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The End of the Enlightenment and Modernity; The Irrational Ironies of Rationalization[1]

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Marxist social thought holds that class is the product of the ownership of the means of production and of the relations of production, and asserts that the ownership of the means of production and the relations of production would become the decisive factor in a class-segmented universalization of culture. In the Marxian expectation the conflict between capitalists and workers would ultimately result in revolution on a world-wide scale. From a cultural point of view, again in Marxian terms, the ruling ideas of any given era or epoch are the ideas of the ruling classes, and the dominant ideas of a given culture or civilization would be those of the ruling classes. With this logic, Marx established a connection between capitalism and culture. At the same time, the contradictions of capitalism would tear away the veil of ideology, laying bare the false consciousness that it produces in order to disguise the emergence of class consciousness on the part of the proletariat. . . now more frequently referred to as the workers. This Marxian expectation is a perspective that still has currency among some academicians in the West, and until recently it represented the orthodoxy of major socialist states including Russia and China.

The rationality implicit in the Marxian projection and in its counterpart the enlightenment and liberalism appears to have been a faith in reason which in praxis has been unfulfilled everywhere.

[1]Begun as a collaborative project with Joseph Bensman before his death, this essay is an expanded and more fully illustrated version of ideas originally outlined in draft form.

THE VARIETIES OF WORKING CLASSES

World War I exposed the failure of the working classes in the West to respond in class terms to what was defined by Lenin as an imperialist war. The workers of all Western nations supported nationalist aims revealing the importance of nationalism as an obstacle to the development of an international class consciousness, and denying the inevitability of Marx's expectation. Moreover, nationalism has remained a powerful force throughout the 20th Century overriding class and proletarian consciousness nearly everywhere.

Similarly, religion which Marx designated as the opiate of the people and Freud thought to be an illusion, remains a more powerful force than class consciousness or secularization, as is revealed by the vitality of the great religions throughout the world. Militant and fundamentalist Islam asserts itself throughout the Middle East and the Moslem world. The Protestant Christian right, especially in the United States but also in Europe and among some Asian countries, reasserts biblical fundamentalism. Catholic Liberation Theology attacks the Church in the name of the poor, and uses an early Christian conception of the communion and of a sense of equality as a basis not for class action but for justice. Fundamentalistic Judaism and Hasidic Orthodoxy in Israel profess a pre-Christian militant tribalism. There also seems to be a reassertion of liberal Catholicism, liberal Judaism and liberal Protestantism. These religious movements embrace the most varied groups and resist simplified mono-class categorizations. Religious motivations and impulses assert themselves as more powerful forces than does class consciousness, in the process denying a one-to-one relationship between faith, class, and secular ideologies.

When religion is combined with nationalism, it can oppose both economic rationality and self-interest, as is illustrated in the religious wars in Northern Ireland, Israel–Palestine, Iraq–Iran or in the continuing Hindu–Muslim conflicts in India. When religion is combined with ethnic identifications, as has happened in Africa, Europe, the Middle East and elsewhere, strife and conflict become organized on the basis of tribal, linguistic or cultural differences. Yugoslavia, a socialist state for 45 years, threatens to disintegrate as a result of competitive religious, ethnic and linguistic as well as economic claims. And much the same holds for the socialist states of what had been regarded as the Eastern Bloc, where neither ethnic identifications, nationalisms, religions or internal class differences have been eliminated. In Armenia, Lithuania, Slovakia and other sovietized areas, ethnicity resurfaces as a point of personal or collective identification much more powerfully than other forms of consciousness.

Despite industrialization, older historic forms of consciousness prevail in almost all parts of the world.

Marxism, socialism, and 19th Century liberalism assumed the development and growth of reason and rationality in society. Communism saw reason emerging under capitalism in the form of class consciousness, which, after the destruction of the state under communism, would result in the formation of an ideal society; Marx was probably the last great 19th Century optimist. Capitalistic optimism stressed the world-wide extension of rational law and rational modes of production – i.e., the rationality of the corporation and of bureaucracy. Rejecting revolutionary means, socialists committed themselves to the rationality of production, the reason of the people, the intelligence of the bureaucrats, and a hope that each population sector would see the reason for more equitable distribution within the framework of the industrial system. None of these rationalities has come to pass, so that no received theory, whether Marxist, Liberal, or Socialist provides a perspective that might allow industrial civilization to become an inevitable societal form in the latter part of the 20th Century.

A central feature of the Western industrial order over the past one-hundred and fifty years has been the vast increase in manufacturing productivity. Fueled first by coal, then petroleum, and today by nuclear energy, this productivity far exceeds the imaginations of theorists like Marx or Weber, who lived and died in the epoch of coal. This industrial manufacturing system developed hand in hand with the bureaucratization not only of western civilization but also of world civilization as we know it today; whether there is a necessary relationship between bureaucracy and industry is a separate question, but it is a fact that the gigantic scale of modern industry rests on its bureaucratization. If bureaucratization as a world process has its own independent momentum, like military organization since the Napoleonic period, it has lent itself easily to the organization of modern manufacturing. Today, the world is at a peak of an international industrial production, propelled by a credit system managed by international banks. The exploitation of the world's natural resources by businessmen and the workers of the world does not appear to be guided by the rationality of either visible or invisible hands.

The extension of industrialization throughout the world has been accompanied by neither a workers' consciousness nor class solidarity. The effects of industrialism on specific societies are determined by when industry arrives, by who is incorporated into it, and by the particular cultural traditions into or onto which it is imposed. Hence, the concept of the industrial worker does not mean the same thing from country to country. Nor does the worker's attitude toward work have a mono-dimensional meaning. For example, Korean or Asian workers in the newly industrialized

areas of the Far East will likely have a much higher acquiescence to their own exploitation than would workers in the Western countries where unionism and the organization of labor have had a century of growth. In other words, a first generation of industrial workers in the recently industrialized countries, anticipates a set of opportunities that workers in the West would regard as grounds for complaint and as a point of departure for making further claims. Or, to take a different example, consider Japan. Japan has a highly disciplined labor force which is organized within a feudally derived framework of loyalty that extends quite naturally to management and nation; the idea of worker solidarity is coterminous with Japan's new postwar version of its economic co-prosperity sphere. To take an instance from Europe, note that East German workers work harder than those in other formerly Eastern Bloc countries primarily as a result of a cultural tradition of work discipline. Within the United States, recently arrived ethnic groups—the new South and East Asians, Indians, Central and South Americans, etc.—seem willing to accept conditions of work that second or third generation white (and, in some cases, black) ethnics in the United States would refuse. Throughout the world, industrial enterprise takes advantage of the conditions that impel the latest and newest immigrants to enter the labor force or the petit bourgeois shopkeeper class.

In Germany, France, and the Scandinavian countries, Southern European, Turkish, and North African workers retain ethnic identifications more powerfully than that of other "Guest workers". Where previously workers were often recruited from the indigenous rural areas of nation-states, the work force of today and tomorrow is more likely to be recruited transnationally and to retain its ethnic identity. Consider the instance of Koreans in large American cities. Both religious and cultural factors influence their work ethic and economic motivations. Immigrant Koreans tend to be mostly Protestants whose faith has been superimposed upon a Confucian base of discipline, loyalty to kin, and rational intellectualization. In their communities, church affiliation and credit validation are connected in a way that is reminiscent of the style described by Weber in his analysis of the earlier American sects, resulting in communitarian enterprises that link kinsmen over two continents. This can only be described as a consciousness of ethnically organized enterprise.

Something similar to this prevails in the Eastern European countries formerly held to be worker states, where the capitalist spirit of self interest, especially in Hungary and Soviet Georgia, manifests itself in a private but collective management of erstwhile state owned industries among workers, farmers and the managerial elite. Religious and cultural orientations whose sources long pre-date industrialism supply worker motivations upon which modern industry and business are dependent.

Though much social as well as economic theory continues to posit workers as a category or as a class, such usages have meaning only as statistical aggregates. The social psychologies of workers and the sources of worker motivation remain as unexamined problems despite—or perhaps because of—the assumptions made about them in ideologies of Marxism, Liberalism, Socialism, or Capitalism where they go no deeper than economic self-interest and remuneration as work incentives. Nowhere has the rationalization of industrial production produced a common consciousness amongst workers.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE INTERNATIONAL UPPER CLASSES

Just as industrialization has failed to produce a uniform working class, so it has also failed to produce a distinctive upper class.

A new international upper class emerged for the first time after the congress of Vienna in 1815. Based upon pre-existing European royalty and linked cross-nationally through arranged marriages, this aristocracy made its status claims on blood lines of descent and hereditary ownership of land; both status and wealth were buttressed by titles of nobility. Surviving to the present day, this European titled nobility has been augmented on a worldwide scale by the pre-industrial nobilities of Russia, China, India, South America, and South Asia.

In England, France, and Germany, an older landed nobility and political aristocracy has had its economic privileges legally protected by rights to land, patents, and the labor of others. The socialism of the Scandinavian countries has been administered by an older landed, benevolent aristocratic class that has been willing to share the spoils of industrial wealth in a welfare system for the masses. In North and South America royal land grants made in the 15th and 16th centuries set a pattern of land holding that abides to the present. After independence, the vast wealth inhering in both continents was politically and legally allocated to what are now the older upper aristocracies of the western hemisphere. The contemporary upper classes of the world are a product not of modern capitalism, socialism, or communism, but rather of the more ancient forms of political and bureaucratic capitalism. In capitalist societies state intervention has been so great that for at least 200 years the West has lived under a system of political capitalism and not that of a free market economy. A genuinely free market economy had not materialized at the time Adam Smith described it, and it has served as a powerful myth ever since.

In communist or orthodox socialist societies, older aristocracies were only partially eliminated by revolutions. Their lands were appropriated, but those who joined the revolution retained their hereditary status, redeemable in the counterrevolutions of today. Communism has denied the capitalistic marketplace in favor of that of the bureaucracy. Within this market, a new aristocracy of privilege exhibits vast power and income differences based in part on ethnic origin, nationalisms and heredity rights to bureaucratic positions in the distributive systems of banking and industry. In the older cultures and civilizations where communist revolutions succeeded, ethnicity, regionalization, feudal estates and linguistic nationalism are stronger forces than those of bureaucratically organized industrialization.

The economic orientations and life styles of the world's upper classes vary in accordance with their respective material and cultural differences. Thorstein Veblen noted that the business upper classes in the United States are less concerned with production than with speculation in land and paper assets—what would now be called the money markets and leveraged buy outs—and that this orientation resulted from the prolific natural resources of the country. The reform eras that emerged in response to the depredations of the Robber Barons after the Civil War have made short term exposés of corporate and governmental crime a part of the American business and constitutional tradition, but do not alter the speculative and predatory character of the American businessman.

In England, by contrast, the pull of monarchy and aristocracy has made the attractiveness of extended multiple family businesses in trade and manufacturing less desirable. Landed rentiership and banking confer greater prestige, support the status claims of wealthy families, and are emulated by the holders of new wealth.

In Northern Italy family capitalism within the framework of industry and business remains as a characteristic feature of business organization among the upper classes. Pre-dating industrialization, this seems to be a cultural derivation from the merchant capitalism of the Florentine and Venetian City States.

In Japan, the forms of state—industry—business cooperation and coordination set in place by the older feudal aristocracy at the time of the Meiji restoration in 1868, referred to at the time by the term Zaibatsu, remains intact. Japan's defeat in World War II and MacArthur's democratization program strengthened the coordinating power of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry and enhanced the authority of its "Big Five." As a matter of imposed postwar policy, Japan's feudal aristocracy switched its national aim from a military to an economic imperialism. Japan's military burden was assumed by the United States, whose business leaders believed that the military requirements of the cold war

would be good for American business. Having shifted from military to economic imperialism, Japan's international policy objectives remains those of its older Feudal aristocracy and are supported by forms of social organization and discipline that pre-date industrialization.

In many parts of Asia, Africa, and South America, the weakness of constraints on the violation of constitutional guarantees of economic and political freedom means that both the new and the old upper classes are free to indulge in arbitrary and capricious force and fraud. President Noriega of Panama is not necessarily an extreme example of rule by personal bodyguards without regard to electoral procedures, external pressures or world opinion to constrain the use of force. In business and in politics the execution of enemies and bribery in exchange for favors and political support is carried out at the expense of technical and economic development. Foreign aid and foreign credit ostensibly designed to stimulate economic growth, instead support military establishments, have not led to industrial "take offs," and frequently find their way into the hands of privileged classes. Fears arising from endemic political instability and uncertainty lead the upper classes of many third world countries to invest not in their own country but in the western capitalistic markets and to place their liquidity in Swiss banks. In these areas industrialization has produced some new forms of wealth, but only in Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore has there been a "take off" in capital accumulation, and even in these latter cases economic development has been related to privileged access to foreign markets and favored-nation treatment. In these areas, landed and traditional aristocracies have lived off the process of industrialization and efforts to stimulate growth.

In the Soviet Union and its former client states the formal status of the political party upper-classes is at variance with the status accorded them by the older aristocracies and middle strata. Despite revolution and industrialization, older cultural, religious and ethnic factors intervene to obstruct the formation of a new class order. The collapse of the party apparatus and the claims to status made by it has led to the reassertion of forms of consciousness associated with feudalism, monarchy and agrarianism thought by some to have been erased. The impulse to restore the past prevails over the social and economic consequences of fifty years of industrialization and communism. The older aristocracies stand in the wings ready to reassert their claims to legitimacy.

Industrial civilization has not yet produced an upper class that can be said to possess a distinctive life style and social rituals that are *independent of sheer wealth.* Even the already established wealth of the new industrial upper-classes has never competed successfully with the status claims of the older aristocracies, though as we shall show below it has made

claims for status on the basis of both refined and vulgar consumption. In part this is because making money takes time, involves risks and possible losses, that is, status reversals, and is tainted with the grubbiness of mundane activity. Life dedicated to the cultivation of taste, manners and social exclusivity is possible only on the base of a secure, legally protected, rentier income. The modern industrialist or businessman enters the world, transforms it and makes this a way of life, asking in return for his or her success the opportunity to participate in high level conspicuous consumption in the form of residences on several continents, ocean going vessels, art collections and so forth. But the legitimation of wealth and the status of its holders takes time and requires acceptance of a claim by others. The question is, who are the others to whom the claim is made?

Established industrial wealth is now at most five or six generations old—in the case of the Rockefellers, for example, the fourth generation has just now reached maturity. Granted that it takes two or three generations for massive industrial capitalistic wealth to gain respectability and that new wealth holders continuously emerge with the development of new forms of capital, it is nevertheless the case that the sheer display of consumption, not to mention its vulgar versions—seen for instance in the lifestyles of Malcolm Forbes and Donald Trump—does not insure the earthly elevation of the consumer. Lacking a mystique of transcendent dignity, because it is too much of this world, the holders of new wealth seek higher forms of legitimation in values that transcend money and what it can buy; they need a referent status group whose life style they can emulate. The workaday world of modern business and capital accumulation needs an image of a way of life that is better than that which it has produced. The titled, landed, aristocratic European nobility, or at least, that part of it that survived the wars and revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries, exemplified the higher virtues of leisure, noblesse oblige, dignity, ancestry, and possessed heirlooms, art collections, and landed estates. Above all, it distanced itself from the corruption of the city and the world of business. Once he became successful, Marx's hated industrial capitalist, the entrepreneurial source of the esteemed capital accumulation, seeks utopias outside the world of business and industry.

Beginning in England in the 19th Century, royalty and aristocracy began to interact with the demi-world of international society. In the heyday of that aristocratic imperialism, it linked to and combined with the older royalties of India and the Middle East and to a new class of worldly buccaneers, adventurers, explorers and collectors of ancient objects of art. This imperial English aristocracy initiated a development that, by the end of World War II had become an international society that included the world's aristocracies, film and sports stars, some political leaders, oil magnates and middle Eastern

nabobs, celebrities of all kinds and high level call girls—in effect, an international class of consumers of leisure and of each other, supported by landed wealth, rents, royalties, patents, the stock market, credit, fraud, the profits of manufacturing industries and governmental corruption.

What is new in the 20th Century is the symbiosis of the rich across all continents made possible by mass communications and the airplane and the absorption into that society of celebrities of all the various human functions—beauty, strength, speed, writing, music, painting, acting, inventing, etc. Even successful bankers, media tycoons and faith healers join this social world that is dedicated not to production but to the expression of a sophisticated lifestyle, without any necessary connections to an upper class consciousness derived from an economic interest.[2]

The social life of this society requires the continuous infusion of new faces and new talent, providing a life style with the excitation and status borrowed from an international pool of celebrities. The constant renewal of real or vicarious eudaemonic activities that serve to confirm self importance provides safeguards against incursions of boredom.

Americans, because of residues of the Protestant Ethic, tend to be more discreet in their profligacy and consumption when participating in this branch of international society. To the extent that it is decadent, the American business aristocracy does not advertise its indiscretions or attempt to enact them on other continents, so that an overall class pattern of depravity has not gained currency. In the first four decades of the Twentieth Century, "America's Sixty Families," as Ferdinand Lundberg noted, sought to enhance their status by marrying into the families of impoverished but genteel European royalty. Later generations traded money for status in different ways. Paul Getty acquires an English Castle and entertains three-hundred expenses paid guests for a weekend party while supporting the Getty Art Museum in California, thus maintaining an image of the cultivated, socially responsible billionaire. Where the English accept the decadence of their upper classes, even to some extent that of the royalty itself, both the Rockefellers or the Kennedys would prefer not to violate at least the appearance of upstanding, responsible, disciplined, hard-working citizens and when they do, as in the case of the Kennedy's, it carries with it the moral opprobrium of the press and the public. When former president Ronald Reagan accepted a two million dollar fee from a Japanese businessman for a short visit and two speeches in Japan, he came close to overstepping the boundary of acceptable corruption, and in spite of his

[2]Up until now this social world has excluded the Soviet and the Chinese political leadership, though it is possible that under the current U.S.–Soviet detente, M. Gorbachev may be included, but Soviet and Czechoslovak tennis and sports stars and Soviet ballet dancers (Nureyev and Barishnikov) are already included.

otherwise sacrosanct status with the press, was criticized for this breach of economic etiquette.

Americans are required to be more careful in their associations with profligate, pleasure-minded Greek shipping magnates, oil rich Middle-Eastern businessmen, corrupt South American political leaders and international drug and armaments dealers. In part this is because the American business upper classes have yet to escape the small town Protestant culture that spawned them. That culture had fairly rigid codes of decency and propriety derived from the association of the businessman with the church. As a result of the dominance of business, these standards have become the cultural standards throughout the nation, especially in the Northeast, South and Midwest. That small town pattern has died out in this century and the standards of propriety upheld, at least in principle, in them are no longer practiced, certainly not by corporate business. But as a civilization we have yet to develop a set of ethical codes and standards to replace them. So we continue to give them lip service and often expect them to be followed, especially by politicians, even as we routinely violate them. The media perpetuate these standards in part because holding public figures to small town standards gives them a club with which to bash the leaders of urban and mass institutions. So the United States is a nation that runs on hypocrisy, especially at the highest institutional levels, because the moral standards publicly articulated are not institutionally embedded.

To some extent the new L.B.O., S & L, investment banking and real-estate fast money of the 1980's has challenged the older moralities by glorifying ways of life based on leisure and sensual enjoyment without restraints. As presented on television, the show "The Life Styles of the Rich and Famous" fatuously glorifies the wealthy for their wealth, and not for any accomplishment or ancestry associated with it. This is a different status claim than that made by old wealth, but is one that seems to be more accepted by the industrial middle classes because unrestrained consumption is what the latter value and esteem the most. It is perhaps an index of the cultural poverty of the middle classes that they no longer hold in esteem the cultivated way of life characteristic of the status claims of old wealth. More respectable and worthy of emulation—though not affordable—are the consumption and recreational styles of the latest tycoons, media celebrities, film industry stars and athletes. Lavish consumption becomes an instantaneous claim to status even if the recognition of that status is never deep or without envy. When media idols like Donald Trump appear to fall, their failure vindicates the propriety of those who have envied them, and reaffirms the older upper class moralities.

These phenomena are a peculiarity of the United States that are not observed in many other countries. In the Philippines, for example, President Marcos and his wife, Imelda, imposed few if any self-restraints on their joint and separate corruptibility. That dictator used an entire society as a source of personal income to fund lavish displays of consumption. In this respect Marcos was not unique and African and South American presidents (Idi Amin and Somoza to mention only two) offer similar examples. It was a notorious fact, known throughout the Caribbean that the General Pérez Jiménez, who was President of Venezuela in 1948, imported call girls from New York city to entertain himself and his military colleagues. In addition to its role in money-laundering of illicitly gained profits in drugs and vice, Havana served a similar purpose for some American businessmen and mafiosi during the incumbency of Batista prior to the Cuban revolution of 1959. But the Marcos' are the most recent paradigmatic case. Having acquired vast wealth, the question arises: what should one do with it? Imelda's answer was to go shopping. Here was a commodity fetishism that Marx has not envisioned. She apparently could only think in terms of consumption—of buildings, paintings, dresses and shoes. She knew only how to shop, and she continued to buy expensive footwear even after acquiring 4,000 pairs of shoes. Such obsessive consumption had not always been the central element of her character, but once she possessed more than all the money needed, she made a ritual of shopping that apparently became the ultimate end of her life. Shopping bestowed its own intrinsic pleasures—the salesperson honors the shopper, elevates the shopper's self-image into a form of self-sacralization. Mrs. Marcos did not need to wear the shoes, but she did need to buy them. She gained pleasure and self-esteem from the very act of possessing. Each new purchase was an act of homage at the shrine of herself.

Consumption for many of the upper and middle classes is its own reward and is independent of any utility derived from the objects purchased.

The rationalization of industrial production, supported by the oil reserves of the world, provides inner-worldly grace based on wealth and consumption to the upper classes of the world, but has not produced a public philosophy for the rational management of the world's human and natural resources.

CELEBRITY CONSCIOUSNESS OF ELITES AND MASSES

In the light of the above, what can be said of political and class consciousness as forces for the rational management of industrial civilization. If political and economic action for the successful is an act of homage at

the shrine of the self, what consequences does this hold for the ordering of society on the basis of class interests?

The older aristocracies of the world claim their status by virtue of birth and title while the newer elites base their claims on wealth or achievement or both. In either case, however, ascription of celebrity status is given by the masses and the media. Self-recognition as a celebrity results in part from a high sense of self-worth and, perhaps, from a unique accomplishment (including birth) but it receives its legitimation in the acceptance of the sacralization contributed by the masses and the media. The celebrity may then acknowledge his or her self-image as such and develop an awareness of its affinity with that of other celebrities. In this sense we may speak of a celebrity class consciousness; that is, by personal choice celebrities choose to rub shoulders with each other and to exclude others who have not yet arrived. The successful politician or businessman, for example, chooses to hobnob with those who are equally or more successful than her/himself. Celebrities reinforce each other's importance by recognizing each other as important in the act of mutual association. This class consciousness is without a common economic or political interest except for an interest in the aggrandizement of the self. As a form of status usurpation it may have political and economic consequences (political capital or advertising royalties), but it does not add up to a class interest.

The membership of the comingled international class of celebrities changes over time. Its only stable sector is the classical nobility from around the world. Otherwise, its membership depends upon success or failure in the world of esteemed secular pursuits, and their recognition by the masses and the media. With the exception of such formal accrediting agencies as the Nobel Prize Committees, the Hollywood Academy Awards, or Forbes' Magazine's listings of the world's richest people, inclusion in this world depends upon acceptance of a claim or accomplishment by the audiences of the world. Accomplishment is always associated with a this-worldly activity. Recognition is given to the greatest power, the greatest speed, the most beautiful physical form, the biggest fortune, the greatest invention, the noblest charitable act and so forth—anything that exceeds or surmounts the conventionalized limits of human endeavor. In effect, by exceeding established limits, i.e., by gaining an image equal to that of the sacred, the celebrity participates in a form of secular deification.

For the masses one set of celebrities is revered until it is replaced by another—other heroes whose accomplishments are greater, more dramatic or who have won the contest for glitter and public exposure. The continuous production of celebrities is necessary because they are consumed, digested and eliminated by the masses of the world rather quickly. Nowhere in the world, in spite of fifty years of effort in the rhetorics of socialism and com-

munism (with the possible exception of some intellectuals in the west) has industrial work been glorified by the masses. The culture of industrial capitalism seeks always to escape from its fundamental motif—work. Salvation through pleasure and excitation replace salvation through work.

Where uniformities of consciousness exist, their source is not likely to be found in economic or material interests. For example, as Weber once noted, workers are less likely to be inclined to the personification of nature than are peasants. Exposure to machine discipline and to the machine itself changes the worker's attitude toward nature. Under the factory roof, the worker, unlike the peasant, does not pray for rain or use magic to make the machine do what he or she wills. similarly, upper classes are less likely to depend on religion for their self-worth, which is instead supported by the approbation given them by the less economically worthy; their self-justification rests upon an inner worldly legitimation granted by the inferiority of others. Upper classes are "closer" to God which may even encourage a psychology of self-deification. The newer middle classes, whatever their political situation in whatever country, are likely to share a consciousness as cultural consumers. Concerned with life style and self cultivation, cultural consumption replaces religion as their opiate. And the "higher" forms of Protestantism—e.g., Episcopalianism in America—become objects of consumption and display for this class and its aspirants. These forms of consciousness are aspects of a more general world view, not the kinds of interests and tangible ideals that come to the surface to form a uniformity of which a class is aware.

But even such tendencies toward uniformity of class outlooks or toward an industrial culture are overshadowed by the countercultural tendencies of religion, nationalism, patriotism, ethnic or racial hostility and whatever pride arises out of tribal, local, regional and national cultures. Moreover, the mix of all these elements with the products of the mass media, modern civilizations' detribalization processes, the variety of forced and unforced migrations, as well as the demographic intermixing that occurs in the international labor force, produce new cultural combinations that violate any expectations based on projections from the past.

POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IRRATIONALITY

Marxism, Socialism and Liberal nineteenth century optimism each depended on the growth of reason and rationality in industrial society. Each in its own way supposed that rational modes of the organization of production, the corporate organization of society, and the utilization of bureaucracy might lead to the realization of secular utopias. While in-

dustrial productivity has exceeded all nineteenth century expectations and bureaucracy has become the basic form of social organization, neither reason nor rationality have prevailed as the governing principles of the social order.

Max Weber, the major theorist of bureaucracy, set forth some of the negative effects of rationality. In his view, excessive abstraction and excessive formalism would lead to the disenchantment of the world. This in turn would drive the hapless individual back into personalism, privatization, religion, magic, shamanism and other irrational forms of resistance to the spiritual emptiness of a rationally organized bureaucratic social order. The irrational component in man's nature would strive to limit the seemingly inexorable drive to formal and intellectual rationality. Certainly Weber's observation seems to have been prescient. The return to religion and to messianic fundamentalism around the world and the mass withdrawal from civic life into drugs and narcissism are the most visible and noteworthy reactions of those who say they want to retain some part of their soul for themselves. Weber, however, failed to foresee the major forces making for irrationality in the modern world.

One unforeseen possibility was the emergence of semi-psychotic or insane political leaders who imposed their personal visions on entire populations. The incredible submissiveness of both the masses and the vast bureaucratic machines to the wishes of Stalin and Hitler point to the amenability and adaptability of peoples and bureaucracies to almost any social purpose or objective. The use by political leaders of demagogic appeals to nationalism, racial, religious, or ethnic enmity and patriotism indicate the embeddedness of unreasoned and irrational foundations for political authority in modern mass bureaucratic societies. It also suggests the possibility that the demagogic appeals to the masses might become the basic foundation of political authority, setting agendas for political leaders and setting aside pure material or class interests.

The modern free market economy is sustained by the continual growth and expansion of production—essentially by the exploitation of the earth's human and natural resources. Linked to a system of investment credit and the decisions of bankers, the costs of production are met by a hopefully accelerating cash flow, where cash flow is the connecting link between industrial production, the creditor and the paying consumer. As Veblen once noted, industrial production and the credit system are neither logically nor rationally related to each other, but rather, are mainly guided by speculation and the desire to "get something for nothing." Less concerned with production than profits, the American businessman extols the myth of the free market economy. This system is a free market economy only in the sense that investment bankers and money speculators determine

values based upon their judgment of the potential for cash flow. The free market economy is thus, a set of traditionally based mutual understandings, trust and faith among money specialists, producers and consumers. Lacking any intrinsic rationality in the sense of a rationally calculable relationship between money and the worth of a commodity—that is to say, what the market will bear determines the price—the so-called success of the market economy in the United States is instead attributable to the richness of the resources of a once virgin continent.

The irrational consequences of the relations between business and science are easily illustrated by the focus of modern physics on the problem of the nature of the nucleus, a focus that led from the theoretical development of atomic physics to the practical development of nuclear bombs and nuclear energy.

Nuclear energy appeared to be a solution to the world's finite quantities of coal and oil. Under the super-salesmanship of Glenn T. Seaborg, who was not a nuclear physicist, but who saw a career opportunity in linking himself to nuclear energy, the campaign for *Atoms For Peace* was launched immediately after the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. From the perspective of businessmen and of political leaders, nuclear energy appeared to be the ultimate solution to the problem of securing vast quantities of energy at little or no cost—and, for the businessmen, at great profit. In effect, nuclear power held the promise of getting something for nothing. So great was the greed that little serious consideration was given to planning for the containment and disposal of radioactive wastes and only gradually did safety considerations gain some priority in methods of construction. Yet, in spite of all planning for safety, a nuclear power plant involves an enormous amount of plumbing and, like all plumbing, it eventually breaks down. Civilization has placed an enormous burden on the shoulders of the plumbers of the world.

In spite of such considerations, countries throughout the world built nuclear power plants without a rational calculation of future costs. Why they did so seems to be based on no other apparent consideration than that of emulation of the United States—that is, if Americans do it, it must be good and, therefore, we should do it too, giving even less thought to future consequences. The irrationality of emulation was more powerful than the rationality of science.

The equivalent of getting something for nothing for the military mind was the measurement of destructive power in megatons of nuclear and hydrogen bombs. Thus, national security could be rationally calculated in terms of size and number of deliverable bombs. In the calculus of the cold-war neither East nor West possessed a measure for an ultimate limit to the production of bombs because each used as its standard the standard adopted

by the other. Fear rather than rational calculation governed the actions of political and military leaders. Even when the irrationality of the over-production of bombs was recognized intellectually, fear continued to guide arms limitations negotiations. The drift to continued production of warheads and the invention of new nuclear strategies could not be stopped because no single agency possessed the necessary authority to reverse the process. The lack of interinstitutional coordination between economic, political and military bureaucracies led by default to drift in the world military policies of Russia and the United States—an interaction ritual in which each participant was guided by the fear of the other. Rational science and political irrationality have led to the exhaustion of the human resources and the foreseeable depletion of the natural resources of the United States and Russia. The Soviet Union's admission of its exhaustion and the American acceptance of a new detente are both admissions of forty-five years of nuclear policy folly.

The conjunction of the functional rationality of science with the substantive rationality of politics and business had led to hitherto unknown forms of irrationality. Freud's future of an illusion has turned out to be an illusion of the future.

In the late twentieth century, irrationality appears to be as powerful a force as rationality. The optimism of nineteenth century ideologies of communism, socialism and capitalism are confounded by these new irrationalities. The expectation that industrial civilization would produce new class formations and new leading strata has been confounded by the continued force of preindustrial classes, ideologies, ethnic identifications, cultures and religious which in their interaction with industrial production create new and unexpected forms of irrationality. Nineteenth century optimism is further confounded by the fact that the supposed agents of rationality at the political, market and bureaucratic levels of our major institutions have not proven themselves in their personal values and character to be as rational as the economic theorists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries imagined they would be.

A major problem facing social analysts today is the investigation of irrationality in presumably rational structures, ideas and ideologies.