due to sabotage; any deviation from the rules of the political order sanctioned by Stalin as supreme creator might be traced to the secret influence of anticommunistic, especially Fascist, agencies. Elimination of individual saboteurs and disloyal officials proceeded continuously, with occasional purges, such as the purge of 1937, removing all convicted traitors as well as many suspected and potential traitors. And the accusation and condemnation

of important traitors was widely publicized to exalt still further the hero, showing the contrast between him and the traitors and proving to the masses that those who oppose the hero are really enemies of the people, secret agents of evil.

Explanation of the hero's failures by the treason of his followers helps us understand why some creators of order have remained heroes in legend and history, even though they were ultimately overthrown and their order destroyed. Of course, their downfall might have been directly due to the power of their enemies; but, as proved by their earlier victories, their enemies would have been unable to defeat them without the help of traitors. When the posthumous cult of Napoleon developed, his defeat was ascribed to the treason of his allies, some of his marshals, and certain of his ministers of state (Fouché and Talleyrand). We can be sure that the cult of Mussolini and especially that of Hitler will continue and that their worshippers will consider treason one of the factors of their ultimate fall.

Finally, the failure of a creator of social order may be explained by the moral weakness or wickedness of the people whose conduct he wanted to regulate. This is the easiest explanation; and it can be resorted to by the followers of a political hero or of any prophet or reformer. Prophets of Israel who failed to influence the people condemned the wickedness of the people; yet they became heroes whose words have been preserved for posterity. For the followers of a prophet have been converted from wickedness to goodness; they are the select few to whom his condemnation does not apply, and to them he is a hero whose greatness is not impaired by his failure to convert the wicked majority. To this day may be found many such select groups, sacred and secular, each with its own hero who is prevented from creating order in his society or in the world at large only by the innate badness or acquired depravity of the human species, which makes the agents of evil more influential than the agents of good.

## Objective Order as a Condition of Successful Activity

CHAPTER

2

### The relation between magic, religion, and technology

Our brief survey of the old and persistent idea that order of every kind is created and maintained by the will of some conscious agent raises the question: In cultures dominated by this type of thinking, how could the conception of a factual order of phenomena existing independently of the will of creators and guardians ever have evolved?

In trying to answer this question, we find that it should be subdivided. For the persistence of faith in human creators of moral order, even after human individuals ceased to be considered capable of creating or maintaining an order of *nature* by the power of their will, indicates that the conception of an independent order among natural objects developed more rapidly and effectively than the conception of an independent order among human actions. There must have been two historical processes, both of which need explanation. We shall begin with the first.

It is generally recognized, of course, that even the most primitive peoples must have had a knowledge of the regularities of nature sufficiently objective and valid to guide their material techniques. But if this knowledge was inextricably mixed with and dominated by magical and religious beliefs, how did it ever become separated and freed from those beliefs and eventually organized into more or less coherent theories? If could not have been by testing the effectiveness of magical and religious methods in comparison with technical methods, and rejecting the former while preserving the latter; for, as we have already seen, magical and religious beliefs were and still are unaffected by such tests. To this very day, the majority of technical workers throughout the world preserve faith in the practical effectiveness of religion, and a considerable proportion of them still keep some faith in the effectiveness of magic. To them it is not a matter of choice between technique on the one hand and magical ritual or religious propitiation on the other hand: They use both.