German-Bashing and the Theory of Democratic Modernization

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Abstract: German society is often considered non-democratic and militaristic because of failure to undergo its own modernizing revolution; as a late modernizer, it has been antagonistic to advanced Western Societies, and prone to anti-civilizing impulses manifested in Nazism. The underlying theory reduces 4 dimensions of modernization to a single transition, allegedly typified by England, the US, and to lesser degree France. On 2 dimensions, bureaucratization and religious secularization (especially in eduction), Germany led the modernization process since the 18th century; on the 3rd, capitalist industrialization, long-term differences were relatively minor; on the 4th, democratization, Germany did not lag as much as Anglo-oriented theory claims, as we see by examining separately the expansion of parliamentary power and of the voting franchise in each country. England and France were also in many respects undemocratic and authoritarian societies until the turn of the 20th century. The image of Germany as an anti-modernist society came from geopolitical causes: the reversal of alliances leading to World War I; and war defeat which laid the basis for fascist seizure of power. Analytically, the roots of militaristic movements of extreme ethnic violence are found in all societies; whether such movements become dominant depends on conditions independent of the modernization process. Given future conditions of geopolitical crisis and ethnic struggle, fascist-like movements are possible in any society in the world.

Derogatory national stereotypes have become taboo, with one exception. It is popular and legitimate to depict Germans as authoritarian and militaristic. A staple of American comedy routines is a caricature of the average German as a closet Nazi, ready to invade Poland at a moment's notice. Similar anti-German stereotypes are prominent in Britain and elsewhere. The image owes something to wartime memories, but the roots are deeper. Scholarly consensus for several generations has described German culture and society as authoritarian and lacking in democratic institutions and values. Germany is explained as dominated by the Prussian ethos of regimentation, and more deeply by the Lutheran ethic of obedience and the Pietist ethic of inwardness and acquiesence; by Romanticism rather than rationality, and by a national identity founded on opposition to the liberal modernism of the West.

These cultural attitudes are usually explained by Germany's structural situation as a late modernizer. Lagging behind the modernizing revolutions of England and France, Germans have come on the world scene with a consciousness of being inferior and of the need to catch up. Hence the cultural rejection of the West, together with structural strains of a rapid and externally forced modernization, manifested in anti-modernist movements ranging from nationalism to anti-semitism and fascism.

The image of Germany as authoritarian is not merely a foreign criticism. It has been shared in the diagnosis by German intellectuals of their own national situation since the 1830s and 40s. The Young Hegelians compared their country unfavorably with France, for failing to undergo the political revolutions of 1789 and 1830. (Löwith 1967: 96) The criticism intensified in the 1850s, after the spread of the 1848 French revolution to the German states failed to establish a constitutional regime and was put down by military force. Germans have regarded themselves as the country which failed to make their own revolution; they have experienced instead revolution "from above" (Moore 1966: 433–42) or by emulating others "from without" (Bendix 1967). The lack of revolutionary will has become a staple of German historiography.[1] The diagnosis is agreed upon by Marxists as well. Germany, failing to go through the normal sequence of bourgeois revolution, was in a distorted position for undergoing a socialist one; the dis-

[1] Schnädelbach 1984: 13; Willey 1978: 28, 184–5; Köhnke 1991. Helmuth Plessner's *Die verspätete Nation* (The Retarded Nation) (1974: 12) states characteristically: "As the nation which came on the scene too late, referred from the outset to models which were the opposite of theirs, the German people distances itself from the norms of latinity and urbanity which it nevertheless feels to be authoritative, while in its own *élan* it gives priority to spontaneity and originality, and thus also inner depth: that is, it flatters itself that it is like a volcano, erupting in extravagance and wildness." (quoted in Schnädelbach 1984: 20) Plessner's book was originally published in exile during the shock of the Nazis in 1935. The massive literature of the *Sonderweg* thesis will not be reviewed here.

tortion would come out in the form of fascist counter-revolution.[2]

One incongruity in this account is that Germany, far from being anti-modern in the cultural sphere, has been on the forefront of modernist movements. Marxism was the most radically future-oriented movement of the past 150 years, explicitly anti-traditionalist and progressive; the reversal which unmasks Marxism as a backward-looking movement is at odds with its surface content. German cultural modernists include Nietzsche, the most radical atheist; and Freud, the most famous sexual liberationist.[3] Virtually all of the radical wings of 19th and 20th century philosophy were pioneered by German thinkers: the logical positivists from Mach to the Vienna Circle; the existentialists folhowing Heidegger and in religion, Buber and Tillich;[4] in theology, the creation of Higher Criticism and Liberal theology, of neo-orthodoxy by Barth and Bultmann, and of worldly Christianity by Bonhoffer. Musical modernism was spearheaded by Wagner, Mahler and Schoenberg. In painting, French Impressionism of the 1860s was the first modernist movement, but in the following generation the dual centers of abstract art were France and Germany, where abstract expressionism developed around 1905. The self- consciously modernist movement in architecture was led by the Bauhaus school and its expressionist predecessors ca. 1910–30; in the cinema, by the German film industry of the 1920s.

German culture, far from being conservative and conformist, since 1800 has been in the lead of world movements. In this sphere, the process of international borrowing and catching-up has been largely the reverse of that depicted in the political sociology of modernization. During this period England has rarely been a cultural exporter; instead, British intellectuals have usually gone to the Continent in search of modern trends. The Romantics Coleridge, Shelley, and Byron travelled in Germany around 1800–1820, bringing back the philosophy of German Idealism. In the 1840s and 1850s George Eliot began her career, battling theological traditionalism by translating the anthropological humanism and materialism of D.F. Strauss and Feuerbach. In the 1890s, Bertrand Russell travelled to Germany to study modern social welfare legislation, and wrote his first book (1896) on *German Social Democracy.* In this period it was typical for philosophers, mathematicians and scientists to visit German universities to keep up with advanced ideas. The pattern of borrowing from Germany was even more pronounced in the US. Transcendentalism in the 1830s was an import of German Idealism. American philosophy, science, psychology, and even sociology from 1860 to the early 1900s were largely the products of professors who had gone to study in German universities; an estimated 10,000 American students went to Germany in the late 19th century. (Berelson 1960: 14) The migration of anti-Nazi refugees from Germany in the 1930s prolonged US cultural dependence upon German academic disciplines down through the middle of the 20th century. (Fleming and Bailyn 1969) Paradoxically, Britain and the

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[2] Stalin's joke is widely known, that the Germans would never make a revolution of their own, because they are afraid to walk on the grass. The Marxist picture of Germans as authoritarian conformists continues the originating traditions of Marxism. Marx began by participating in the Young Hegelian criticism in the 1840s of Germany as laggards behind the French; in his later writings, Marx came to see English industrialism as showing Germany the face of its future. NonMarxist analysis on the other hand tends to put the divergence of Germany further back; for Elias (1989) it was the destructive wars of the 1600s which turned Germany into the path of depression and nostalgia for the medieval empire, carrying over into the militarism of status cultures during the Wilhelmine era, even among the bourgeoisie.

[3] It is conventional to include Austria within the German cultural orbit. This is justified by structural reasons: German-speaking intellectuals, artists and musicians moved freely among the states of Germany, Austria, and parts of Switzerland; the network of unversities in these places made a common career pool; structurally the institutions of Austria were similar to those of the German states, with the added complication of Austria's multi-ethnic empire. The institutional similarity is based upon the fact that in the Middle Ages, all these states were within the Holy Roman Empire under a German-speaking emperor. In modern times, politicians too have flowed across the borders; Hitler was a Austrian by birth. Oddly, although Austria was notably more conservative than Germany, it has escaped from Austria-bashing, perhaps by sloughing off its cultural identity upon Germany.

[4] Foreign existentialists were almost uniformly offshoots of philosophical training in Germany. The Dane Kierkegaard was a student at Berlin in the 1840s; Kafka studied at the German university of Prague; Jean-Paul Sartre developed French existentialism after having studied in 1933–4 at the Maison Francaise in Berlin, while others of his circle has sojourned at Cologne (Aron), and migrants like Kojève and Koyré introduced Hegelian and Diltheyian philosophy from the German intellectual networks. Data on these network connections are drawn from my work in progress, *The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change.*

US, the two allegedly most modern societies, have been culturally the least modernist, and the most dependent upon foreign imports.

France has been the other center of world cultural modernism. Foreign pupils flocked to Paris for science and mathematics, from the 1760s until about 1840, when impetus in those fields swung to Germany. In literature since Baudelaire and Flaubert in the 1850s and cultiminating in Mallarmé's Symbolist circle of the 1890s, in art since the Impressionists, Paris has been the world mecca of modernism up through the latest "postmodernist" version in the 1980s. Even France responded to the pull of German cultural innovation: there was a cult of German philosophy among the leading French intellectuals of the 1810s and 20s, popularized by Mme. de Staehl and Victor Cousin; in the 1870s and 80s after defeat in the Franco-Prussian war, a number of French intellectuals, Durkheim among them, sojourned in Germany to learn techniques of educational innovation and the contents of the modern disciplines. In the 1920s and 1930s French thinkers imported German phenomenology and existentialism, followed through the 1950s by Freudianism and Marxism. Even in the most self-consciously avant-garde world center, there has been a periodic tendency to look to Germany for innovation.

How may we explain these contradictory pictures of political vs. cultural leadership and lag? Let us disaggregate the phenomenon. Modernity is not a single package; it is made of at least four distinct components, responding to different causes and moving independently of one another. In the following, I will outline the historical pathways of Germany and other leading Western societies in their degree of (1) bureaucratization; (2) religious secularization; (3) capitalist industrialization; (4) democratization. Rather than lagging, Germany led in time on several of these dimensions. I will also cast doubt on the extent to which Germany was "behind" in the sequence of political modernization. Such judgments assume a standard of comparison; and this should be the actual condition of other countries such as Britain, the US, and France in historical time, rather than an ideal which most societies did not approximate until quite late. If Germany was only haltingly democratic before the end of the 19th century, this was true in varying degree of every other major society as well.

One outcome of this analysis will be to show that the stereotype of German backwardness and antimodernism is inaccurate, not only in culture, but in most institutional spheres, even the political. My point is not to reverse the stereotype, to celebrate Germany in place of denigrating it. We should seek the analytical lesson: understanding the: multiple process which make up social change in the modern era. The negative aspects of modernization, all too obvious in many facets of German history, are the more sobering because they exemplify or exaggerate tendencies that exist in the structure of every modern society.[5]

I. Four Modernizing Processes

A unidimensional model of modernization implies movement along a single continuum, varying only in speed and the duration of halts and regressions. A multi-dimensional model better accounts for a variety of sequences. Why focus upon these particular four dimensions, bureaucratization, secularization, capitalist industrialization, and democratization? These four components capture what is valid in the classic unidimensional models, while pinning them to appropriate institutional spheres. The polarities of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, mechanical and organic solidarity, point to the growth of large scale organization above local and personal relationships; but this comes about in two separate ways, by the growth of bureaucratization and of the market. The theory of increasing differentiation is a generalization of increasing division of labor, which points again to a process occuring within the market economy, and in a different way within bureaucratic organization. In a more abstract sense religious secularization may also be regarded as a form of differentiation of cultural spheres (Parsons 1971); but this rather pallid description fails to capture the vehemance with which the battle was fought between upholders of religious dominance and secularizers, nor the malaise that has characterized modern culture in just the places where secularization was most extensive. Another proposed master dimension of change, rationalization, is unsatisfactory because of its ambiguity; the term variously connotes efficiency, predictability, or formalization, which do

[5] I will use the term "modern" and its cognates throughout, despite the popularity of reference to an era of "postmodernity" emerging some time vaguely since the end of the 18th century Enlightenment. Virtually all features of "postmodernism" are intensifications of the structural features of modernization; if special emphasis is wanted for some trends in the late 20th century, the term "hypermodernism" would be preferable.

not necessarily go together nor occur in every institutional sphere.

An advantage of focussing upon concrete institutional changes (bureaucratization, secularization, capitalist industrialization, democratization) is these are easier attach to theories of causes and consequences. The fourth arena, democratization, calls for special comment. Compared to the others, the situation is least satisfactory here in terms of the development of an historically causal theory. Capitalist development has attracted a great deal of refined theorizing and efforts at comparative historical test. Organizational socfliology has centrally focussed upon bureaucratization, the sociology of religion upon secularization. Systematic and comparative work in political sociology, however, has been more concerned with the theory of revolutions (and secondarily with state-building) than with a theory of democratic structures, and we are far from agreement upon their causal conditions. Evolutionary modernization theories are a stumbling block here; for it is not at all clear that democracy is a specifically modern institution, except in the brute historical sense that the societies conventionally taken as exemplars of modernity – Britain and the US – have been democracies. The structural features of democracy do not follow from any of the classic unidimensional polarities of social change (*Gesellschaft*, differentiation, rationalization).[6]

Historically, democratic structures of various kinds have existed long before the other dimensions of modernity: collective assemblies in many hunting-and-gathering bands and in tribal societies; Greek city-states; collegial power-sharing bodies of notables, elective kingship, and independent judiciaries in medieval feudalism. The range of historical comparisons needed has been an obstacle to developing a full causal theory of democracy.

[6] Parsons (1964) attempted to account for democracy as the differentiation of executive administration from juridical pattern maintenance and legislative goal-setting, and held that democracy is a universal evolutionary stage. The theory is not convincing in terms of causality; it is not clear what selective advantages follow from this type of differentiation, especially since democratic division of powers can promote deadlock rather than efficient action. Runciman (1989) on the other hand argues on the basis of a wide-ranging historical comparison that industrial/bureaucratic societies can exist in a number of political forms. In a more limited way, and ignoring pre-modern forms of democracy, Lipset (1994) argues that capitalism is a necessary but not sufficient condition for democracy.

It may well be that democracy is not inherently very modern, indeed that it goes against the grain of other features of modern social structure. That may explain why democracy is the characteristic which is most variable and most often undermined, for instance in the Nazi episode of the early 20th century. This is a reason why Britain and the US could be rather less modern on many traits, whereas Germany and France have been exemplars of many features of modernity while at the same time having the rockiest experience with democracy.

2. Bureaucratization

Bureaucracy is the basis of many of the most characteristic features of modern life. Bureaucracy displaced the typical pre-modern organization, the household, where authority was based on kinship and inheritance, and subordinates were in the position of servants or personal followers. In its place bureaucracy separates personal and family identity from organizational position, thereby introducing career criteria of "merit" and "achievement". By separation of personal from organizational property, it introduces a new ethical standard from the standpoint of which the traditional mingling of spheres is corruption. Bureaucracy is responsible for the impersonality of modern life; by the same token it usually opens a sphere of privacy for the individual apart from public roles. Bureaucracy operates through paperwork, records, and formal rules; these make possible whatever efficiency (and inefficiency) come from continuity and routine; they also are the instruments by which the individual is separated from the position, and the organization from the family and the personal clique. The expansion of paperwork is now considered a pathology of modern life; but it has been a major civilizing process, expanding the sedentary, nonmanual occupations. It is this group which comprised the original educated stratum in a society in which most, including the military aristocracy, were illiterate. The growth of organizational paperwork has been responsible for much of the expansion of the middle class, even more than the expansion of business, which originally was carried out largely in small household-based units.

The growth of bureaucracy was not an all-or-nothing transition. Literacy, written communications and records, and general laws were introduced into patrimonial-household organization gradually and in varying degrees. The qualitative breaking point came when these instruments were

used to overthrown the kinship/personalistic structure and to place emphasis upon the organization existing over and above the persons within it. Friedrich the Great, spending long hours checking reports from subordinates, uttered "I am the first servant of the State!" This is the recognition of bureaucracy, just as Louis XIV's "L'état, c'est moi" expresses patrimonialism.

Bureaucracy developed gradually over a long period in several parts of Europe. For many centuries, bureaucratic structures intermingled with non-bureaucratic forms in the *Ständestaat*, and other mixed structures. The predominance of relativly pure bureaucracy as the principal form of organization in the modern West was pioneered in the German states, especially Prussia. Prussian governmental administration moved up the continuum of bureaucratization during the 1700s, while many of its features spread to the *Kleinstaaterei*, the smaller principalities.[7] It is from this time that Germany acquired a reputation for proliferation of official titles (Chesterfield 1992: 88; original 1748), the result of establishing administrative ranks among middle-class officials which gave them public standing independent of the hereditary aristocracy. In Weberian terms, the bureaucrat was acquiring a status-honor specific to his office.[8]

The key anti-bureaucratic feature, ownership of governmental office as source of private revenue, had disappeared in Prussia by 1750. In 1770, an examination was established for employment in the Prussian bureaucracy, placing a premium on university legal training, although nobles were exempted at first. Legally permanent tenure of officials and freedom from arbitrary punishment and dismissal came with reform of 1794. In 1804, the educational requirement was strengthened to require three years of study at a Prussian university for all higher offices. The Prussian reform movement of 1806–12 consolidated the bureaucratic structure of government through the abolition of serfdom on those estates where it still existed, the establishment of legal equality by abolition of the Estates, the elimination of the aristocratic caste system in the army and state administration, and of guild restrictions on entry into crafts and industries. With the foundation of the University of Berlin in 1810 and an accompanying series of official examinations, university legal study became rigorously required for government employment: the first society anywhere in the West to establish anything like the Chinese Imperial examination system. At this point, all features of Weber's ideal type were in existence; it is not surprising a German would be first to formulate the theory of bureaucracy.

The Absolutist state in France made steps along the path of bureaucratization but less rapidly than in Germany. Several features undermined the bureaucratic structures which developed. (CMH viii: 36–52; Goldstone 1991: 225–243; Bendix 1978: 331–38) Venality of office, repeatedly used by the government for raising funds, countervened the key bureaucratic structures of centralized control and the separation of personal property from the property of the formal organization. Tax farming is a version of the sale of government offices to private persons, which expressly condones what would in a bureaucratic context would be considered corruption, making personal profit from public revenues.[9] The multiplicity of courts, feudal and

[7] Rosenberg 1958; Bruford 1965; Brunschwig 1947; Bendix 1978. Strictly speaking, the earliest bureaucracy in Europe since the end of Roman times was the Papal chancery from 1100 onwards. (Southern 1970: 105–24) This too was a political organization, during a period when the Papacy made strong claims for secular power against the fragmented feudal states. The administrative chancery carrying out paperwork spread into secular administration in the 1200s (Bartlett 1993: 283–5), resulting in a patrimonial/bureaucratic mixture. Bureaucratization of the private sector did not occur until big business corporations were formed in the 1880s and later. This happened more or less simultaneously in all the major societies, especially in Germany and the US; French business organization lagged in a familistic direction well into the 20th century. (Thorstendahl 1991; Granick 1962)

[8] Kiser and Schneider (1994) argue that Prussian bureaucracy in the 18th century tax administration contained a number of non-bureaucratic elements, including a rather flat hierarchy and considerable direct interference from the top, and some hiring through nepotistic personal connections. In this account, full-scale bureaucracy emerged around 1800. Mann (1993: 450–2) also refers to limitations on German bureaucracy, especially at the top levels and in the lack of integration among different administrative departments. But these kinds of failures to realize the Weberian ideal type are virtually universal; 20th century bureaucracies continue to have their politicized and chaotic elements.

[9] On the other hand, as Kiser (1991) points out, the administration of the tax farmers in France in the 18th century had become internally bureaucratic, as the tax farmer himself resisted corruption by his own employees. When the government took over direct tax collection again since the Revolution, the bureaucratic structure of the previous tax farmers was generally incorporated in the state. On the whole, *ancien regime* French government was nonbureaucratic; Mann (1993: 452–4) estimates only 5% of officials could be called bureaucrats in the Weberian sense of the term.

royal jurisdictions confused lines of authority and prevented clear-cut bureaucratic hierarchy and division of functions. Laws and procedures regulating taxation, criminal justice, and military service applied not uniformly but according to distinctions among a large number of categories of persons. The aristocracy overruled bureaucracy at many points, with exemptions from jurisdiction of officials and claims to many positions by family status, especially military command and the judiciary. In the aftermath of the 1789 Revolution and Napoleonic reforms, office-owning was abolished in favor of salaried officers. French bureaucracy lagged behind German, in part because of the tendency for a party spoils system through the many regime changes of the 19th century. Competitive examinations arrived after 1848, and the formal training of officials in the Grandes Écoles began in 1872. (Mann 1993: 461–3)

England remained relatively unbureaucratic much longer. (Gusfield 1958; Mueller 1984; Mann 1993: 454–5, 463–4) During the 18th century, most offices were owned as sources of private revenue; until 1800 most officials were absentee sinecurists who employed deputies to carry out their duties at a fraction of their own incomes. The structure stymied any chain of command or centralized budgetary accounting. Until 1872, army commissions were sold to officers. The Colonel was an entrepreneur who raised a regiment; his profit depended upon the spread between the funds allocated by the government and the costs of provision for his troops. The navy was more centrally administered, due to its heavy investment in ships and equipment; but captains still could engage in private profit-making out of economies in provisioning, and by commercial carrying on board. (Stinchcombe 1995) The disparity with Germany is all the more striking, as it was the Prussian army reforms of 1733, developing a standing army under universal conscription, which were the opening wedge to bureaucratization. The British judiciary at the local level was staffed by Justices of the Peace drawn from the resident aristocracy. Aristocratic landowners also provided policing until a centralized police force was organized, beginning in the 1820s in London. Sinecurism and office-owning began to be reformed in the 1790s and were largely abolished by 1832. Appointment by personal patronage persisted until a second wave of reform, beginning in the Indian Civil Service in 1853; the shift to full-scale bureaucratic criteria in England was not carried out until 1870 with the introduction of formal examinations for administrative positions. The army and university reforms of that period were part of the same package.

In the US, public administration originally was carried out by political patronage, and at the regional level by local notables.[10] Reform came about because of vehement disputes over political spoils with each change of party dominance, culminating in quarrels among senators and the assassination of the President in 1881 by a disappointed office seeker. Bureaucratization advanced at the federal level with the Civil Service laws of 1881–95, introducing competitive examinations, formalizing ranks and promotion procedures, insulating careers against political replacement or other dismissal for non-work-related reasons. Due to the decentralization of government to the states and their subunits, the movement for bureaucratization of administration – which went under the more appealing name of the Progressive movement or "Good Government" movement – continued in various regions down to 1920 and even later.[11] A unified federal budget did not appear until the 1920s.

To late 20th century ears, the term "bureaucracy" is a negative one, associated with unpleasant features of modern life: impersonality, paper-work, and the disenchantment of world views. Bureaucratization is also responsible for traits which were strongly fought for by reformers and modernizers, above all universalism, the rule of law without favoritism applicable to everyone. In the sphere of organizational life, bureaucracy means the security of employees against arbitrary control and punishment by their superiors. Bureaucratization was the main route out of the brutality which characterized most premodern societies, and was widespread in the 1600s; it was typically officials who were first exempted from torture and degrading treatment, and it was through the spread of bureaucratic jurisdictions that the inviolability of the human body and the inner self became extended to the entire population.[12] In a society divided between heredit-

[10] CMH vii: 649–50, 670. Mann (1993: 457–9, 468–70) notes that the US began formally with a salaried bureaucracy at the federal level, but it was undermined by the political spoils system and personal patronage, becoming increasingly *non*-bureaucratic up through the 1870s.

[11] The rural south of the US was largely controlled by personalistic politics that Weber would have described as patrimonial until 1950 and beyond. (V.O. Key 1949)

[12] The bureaucracy of imperial China, which predates those of Europe, mitigated the severe punishments of torture and mutilation inflicted on the general populace in the case of offenses by officials. In Europe, ritual public

ary aristocrats and the common people whom they almost literally crushed under foot, bureaucracy opened a sphere which gave dignity to the individual apart from birth and personal connections. Bureaucratization has been one main source of the modern tendency to social equality, not only of procedural rights, but in the sphere of personal status in the Weberian sense.

3. Secularization

Until the 20th century, the aspect of modernization most vividly in the consciousness of the persons who underwent it was undoubtedly secularization. The displacement of religion from the center of attention, from the rituals of everyday life, from the public symbols and pronouncements which legitimated political power and social rank, produced a series of shocks and controversies. In the eyes of traditional people at any point during the last 300 years, the modernizer is a blasphemer; on the other side reformers regarded themselves as moving from superstition and oppression to reason and humane morality.[13]

Pre-modern European societies were pervaded by the church. In the medieval period, the church virtually monopolized literacy and education; provided the physical setting for most popular culture in its buildings and festivals; owned much of the land, and provided much of the economic dynamism in its monasteries; and shared political rule either by cooperation with secular powers or in its own right. With the Reformation and the growth of the Absolutist states, a number of these features changed; monasteries lost their importance, property passed largely into secular hands. The Reformation strengthened the tie between states and the church. In the Protestant states, the church usually became nationally established, under direct politic-al patronage and power of appointment; in the Catholic states, generally a modus vivendi was created by which state supremacy was guaranteed (Gallicanism in France; Spanish dominance of the the Counter-Reformation Papacy) (Wuthnow 1989; Cameron 1991) International politics down to the late 1600s was commonly carried on in terms of religious wars and alliances.

Battles and shifts along the continuum of secularization occured in all the major European societies at different rates. Germany, led by Prussia and the other northern states, became the first relatively secular modern society, as the result of a combination of factors. Chief among these were the predominance of state bureaucracy over the church, and the reform of the educational system under lay control.

Protestantism in general was far from being a secularizing force; initially, it was a revival of religious intensity in everyday life, to some degree in reaction against the tendency to secularism during the

torture and execution was a common practice through the 1600s and later. Torture during judicial investigations was partially abolished in France by royal decree in 1780, and completely by the Revolutionary code. The humanizing effects of bureaucracy are indicated by the abolition of corporal punishment in the Prussian army by the reform of 1808; in contrast, in the British navy through the 1820s, discipline (of sailors who were generally enrolled forcibly by armed press-gangs) was enforced by public whipping, which amounted in many cases to death by prolonged torture. Not surprisingly there were several mutinies in the British fleet in 1797, which were repressed with great brutality. Through the 1860s, the British army in India engaged in ritual executions by draping the malefactor over the muzzle of a cannon. In civilian life, the Dickensian horrors of British criminal law were only gradually mitigated after 1830; up to that time, the death penalty or overseas transportation to penal servitude were the principal penalities for virtually all offenses. Lea 1973; CMH viii: 452–3, 476–80, 744–5; Kinder and Hilgemann 1968: 307.

[13] My conception of secularization differs somewhat from that used by some leading sociologists of religion. Stark and Bainbridge (1985; see also Warner 1993) argue that there is an ongoing process in which all religious movements, starting out at a high level of supernatural orientation and hence of tension with secular society, gradually accommodate to society as the result of raising the social class level of their membership; the result is not an irreligious society, but the active religious market found in the 20th century US, in which new, supernaturally-oriented religious movements continuously reappear, recruiting from the disaffected or unchurched population whose spiritual demands are unmet by the liberalized churches. In contrast to this model of secularization, I would point out that the cycle of worldly accommodation by the dominant church, with periodic renewal movements, also occured in medieval Christendom, without bringing about doctrinal tendencies away from supernaturalism; the medieval cycle fluctuated between formally ritualistic church observance, and movements of mysticism or piety. The Stark-Bainbridge cycle should not be called so much secularization-and-counter-secularization as social-tension-and-accommodation. Thus the key aspects of secularization over the past few centuries have been the decline of the institutional centrality of the church among social organizations, especially the emergence of secular forms of legitimation for the state, and lay-controlled public education.

Italian Renaissance and the most worldly period of the Papacy. Thus there is no reason to expect Protestant England would lead in secularization. Religious feelings were stirred by a series of dynastic conflicts pitting Catholic and Protestant claims to the English throne; the revolutions of the 1640s and 1688–90 were mobilized by religious animosity.

The 1700s in England is often regarded as a period of urbane rationality in which religion was reduced to Deism. The last notable prosecution for blasphemy occured in 1729–31, when the Cambridge fellow Woodston was jailed for publishing pamphlets on the allegorical interpretation of scripture. England remained a society dominated in several respects by coercively enforced religion. (Chadwick 1966; CMH x: 621–54; xi: 330) Catholics were prohibited from military commissions, from the legal and teaching professions, from voting or sitting in Parliament. Performing or hearing mass was punishable by imprisonment; sentences were carried out as late as 1782, although enforcement gradually abated. In Ireland, English conquest during the 1500s, culminating during the Protestant Commonwealth of 1640–60, had combined with religious confiscations to reduce most Catholics to peasantry under Protestant landlords. In 1793 a restricted property franchise gave the vote to a small number of Irish Catholics. After massive Irish agitation in the 1820s exascerbated by famine, Catholic emancipation was passed in 1829 for both England and Ireland, allowing the vote but to an even more restricted franchise; and continuing to prohibit Catholics from the highest political offices and from the universities and Public Schools (i.e. the endowed secondary schools). Other penalties and restrictions, including nonrecognition of marriages performed by Catholic priests, were removed in the 1840s. Jews received the right to sit in Parliflament only in 1866 (60 years after the emanicipation of Jews in Prussia).[14]

In popular as opposed to elite culture, religious fervor grew: the Methodist movement of popular preaching (originally a movement within the Church of England) spread widely from the 1740s through the end of the century; the Salvation Army was founded in 1865. In the early 1800s, the Church of England underwent an activist puritanical revival: the Evangelical movement, which crusaded for total sabbath observance, including a ban on public transportation and any public nonreligious activity on Sundays. The reputation of Victorian England for extreme prudishness was due in large part to the influence of the Evangelicals. The growth of the industrial working class (Thompson 1963) and the commercial middle class both contributed to making England an intensely religious society for most people until around 1890–1910. Before this time, secularizers in England looked to the Continent for a lead.

Waves of popular revival movements in America paralleled British ones from the mid-1700s onwards. At the Revolution the disestablishment of the state churches of the various colonies opened America to vigorous market competition among religious denominations and sect-building entrepreneurs. This religious market has continued to flourish down to the late 20th century; the relatively low levels of church membership found among the popular classes and the frontier in the early 1800s gave way to a rising level of religious membership and participation which has coninued into the mid-20th century, and even later in some respects. (Warner 1993; Finke and Stark 1992) The secularization which gradually pervaded British intellectuals and the educated classes during the early 20th century met with stronger resistance in the US; the celebrated Scopes trial in 1924 is only one of a long string of battles over religious content in public culture throughout the century. In pervasiveness of religious belief and levels of church attendance, the US remains the least secularized of all the major western societies.

France acquired a reputation for religious wickedness, dating from the anticlerical barbs of Voltaire and D'Holbach in the 1760s, and reinforced by the diabolism of the literary avant-garde since Baudelaire in the 1850s. Battles over secularization in France were vehemant, and highly variable in their outcomes.[15] In the 1680s and 90s court ethos was dominated by religious observances and the ostentacious expression of religious sentiment. Battles over religion took the form of rival religious

[14] Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister 1868 and again 1874–80, does not constitute an exception; he was baptized as a Christian in 1817.

[15] Heer 1963: 134, 194–203; CMH viii: 56, 733, ix: 185. D'Holbach, a German baron resident in Paris, set off a debate over deism vs. atheism in the 1770s. Voltaire's antireligious writings were written in exile in Switzerland, and were intermittently repressed in France; his principal supporter was Friedrich the Great, who made him a member of the Berlin Academy in the 1750s. In the 1760s the Encyclopedia, with its guardedly secular attitude, was suspended by the French government. Baudelaire was prosecuted for public impropriety in 1864.

tendencies and orders; pietist movements within Catholicism such as the Port-Royal movement were banned and suppressed (in the 1660s and again in 1710); at other times, the pendulum swung against rationalistic and worldly-political movements such as the Jesuits (who were expelled from France in 1765). Active Protestants were hanged, jailed or sentenced to hard labor in the galleys until the 1760s; a royal decree of toleration finally came in 1787. Jews had no civil privileges until 1789. During the Revolution, the pendulum swung wildly. Christianity was briefly abolished in 1794, replaced by a Deist state cult of the Supreme Being; in 1801 Napoleon made a concordat with the church which guaranteed state salaries for priests, while reestablishing the Gallican principle of state appointment of bishops and other propertied posts. Protestant and Jewish congregations were also allowed under state regulation

The effect of the French Revolution was to polarize religious politics; reactionary conservatives became Ultramontanists rather than Gallicans, extolling obedience to the Pope instead of national political accommodation. The Church was generally allied with monarchists and the propertied upper class, but over time it split conservative ranks by quarrels over the relative precedence of state and church. Catholic claims for autonomy and primacy in cultural matters became all the more intransigent after the Pope declared his doctrine of infallibility in 1870; here again polarization emerged from conflict, in this case the Pope's response to the threat to Papal territories around Rome during the movement for Italian unification (which the French emperor supported). Separation of church and state was finally carried through under the Third Republican 1905.

The church had dominated European culture and public consciousness since the Middle Ages because it encompassed most of the material means of cultural production. Even when an alternative base emerged in the marketplace for books – beginning in the 1500s, and first reaching proportions where it could support full-time writers in the mid-1700s – for a long time the biggest sellers were religious books. Sustained production of intellectual culture was based on the universities, an institution developed in –the Middle Ages under the auspices of the church. The popularity of universities declined in the Renaissance, and after a post-Reformation wave, again in the 1600s and early 1700s; and during these times secular intellectuals formed their circles under the support of aristocratic patrons. Nevertheless, the main cultural results of these new social bases, the Humanist revival of classic Greek and Latin literature in the 1400s and 1500s, and the emergence of modern research science in the 1600s, were generally absorbed into the universities, and legitimated as allies of Christian culture.[16] The main threat to religious culture was the movement during the 1700s known as Enlightenment, based upon government officials and the salon society of the politically active aristocracy; they typically favored abolishing the universities as reactionary institutions, a course of action which eventually was carried through in revolutionary France. (Wuthnow 1989; Collins 1987)

The biggest structural impetus to secularization occured when the university passed from church control. This happened first and most influentially in Germany. The university reform movement of the 1780s and 90s, which culminated in the foundation of the new-style university of Berlin in 1810, was oriented towards eliminating the dominance of the Theological Faculty, and raising the Philosophical Faculty, which had previously been an undergraduate preparation, to the level of a grad†uate faculty. (Collins 1987) The subjects of the philosophical faculty – including history, language, and science – were given autonomy as fields of research. Professors were now expected to be researchers and innovators; the principle of autonomy of teaching and learning, *Lehrfreiheit* and *Lernfreiheit* were announced in the constitution of von Humboldt, the Prussian minister of education and religion. The invention of the modern research university spread first to other German states, as the result of competition for prestige and a common market for professors. The university soon became the locus for leading research in science, as well as for new waves of scholarship in the humanities. Previous bases of intellectual production, the private patronage which had sustained scientific research, and the book markets which were the base for innovation in literature, were upstaged during the early 1800s by the systematic innovation promoted by the career competition of research professors. In secondary and primary education too, a series of Prussian reforms in 1763, 1787,

[16] The Jesuits flourished by absorbing both Humanism and science into Christian education. Although occasional Humanists during the 1400s promoted paganism, the Protestant reformers (Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, et al.) came from Humanist circles. Again during the scientific revolution, priests like Mersenne and Gassendi were at the center of the network structure, and on the whole there was little difficulty in giving a religious legitimation to the new science.

and 1812 established universal compulsory schooling and put it under lay teachers independent of the clergy; this system of secular schooling spread quickly to the other Protestant states, and after the unification of Germany in 1871, to the Catholic states of the south. (Mueller 1987: 18–26)

The German universities were the principal organizational basis for secularization, and cultural modernization elsewhere followed the importation or imitation of the German university reforms. By the 1850s British intellectuals and educators were acutely conscious of the superiority of the German over the English universities, still dominated by clergy and teaching a traditional undergraduate-oriented curriculum. In 1854–6 and 1872, British universities were reformed along German lines: abolishing religious tests which had excluded Catholics, Protestant non-conformists, and Jews; secularizing the teaching profession by eliminating the requirement that fellows be in religious orders; replacing patronage appointments to fellowships by competitive examinations; establishing research-oriented faculty positions.[17] The watershed in American intellectual life, too, came with university reform along German lines: The religious colleges which had constituted American higher education until this time were supplanted, in the space of a generation, by the new style university, following the foundation of Johns Hopkins in 1874 and of the University of Chicago in 1892 as German-style research graduate schools, and similar reforms at Harvard in the same period. (Vesey 1965; Flexner 1930)

In France, secularization was the subject of a lengthy series of battles, resulting in swings between clerical and anti-clerical dominance. For this reason, it was in France that the issue of secularism was debated in most explicit and intense form, but the actual transformation to a modern base of cultural production occurred relatively late. (CMH viii: 52, 752 vix: 126–9; x: 73–93; xi: 23–6, 297; xii: 92–3, 114–18; Weisz 1983; Fabiani 1988) Before the Revolution, education in France was largely in the hands of the Catholic clergy or nuns, and all other teachers were under clerical supervision, with the exception of government technical schools for military and civil engineers. The Revolution abolished the universities along with the privileges of the church, also eliminating in its attack on the Old Regime lawyers and law schools. The new educational system built up during the Napoleonic period left primary schooling to local authorities, and in 1808 after state rapprochement with the church, to Catholic teaching orders. Secondary schools and higher education were centralized under the Imperial University, which monopolized teaching for its degree holders, made all appointments, controlled salaries and curricula, and formed a regular career hierarchy of teachers, inspectors and governers. The head of this bureaucracy was appointed by the state; under Napoleon, this was a bishop who restored Catholic orthodoxy in education. Unlike the German universities, the professors at the highest schools were not expected to do independent research, which was reserved for members of the central Institute under governmental patronage. The old university faculty of philosophy was eliminated, replaced by faculties of science and literature. Under this system, innovative research continued in the mathematical sciences, where the École Polytechnique supported many leading scientists; but languished in other fields, where institutional dominance passed to the Germans.

The Restoration intensified clerical control, making all primary and secondary teachers subject to the bishops, multiplying eccelesiastical schools at the expense of those under secular auspices, and dismissing professors such as Cousin from university posts (1822). Struggle between the Ultramontane papal faction and national royalists tended to block the more extreme claims of the former, however, and conservative secularists like Cousin were recalled in 1828. Rigid state control of the church pushed the Catholic conservatives into opposition to the government, and thus playing a part in the agitation for liberal rights and electoral principles which led to the constitutional monarchies of 1840–48 and 1859–70, and the revolutions of 1848 and 1871. The revolution of 1848 briefly gave security of tenure to professors; under the dictatorship of Napoleon III this was revoked, and liberal professors such as Renouvier were excluded; degrees in history and philosophy were eliminated in 1854 and the medieval Trivium and Quadrivium reinstituted in the university curriculum. In primary education, secular schools had been the majority in the 1840s, while religious schools took the lead in the

[17] Rothblatt 1981; Green 1969; Richter 1964; CMH xii: 24–5, 57–8; Marsden and Longfield 1992.. At the same time (1872), Britain established compulsory elementary schooling with government financial grants and inspection; the majority of these schools remained those of the Church of England, however, and free non-denominational education was not mandated until 1902. By contrast, Prussia established state-supported universal compulsory schooling in 1717, which was gradually made effective around 1763.

1860s. Catholic militancy in turn stiffened the secularizers in the government defending the supremacy of their own administration. The tendency built up already under the Second Empire; Renan and Taine agitated since 1865 for a secularizing reform, to allow France to catch up with Germany in science. The struggle broke out full force under the Third Republic in the 1870s, culminating in the reforms of 1881, deliberately importing many aspects of German-style educational structures (Mitchell 1979). Clergy were excluded from university teaching and from the right to confer degrees, and a centralized system of public and compulsory primary schools was established. Replacement of religious orders with lay teachers in elementary schooling did not occur until 1905, thereby removing education entirely from the hands of the church.

The university revolution is the reason why Germany since 1800 has been the world leader of religious secularization and hence in the creation of modern culture. In Germany, intellectuals acquired a base for cultural production which stressed innovation and the independence of scholarship from outside control. This independence was not absolute; in several episodes politically conservative regimes dismissed professors for political liberalism, and sometimes for religious unorthodoxy[18] Yet overall, the tendency was for scholars to pursue their own paths. This became explicit by the time of Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* of 1873–86, which resulted from the unification of the Reich and the joining of Catholic territories to the already much more secularized Prussian north, giving rise to a struggle to remove all education from clerical to state control. This period is the explicit triumph of German anti-clericalism; but its institutional roots go back much further, and the Prussian state church had long been subject to strong influences from the secularizing ministers and university philosophers.

One area in which German professors were unusually free to innovate was in Biblical, historical and philosophical scholarship, in which German academics produced a series of cutting-edge developments which undermined traditionalist religious doctrine. During 1790–1820, the philosophies of German Idealism promoted a rationalized pantheism which became a substitute for scriptural Christianity. In the 1830s and 40s, D.F. Strauss' historical scholarship on the life of Jesus made a sensation, followed by claims by Feuerbach and the Young Hegelians that humanism or even political liberalism were the modern forms of religion. Modern political radicalism, formulated by Bakunin and by Marx and Engels, emerged from these circles of young German academics in this period. From the 1820s onward, theologians in Germany developed a liberal wing (Baur and the Tübingen School; later in the century Ritschl and von Harnack), which incorporated historical scholarship and philosophical idealism as tools with which to fashion a religion closer to the modern temper. In the 1880s, Nietzsche could declare that modernity had already triumphed and that God is dead; in the early 1900s, another thinker connected to the main German academic networks, Freud, could analyze religion as a psychological pathology.

These continuing waves of anti-religious cultural innovation, scandalous to traditionalists, developed in Germany because of the independent academic base. Before England and the US underwent their own university revolutions, their sources of intellectual and religious modernism came from outside; their secularizing modernist thinkers sojourned in Germany, and translated avant-garde

[18] After the suppression of the liberal student movement in 1819, a number of professors were deprived of their posts until 1824. Others were casualties of the Young Hegelian agitation; Feuerbach lost his position in 1830; D.F. Strauss was dismissed in the scandal over his *Life of Jesus* in 1837; Ruge's academic journal was suppressed, and Bauer was dismissed for atheism in 1842. After the failure of the 1848 revolution, several outspoken materialists as well as religiously liberal Neo-Kantians lost their license to teach in 1853; anti-socialist laws 1878–1890 following an attempted assassination of the Kaiser excluded socialist party members. But penalities were not usually long or severe; most of those prohibited from teaching in 1853 were back at academic posts in 1857; Strauss, Feuerbach and the materialist Büchner became best-selling authors. (Willey 1978: 61–3, 70, 89, 96; Köhnke 1991: 64, 79, 83, 91) Compared to the ritual executions for heresy through the 1600s, or the banishment and imprisonment meted out for unorthodoxy in much of Europe during Voltaire's day, these were mild controls. At its worst, infringements on academic freedom in German universities were comparable to standard contemporary practices elsewhere: in the 1840s the Tractarian leader Newman was forced out of Oxford for his unorthodox stance on the state church; in France academic freedom did not exist before the 1870s; in the US, there were no research universities at all until late in the century. In practice, German academics acquired de facto autonomy, whatever the political regime, as long as their innovation stuck to scholarly subjects and stayed out of political activism; the result was a series of scholarly innovations which liberalized and eventually completely secularized Christian doctrine.

works on religion from the Germans.[19] During the first generation of the university importation, British and American universities remained semi-religious, recapitulating the episode of Idealist philosophy which Germany had experienced at the turn of the century. A leader of academic reform at Oxford, Jowett, was tried for heresy in 1855 for his liberal theological writings, but acquitted. Full-fledged secularization in the Anglophone world did not take place until the 20th century. The first publically outspoken atheists, such as Bertrand Russell, appear in England around 1910; in the more conservative US, Russell was banned from teaching at the City College of New York in 1940. Even more modernist movements, grappling with the issue of meaninglessness in a culture where religion is dead, first appeared with the existentialism of the 1920s in Germany and the 1940s in France, reflected again in the Postmodernism of the 1980s. Not only the original battle against religion, but later twists upon the secularization theme have continued to emerge in the Continental centers of cultural modernity, and are imported by the less secularized follower societies of the Anglo-American world.

It is not my intension to replace the conventional interpretation of the German cultural *Geist* as reactionary anti-modernism, with an equally *geistig* explanation of Germany as modernist. It is a matter of the organizational transformation of the means of cultural production. Above all, this was the creation of the independent research-oriented university. It is because this was pioneered in Germany, and its spread around the Western world lagged behind Germany for several generations, that Germany became the exporter of cultural modernity, virtually down to the 1930s (and to some extent beyond, due to emigration of the most modernist German intellectuals). If Germany also suffered from the most vehemently anti-modernist movement in the form of the Nazi regime, this was in part due to the fact that the opposite movement of cultural modernists had gone farthest there.

[19] A travelling companion of George Herbert Mead wrote in 1889 about the pressures for escaping religious compulsion in America, as compared to the freedom of thought in Germany: "... in America, where poor, hated unhappy Christianity, trembling for its life, claps the gag in the mouth of Free Thought and says, 'Hush, hush, not a word or nobody will believe in me anymore', he (Mead) thinks it would be hard for him to get a chance to utter any ultimate philosophical opinions savoring of independence." (Miller 1973: xvii)

4. Capitalist Industrialization

The industrial revolution is conventionally attributed to England during 1770–1820, with everyone else a follower society. The image of a sudden break is a rhetorical exaggeration of Anglo-centric thinking. The spread of mechanized production after 1770 was an episode within the long-term growth of a market economy: Wallerstein (1974) and Braudel (1979/1984) date it from the mid-1400s; others (Gimpel 1976; Collins 1986: 45–58) discern an initial capitalist takeoff within medieval Europe of the 1100s and 1200s. The institutional bases for earlier capitalism were widely spread over northern and western Europe. Germany was an important part of the market economy during the 1400s and early 1500s, when the main trade networks passed through Augsburg, Nuremberg, Leipzig, Frankfurt and Cologne; commercialization of Scandinavia and the Baltic was carried out by the cities of the Hanseatic League, and German bankœers were leaders of European finance. The Netherlands, leader of economic growth in the 1600s, was one of the fragments of the decentralized *Kleinstaaterei* of medieval north/central Europe, institutionally a continuation of the free cities of the Hanseatic pattern, as the Low Countries had been part of the medieval German Empire until 1345. (Kinder and Hilgemann 1968: 192) In the 1700s England pulled ahead, although the growth of manufactures and agricultural production in France was comparable during much of the period. In considerable part the transfer of leadership to the English channel was due to destruction of Germany in the Thirty Years War. Even so Germany shared in the intensification of production in the 1700s, especially in the cutting edge of industrialization in woolens and metallurgy, in a belt from the North Sea to the upper Rhine, and from the Danube to Saxony. (Mann 1993: 262–3; Barraclough 1979: 144–5, 180–1)

England's period of clear-cut economic leadership was a relatively brief one. Germany plays catch-up, but it does not start from institutions alien to the capitalist market. In its network of partially independent cities, it retains much of the bourgeois structures of earlier centuries, freed after 1810 from guild restrictions and supplemented by active economic promotion by the state, plus the innovative impetus of university research laboratories beginning in the 1820s and polytechnic institutes from the 1830s. A major obstacle to German economic development was geopolitical, the multiple customs barriers due to political fragmentation;

this was overcome by the Prussian-led customs union from 1834 onwards. Thereafter the German rate of growth is rapid, closing to approximate equality with Britain in agricultural productivity by 1900 and to about 75% of Britain's per capita industrial production by 1913. Only the US made a comparable run at Britain's early lead, overcoming British agricultural productivity by 1840 and industrial productivity by 1913. (Mann 1993: 262–5)

On the whole, movement along the dimension of economic modernization did not make for large differences among the major western societies. France, in the eyes of contemporary observers the wealthiest society from the mid-1600s through 1780, lagged thereafter but only relatively; it continued to move along the economic continuum but at a slower rate than England, falling behind Germany between 1880 and 1900. The "industrial revolution" in England was not clearly visible in the changing material conditions of life until the 1820s;[20] its distinctiveness did not last long, as railroads and mechanized factories spread widely on the Continent by the 1850s.[21] It was during this 50-year niche, when England seemed to stand alone on the forefront, that Marx and the other Young Hegelians formulated their ideas of modern history, and the image of Germany as a backward society was created. This piece of rhetoric designed for purposes of political agitation, has since become a free-floating myth used to account for all that differs between Germany and the other Western societies. It was none too accurate at the time, and soon became even less so.

5. Democratization

The dimension on which England is usually regarded as unequivocally leading and Germany lagging has been democratization. Both German thinkers themselves and foreign critics tend to ascribe conservatism, traditionalism, and authoritarianism to Germany on the grounds that it failed to carry out a bourgeois revolution, especially in the form of a popular revolution from below. This conventional interpretation considerably overstates the case. Consistent comparisons have not usually been made; an outline of the pattern of revolutions would show (a) Germany has not been lacking in revolutions, ranging from the Protestant Reformation, through the 1807–14 reform and liberation movement, the 1848 uprisings, and the successful 1918–19 revolution; (b) most revolutions everywhere are made as much from above as from below; (c) many revolutions – not only in Germany – fail to end with political democratization, and the comparative evidence does not support the claim that democracy is necessarily produced by revolutions, much less by bourgeois ones (Goldstone 1991: 477–83); (d) the pace of democratization did not vary so widely among Western countries as the conventional picture supposes, when degrees of democratization are taken into account.

The most important analytical point is that democracy is not an all-or-nothing condition, but a series of variations along a continuum. Indeed, there are at least two continua, two major dimensions of democratization: (1) the extent of *collegially shared power* (through parliaments, councils, and other such structures); and (2) the *proportion of the populace which participates in the political franchise.* It is not possible here to marshall the comparative evidence or to examine the theoretical conditions for movement along each dimension of democratization.[22] In brief summary: none of the major Western states moved rapidly, continuously, or synchroniously along either dimension of democratization.

Parliamentary institutions and other collegial power-sharing structures existed all over medieval Europe; many of these survived on the local level in Germany, as much or more than elsewhere, up through modern times. In England, parliamentary domination over the monarchy began after 1710 and was generally established during 1760–1820; the hereditary House of Lords continued to share power until 1911, and the aristocracy dominated government ministries until 1905. In France, after

[20] The term "industrial revolution" was coined not in England, but in France by Blanqui in 1837.

[21] The first railroad line in England was 1828, the first in Germany 1835. By 1850, railroads in Germany were comparable to England and considerably more extensive than in France. Even earlier, there was much less difference between German and English economic modernization than is imposed by our retrospective imagery; an observer in 1809 called the Ruhr factory district "a miniature England." (Barraclough 1979: 210) Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, written by an Englishwoman in 1818, is the first notable work of science fiction, and a warning against the dangers of the new technology; the dangerous modernizer in the story is not English, but a German scientist.

[22] This task is attempted in a companion paper: Randall Collins, "The theory of democratization and the fallacies of under-theorized history", prepared for session on Theory in Historical Sociology, Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Los Angeles, August 1994.

a brief period of control by the revolutionary assembly in the 1790s and again in 1848-51, a token assembly co-existed with autocracy until full parliamentary control emerged in 1875. In Germany, following decades of token parliaments, the Imperial *Reichstag* acquired power over budget and legislation in 1871, while the Emperor retained power to name the Chancellor. Ministerial responsibility to parliament lagged until 1919. The oldest strongly collegial power structure was the US, dating from 1787.

On the dimension of the extent of the franchise: in England less than 15% of adult males had the franchise before 1832, expanding to about 33% in 1867, 66% in 1884, with full manhood suffrage in 1918, and universal suffrage for women aged 21 and over in 1928. In the US: colonial legislatures enfranchised 50–80% of white males, expanding slightly with the Revolution; full white male suffrage was reached in the 1840s, expanding to black former slaves in 1870 (although de facto not until the 1960s); universal adult franchise (including women) in 1920. In France, after a brief episode of full male franchise in the 1790s, there was a tiny franchise, expanded again to all adult males in 1848, and to women in 1946. For the German Reichstag, full male suffrage above age 25 existed since 1871; universal suffrage for men and woman above 20 in 1919. None of these states reached 100% adult suffrage until 1919 (Germany was the first).

If we combine relatively effective parliamentary power with a wide male franchise, the US, France and Germany all reached this level around the same time, 1870–75; England not until later. To judge England the leader in democratization is either to engage in retrospective teleology, or to give overwhelming weight to the early parliamentary regimes, with their aristocratic bias and their very limited franchise.[23] My point is not that Germany has historically been highly democratic, but that its degree of limited democratization is not at all unusual. No states were truly democratic until the 20th century; if any led the way earlier, it was the US, although with its severe (if not unusual) blights of slavery and the exclusion of women.

[23] Blackbourn and Eley (1984) reject the *Sonderweg* thesis as it applies to Germany, by taking a Marxist view on the actual level of democracy attained in England during this period. On the political dimension the materials cited by Blackbourn and Eley support my argument here; their weakness is that they adhere to a uni-dimensional model of modernity, failing to recognize the dimensions on which Germany was a leader in modernization.

6. The World Wars and the Nazi Regime: Geopolitical Roots of Modern German-Bashing

On the whole, the image of Germany as uniquely authoritarian and traditional is not justified by the evidence. Germany has been the world leader of modernization on the dimensions of bureaucratic universalism, and of religious secularization and post-religious culture. German economic modernization lagged behind England and France between 1650 and 1850, but the German economy was by no means static during this period; thereafter it rapidly narrowed the gap with England and overtook France by 1880. In democratization, German collegial institutions at the national level expanded in the 1800s along lines pioneered in England, although with weaker powers vis-a-vis the autocratic executive; the extension of the franchise is on about an even pace with every other major society except for the US; the record on freedom of expression is spotty everywhere, with Germany lagging little if any in the 19th century.

Germany had many elements of conservatism and class deference; but this pattern is not unusual when we compare it, not with an ideal type of egalitarian democracy, but with actually existing societies during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Social conservatism was more pronounced in Germany than in the U.S., but was quite similar to England. Statistical evidence on concentration of landholdings and on distribution of wealth and income shows that around 1900 Britain was by far the most inegalitarian of the major Euro-American societies; France, England and Germany all had approximately the same, moderate level of inequality (Barkin 1987). Ideal typical comparisons are even less justified when we recognize that every society has been divided by conflicts over just these issues. A false perspective is produced by writers such as Peter Gay in his *Weimar Culture* (1968) by concentrating on the conservative and antidemocratic factions while slighting the opposition of German liberals and socialists; just as a false ideal type is created on the other side by depicting only the English or French traditions of liberal egalitarianism and ignoring British and French conservatives. One can make out a good case, in fact, that England is the leading conservative power during the period from 1776 to 1914, opposing the American and French revolutions and lagging in mass democracy as late as 1917. It was the success of English aristocracy in resisting modernity that German conservatives prior to World War held up as their ideal.

Germany's reputation for anti-modernist conservatism, in the eyes of the other western societies, dates from World War I and especially from the Nazi regime of 1933–45. Prior to this time, modernizers in Britain, the US, and even France were prone to look to Germany for the avant-garde path, especially in culture and administrative organization. (Mitchell 1979) The reason for the shift in imagery is geopolitical. Britain and major German states had been allies ever since the War of Spanish Succession (1701–13), with France as the primary enemy; this held through the Napoleonic wars and beyond. The turning point came in 1904 with the formation of the Entente between Russia, France, and Britain, a reversal of alliances which set up World War I.[24] The US, which had never had any military relationships with Germany (but plenty of cultural dependence), and a long-standing French alliance against Britain, was dragged into the anti-German coalition. Allied propaganda during warfare created the popular image of Germans as medieval barbarians and Prussian power-lackeys. This is nothing structurally inherent about this. If the US happened to be the ally of Germany against England, it is easy to imagine that propaganda could have been created depicting Germany as the land of the beer-drinking common man and England as ruled by haughty and bigoted aristocrats, deferred to by servile lower classes with cap in hand.

Full-scale democracy during the Weimar republic did not last long enough to dampen the wartime anti-German image. The rise of the Nazi regime, and the ideological mobilization that went along with World War II, tarred all German institutions and culture with the same brush. Since 1940 most academic scholarship on Germany has been written in Hitler's shadow, raking through previous German history and seeing everything possible as a foreshadowing of the holocaust to come. Such post hoc explanation, in the absence of systematic comparison or generalizable theory, has been of little value. If Germany, by and large, has followed the same paths of institutional development as the other major western societies, the roots of the Nazis must be sought in a more uncomfortable place: in conditions common to us all. Without attempting to review the voluminous research literature on the social bases of Nazism, let me suggest the crucial causal variable is geopolitical.

It is generally the case that when a state loses a war, the party in power at the time is delegitimated. The same process strengthens its domestic opponents. The Wilhelmine Reich which lost World War I was a regime in which parliament shared responsibility; all parties, including the Social Democrats, who held the largest number of seats after the 1912 election, had voted overwhelmingly for war credits. All the political parties as well as parliamentary power were delegitimated by the war loss. The revolutionary transfer of power in winter 1918–19 put the new democratic regime under responsibility for negotiating the humiliating Versailles peace settlement. The Weimar Republic, under liberal/left control until 1930, did little to regain international prestige; the popularity of the Nazis was to a considerable extent based upon its militancy for throwing off war sanctions and resurrecting Germany as a great power. Confined to the international issue alone, there is nothing here which differs from the common pattern of states in seeking national power prestige through military strength; we see this also in the cases of Britain and France in the imperialist period of the late 19th and early 20th century, and in the drive for territorial acquisitions by the US from the 1790s through the Spanish-American War. The Weimar regime, lacking in international power prestige, had its weak legitimacy further undermined by economic ineffectiveness, both in the inflation of the post-war years and by the Great Depression.

What was most distinctive about the Nazis was their domestic policy, their attack on democratic institutions, and their rabid anti-universalism which led to racial genocide. These were not dominant positions in German culture. The Nazis took office in 1933 in a coalition government, having won a minority 288 of 647 seats; absolute power was taken in a coup d'etat (Kinder and Hilgemann 1968: 470–1). A substantial portion of the German population was attracted to the Nazi program, and others acquiesed in it. Acquiescence to government power however is not a uniquely German quality; it exists among the majority of people in every state. The plebiscites held during the 1930s which gave large majorities ratifying Hitler's foreign policies involved the normal sociological processes of crowd enthusiasm, as well as political manipulation and the enforced non-participation of the strongest opponents. In addition, the German population was attracted, in a way which general sociological principles would predict, to the revival of international power prestige, as well as to the

[24] As late as 1898–1901 Joseph Chamberlain as British colonial minister continued to advocate the policy of alliance with Germany, falling from office because of this issue.

rapid recovery from the massive unemployment produced by government-directed, essentially Keynesian, economic policies of the Hitler regime.

The portion of the German population which was pro-Nazi has been much more extensively studied than comparable groups in other societies. Survey evidence indicates that anti-semitism was not the primary attraction of the Nazi movement. Among early converts to Nazism, less than 15% were preoccupied with the threat of "Jewish conspiracy", as compared to over 50% concerned chiefly with the threat of Communism (Merkl 1975: 449–522). Anti-semitism was one of two predominant themes in the Nazi movement of the early 1920s, blaming the Jews for German defeat and for the Versailles treaty; that is to say Hitler linked an older and relatively weaker movement in Germany to the prevailing mobilizing theme of the period, state delegitimation through military defeat. By the late 1920s, Nazi election campaigns played down anti-semitism, as regional evidence showed that it did not attract voters (Goldscheider and Zuckerman 1984: 144)

A virulent anti-semitic movement existed in Germany and Austria since the turn of the century; but to attribute it to uniquely German cultural qualities (e.g. in the argument of Mosse 1964) is to misstate its sources. In the early 1890s, the anti-semitic People's Party won some electoral victories in Germany, with the result that anti-semitism spread to the Conservative and Center parties. These parties lost ground in the late 1890s, and anti-semitism subsequently declined as a political issue. The center of anti-semitic movements in the German-speaking states was Austria, dating from the 1880s, and was directly connected with the ethnic rivalries of the multi-ethnic Austro-Hungarian empire (Schorske 1980: 116–80). Historically, the strongest roots of anti-semitism were on the eastern part of this zone, in Slavic eastern Europe. Until the 1840s-60s, Jews from the Polish part of Russia were banned from admission to Russia proper; when barriers were lifted, Jewish migration into the Ukraine and Russia led to armed attacks, the pogroms of the 1880s. (CMH vol. 12: 339–41) Until World War I, the main instances of official government anti-semitic policies were in Tsarist Russia, Poland, and Hungary (Goldscheider and Zuckerman 1984: 139–47). German anti-semitic activities in this same period are not to be minimized (Jochmann 1988), but compared to the extent and above all the violence of those occuring in Eastern Europe, indigenous German anti-semitism is derivative and secondary.

Hitler brought this Austrian and East-European style of anti-semitic politics into Germany at the end of World War I, where it became subordinated to more central issues of Fascist authoritarianism. The conditions for a truly genocidal mass action emerged later, and again because of military-geopolitical events.The mass killings of the Holocaust took place, not immediately following the Nazi coming to power in Germany in 1933, but from 1941 onwards, set off as the German armies moved east into war with Russia. Slovak and Romanian governments organized their own massacres; in Lithuania, the Ukraine, Poland and elsewhere in the east local auxiliaries aided the Nazis in exterminating Jews (Fein 1979). It was in these eastern regions that the large majority of the Jewish deaths took place (Goldscheider and Zuckerman 1984). The massacre of ghetto Jews in Poland was for the most part carried out by volunteer Soviet prisoners-of-war, under the direction of German military police units which were themselves reluctant to become involved in the actual killings (Browning 1992). Genocide occured in the context of war hysteria (not unlike that which we witness again in the 1990s in Yugoslavia), taken to unprecedented levels by the deadly combination of modern German military organization and long-standing antagonism of Slavic peasantries to the segregated shtetl communities of eastern Europe.

To concentrate exclusively on German culture as the source of anti-semitism is to overlook comparable ideological movements, not only in eastern Europe, but in all the major democracies: anti-immigrant movements, racial supremacists and anti-semites in the US; imperialists and eugenic purists in England; in France, anti-semitism peaking with the Dreyfus Affair at the turn of the century, along with anti-modernist and anti-democratic movements such as the Action Francaise which have been categorized as fascist in the same sense as the Nazis. (Nolte 1969) The intensities did not reach such extremes, but they are marks along the same continuum. The most famous ideologists of anti-semitism and racial purity in the 19th century were the Englishman H.S. Chamberlain and the Frenchman de Gobineau. On the other side, the German opponents of the anti-semitic movement have not been given as much attention. Nietzsche, popularly regarded as a Nazi precursor, was an explicit enemy of the anti-semitic movement. Other critics included Max Weber (see his *Sociology of Religion* 1922/1991: 246–61). German anthropologists and philologists such as Waitz, Bastian and his pupil Boas, were the

leading scientific opponents of racial theories, because their historical research showed that language groups (Indo-European, Semitic) should not be confused with biological stocks, and that culture is independent of biology. This has nothing to do with national character; the autonomy of disciplines within the German research university was responsible for this aspect of German intellectual modernism.[25]

It is a melancholy fact that the the horrors of racial genocide were not confined historically to Nazi Germany: The Amerindian population was decimated and subjected to forced population movements by the Spanish and the Anglo-Americans; whole clans of "wild" Scots were hunted to extermination by British armies in the 1620s; the English attempted the forced evacuation of all native Irish, on pain of death, to a reservation on the barren lands of north-western Ireland in the 1650s. This massive "ethnic cleansing" failed mainly because the English at the time lacked the organizational resources to carry out their plan; nevertheless one quarter of the Irish population died, and 80,000 were shipped to the West Indies as slave labor. (CMH iv: 522, 536–7; Foster 1992: 122–3; MacLoed 1967) The difference here from the Holocaust is a matter of numbers and of modern organizational efficiency, not of the basic impulse.

The rise of the Nazis to power in Germany was the result of a contingent factor, cutting across the processes of modernization. If the reversal of alliances had not taken place, and France instead of Germany had lost World War I and experienced sanctions similar to those imposed at the Versailles treaty, it is plausible French fascism could have come to power in the 1920s or 30s. One can imagine the reconstruction of cultural history that would have followed: Americans and British would no doubt have extolled the reasonable and moderate path to modernization followed by their German friends, and condemned the excesses and lack of an organically growing democratic tradition which led to fascism in France. Nor is this merely a matter of past propensities, but of ever-present possibilities. Suppose the US were to lose a war, and be plunged into an economic crisis. In the fray of political infighting, the government loses control over the legitimate means of violence. A popular movement emerges to restore order by marshalling private armies; as this movement of vigilantes becomes threatening, the faction in control of government engages in extra-legal measures which further break the institutional habits of democratic government. The pattern is not fanciful; these were the steps by which the Nazi minority arrived at the position to carry out their coup d'etat against a delegitimated democracy.

In the US, the ideology of any successful anti-modernist movement would of course be tailored to local traditions. A US fascist movement would be most successful, not by wrapping itself in swastikas but in American flags; its image of the racial enemy would be tailored to current conditions, singling out perhaps Hispanic immigrants, or economic-imperialist Japanese. There is no reason why an authoritarian racist-nationalist anti-modernist movement would have to be anti-semitic, and the particularistic definition of Fascism as anti-semitic per se keeps us from understanding the universal dynamics. Fortunately, the basic structural parts of the scenario – war defeat coupled with economic collapse – are remote. But the theoretical lesson of the German case cannot be shunted off with a reference to a particular cultural history. It is structural conditions, for democratization and for anti-democratic overthrow, for modernity and anti-modernism as well, with which we must be concerned.

7. The Moral of the Story

Military victors write the histories; that is one source of distortion about the patterns and causes of modern social change. A deeper problem in the prevalence of unidimensional rhetoric, which imposes a single line of development on a multidimensional process. We have seen this multidimensionality twice over: in the concept of modernization, which can be decomposed into bureaucratization, secularization, capitalist industrialization, and democratization; and again within the concept of democratization, which has different causal trajectories for collegial power-sharing institutions andt for the extent of the franchise. Both popular opinion and scholarly consensus have misperceived the path of Germany in the process of modernization; this also means they have misperceived the paths of most other societies, but in opposite ways. Britain and the US are much less full-fledged exemplars of ideal type modernity than is usually supposed; on important dimensions, they are among the more traditionalist and non-modern so-

[25] During Hitler's last days in his bunker, as Russian troops stormed Berlin, what did he read? Nietzsche? Heidegger? Hegel? None of these; it was the British admirer of heroes, Carlyle. (Liddell-Hart, 1971: 679)

cieties of the past two centuries in the West. France, with extremely modernistic tendencies cropping up from time to time on various dimensions, has also had severe conflicts with anti-modernist forces. If we insist on a composite, global judgment about the principal historical location for the emergence of modernity, Germany is as good a candidate as any; its troubles may be an archetype of the inherent difficulties of modern social structures.

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