

Interpretation

A JOURNAL OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Winter 2004

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Subscriptions Subscription rates per volume (3 issues):
Individuals \$29
Libraries and all other institutions \$48
Students (four-year limit) \$18

Single copies available.

Payments: in U.S. dollars and payable by a financial institution located within the U.S.A. (or the U. S. Postal Service).

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Printed by Sheridan Press, Hanover, PA, U.S.A.

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Priam the Patriarch, His City, and His Sons

M E R A J . F L A U M E N H A F T

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Are Homer's Trojans different from his Achaeans? They wear the same garments and armor. They look to the same gods, and, in that most telling Herodotean test of custom, they dispose of their dead in the same way. Homer says that, unlike the Achaeans, the Trojans and their allies do not all share the same language (*Iliad* II.804; IV.438). In the poem, fortunately, everyone speaks Greek. But, do they speak in the same way, about the same things? Even after many readings, the common humanity of the adversaries is so striking that their differences are hardly noticed. My interest in Trojans and Greeks is not motivated by a desire for historical information. I am interested in Priam, Paris, and Hector and what their stories have to do with the kind of city they live in. I shall not speak at length about the rage of Achilles, but he and his Achaean comrades will, I hope, help us to think about the Trojans. Why does this double story end with the meeting of an Asian king of many years and a Greek warrior fated to die young? Why does the *Iliad* begin and end with the ransoms of children?

I. PRIAM AND PRIAM'S CITY

Although Homer does not include it in the *Iliad*, there is a story about a ransom that long predates the events in the story he tells. From several passages in the *Iliad*, we learn that Priam's father, Laomedon, had a poor record with respect to keeping promises. The walls of his newly fortified city were built by Apollo and Poseidon (VII.455; XXI.436–57). When the king failed to pay for them as agreed, the offended gods sent plague and a sea monster to Troy. Heracles came to the rescue, saving Laomedon's daughter from the

monster. But again, the king did not give the promised reward and Heracles sacked the city (V. 638–42; XX.145–48). He killed Laomedon and gave his daughter away to be married, but he allowed her to save one prisoner. She chose her brother Podarces, the “swift-footed,” who became Troy’s ruler, or founder, under the new name of Priamos. The name has a foreign sound to it, whose meaning is unknown, but in Greek it means “paid for” or “ransomed” (I.99; *Odyssey* I.430; XIV.115, 452; XV.483). And so Priam entered the story, the ransomed son of a king who used others to get what he wanted, and failed to live up to a bargain. Some of Laomedon’s descendents seem to have inherited his casual attitude with respect to the belongings of others. Priam’s earlier name, Podarces, is heard often in the *Iliad*, usually to describe “swift-footed goodly Achilles.” Priam will meet this other Podarces when, as an old man, he risks his life to ransom his own son.

In the *Iliad* Priam is called the “son of Dardanus,” his first mortal ancestor, or “son of Laomedon,” or simply “Trojan Priam.” The city he rules is called “Priam’s city.” Those who live there are called “Priam and the people (laos) of Priam” (IV. 34), or “Priam and the sons of Priam and the other Trojans” (IV.35–36). These formulas suggest that the extended community is always thought of in relation to the king and his family. Politically, psychologically, and, to a large extent, genetically, the Trojans are the “people of Priam,” who rebuilt their walls and restored the citadel. When Agamemnon asks Zeus to grant the destruction of Troy, he prays that he may “cast down in ruin the hall of Priam” (II.414).

It is instructive to compare the Trojans with the host that has come against them. There are no temples, tombs, or landmarks, no wives, and, certainly, no children in the Achaean camp. But although they do not constitute an enduring political community in a permanent location, the Achaeans do point to features of such a community. Precisely because they are not a “folk” like the “people of Priam,” they have developed institutions and habits of behavior that are less evident in the settled city of Troy. These include political assemblies, communal sacrifices, eating and story telling, and competitive funeral games. (For a discussion of the way these institutions are reflected in the language of the Trojans and Achaeans, see Mackie 1996. Although its focus is different, this interesting book confirms many of my own conclusions.)

Homer devotes much time to the description of Achaean assemblies that are formally summoned by heralds. The supreme commander is the “sceptered king” who has brought the greatest number of ships. Agamemnon’s scepter, whose genealogy he recounts, is a sign of his

continuous, Zeus-sanctioned authority in his own kingdom. But among the assembled Achaean host, there is no family-based hierarchy, and the king is advised by council and other individuals who are “sceptered kings” in their own lands. Their ability to oppose Agamemnon is the source of the disruption that begins Homer’s story. Although some have come with fathers, brothers, or cousins, the leaders of the Greek contingents are unrelated by birth; by convention, Agamemnon is first among them, but first among equals. In the Achaean assemblies, as in the city on Achilles’ shield, heralds recognize speakers. Each stands to speak, leaning on the scepter or holding it aloft, and the assembly registers its reactions loud and clear. When Achilles severs himself from the Achaean community, he dashes the scepter to the ground.

In contrast, the Trojan assembly, the *agorē*, is located just outside the doors (II.787–88; VII. 346) of the king’s royal *oikos*, or household, which dominates the city, visually and politically, from the elevated acropolis at its center. The only Trojan places that are described in detail are the chambers and portico of this palace and those of Paris and Hector nearby. If, as some historians claim, Troy is an intermediate stage between Mycenaean palace culture and the fully developed *polis*, its physical and political arrangements suggest that it is not far along. Trojan assemblies and councils are not occasions for extended public deliberation or oratory. Instead, there is usually a brief exchange or a weak suggestion that does not result in action. Consider some examples from early in the book.

The elderly men in whose eyes Helen makes her first appearance (III.146–60) are too old for battle, but are said to be good speakers. These “leaders of the Trojans” are stirred by her divine looks and understand why thousands of men would go to war over her. They also agree that she is wreaking havoc and should be sent away. Their gathering at the wall is not identified as a formal council. Their weak, cicada-like voices are as ineffectual for policy as their worn-out bodies are for battle. Priam calls Helen to him, assuring her that not she, but the gods, are responsible for his troubles. There is no sign that he is considering the elders’ words, or that he himself intends to send her away. When Hector returns to Troy in Book VI, he says he will bid the women and “the elders that give counsel” (VI.113–14) to pray to the gods. He does go to the women, but the counselors are not mentioned again.

At Trojan assemblies heralds, scepters, and the sequential recognition of speakers are less evident than at Greek ones. In Book VII “wise Antenor” (VII.347) again says that Helen should be returned to the Argives because the Trojans broke the oath. But Paris refuses to part with his “wife”

(*gynaika*, VII.362) and offers to return only the treasures. Priam ignores Antenor, and sends Paris's answer, ordering only a temporary truce to collect the dead before returning to battle. Political counsel has had little influence on the king, who is unwilling to thwart his son's desire, even for the welfare of the city. Kinship is everything. Priam's unfailing attachment to family is the inversion of the failure to respect non-family that characterizes both his father Laomedon and his son Paris.

Political deliberation on the Trojan side is limited in another way: the Trojans are supported by allies who come from near and far, but who seem to have little contact with the folk for whom they fight. While the Trojans themselves are a relatively homogeneous folk, their extended force is a loose conglomerate of articulated groups. Each has its own commander and language, and, although Sarpedon is said to "lead the allies" (XI.101), there is little coordination among them. In contrast, the coordinated Achaeans operate under one name, and do not call each other "allies" (*epicouroi*) (Van Wees 1992, 39–40; Thucydides I.ii). Nor is there significant disagreement among the leaders of the different "Trojan" contingents as there is on the Greek side.

Sacred space, as well as assembly space, is not fully detached from the ruling *oikos* of this city. The altar of Zeus Herkeios in the palace courtyard (*herkos*) is the "architectural and religious focal point of the domestic realm" (Anderson 1997, 37). Other versions of Priam's story depict his murder, at the center of his own home, at this same altar. Detached, free-standing temples, on the other hand, are often said to be a sign of city culture, and the Trojan temples of Athena and Apollo are indeed separate from the king's palace. But palace and temples are still associated on the acropolis. For public assembly and sacrifice to the gods, the people of Priam must ascend to the vicinity of the palace of Priam. From this height, both king and gods descend to the city and battlefield below.

Between the halls of the household at the elevated center of the city, and the walls that bound it at its periphery, is the lower city, presumably the home and economic space of the "other Trojans." But, curiously, in the narrative, Trojans move between the palace and the outer wall as if they were contiguous, rather than at some distance. Helen goes from palace to wall and back with no mention of the "city" between. When Hector cannot find Andromache, he returns in just two lines, "from the house back over the same way along the well-built streets...passing through the great city" (VI.391–92) to the Scaean gate where he meets his wife and child. Later, Paris also leaves his house and quickly catches up with Hector at the wall. This "foreshortening"

heightens the “dramatic confrontation between the citadel defender and citadel attacker” (Scully 1994, 10; although I differ from him in important ways, Scully is very helpful in thinking about Trojan topography). It also has the effect of attaching all the important “inside” action in Troy to the palace. The collapse of the distance between central palace and city boundary diminishes the psychological and political presence of the part of the city called “wide-wayed” Troy. There is no civic middle territory between the closely related royal dynasty inside and the unrelated alien host that attacks from outside. Among the few public landmarks mentioned are the ancestral tombs of Aesyetes and Ilus. Although they are not attached to the palace, as they would be in pre-polis times, they continue to serve as reminders of the status of the royal family.

The present ruler of Troy is rich in years, rich in household goods, rich in horses, and rich in women. Troy is a deep-soiled place, with fertile plain, irrigating rivers, and a hospitable terrain for farmers and horsemen. Indoors, there are piled fabrics and beautiful clothing. One would never call this place of plenty “rugged.” Troy’s softness also characterizes its patriarch. Priam tells Helen that, as a Phrygian ally, he once fought the Amazons (III.189). The defense against these female warriors seems to be his only military exploit. The elderly Nestor, who refers frequently to his own experiences fighting mighty men and manlike centaurs (I.262–68), still goes to battle, but Priam bears little resemblance to a rugged warrior. Before Paris’s duel with Menelaus, the king is summoned to the plain to swear oaths. But he “shudders” (III.259) and says he cannot “endure” [or “dare,” *tlēsom*] to behold his “dear son doing battle” (III.306–7). He returns, with Antenor, to Ilium, no doubt to the protective comfort of the palace on the citadel (III.313). We later hear that he has attempted to keep his youngest and dearest son, Polydorus, from fighting in the war (XX.408–9). During the truce to collect dead bodies, Priam forbids the Trojans to wail aloud; shedding “hot tears,” they must burn their comrades “in silence” (VII.427–28). Perhaps gentle Priam worries that unrestrained expression of grief might make the Trojans softer still. After Pandarus breaks the oath, the king allows battle to resume, but leaves the fighting to his sons. We do not see him again until Book XXI.

Although Priam has not led the life of an outstanding (*exochos*) warrior, he is, evidently, an outstandingly erotic man: what he has lacked in spiritedness, he has made up for in desire. He presides over a large harem, consisting of his chief wife Hecuba—some legends report that he divorced a first wife to marry her—a second named Laothoë (XXI.85), another named Castianeira (VIII.305), and countless unnamed concubines,

whom he refers to as the “women in the palace” (XXIV.497). This arrangement means that, above all, erotic Priam is rich in children, for a man’s offspring are limited only if he restricts himself to one mate. Only by multiplying wives and children can a mortal man approximate the condition of immortal Zeus, the father of gods and men, whose generation is not limited even by time and place. Priam has fathered fifty sons. Nineteen are of “one womb” (XXIV.496), that is, of Hecuba, two belong to Laothoë, and one to Castianeira. Some identify themselves by which “womb” bore them to their common father (VI.87; XXI.84–96). We come to know a few of them well and hear briefly of a score of others. The rest, like most of their mothers, are unnamed. This is the way of polygamy. Wives and children, like other acquisitions, can be accumulated and enumerated, but their personal importance diminishes as their numbers increase. Not surprisingly, infanticide, wife-burning, and even cannibalism appear more often in polygamous societies than in those where the norm is continuous monogamy (Hegel 1956, 95–96, 149–50, 298–99).

Greek patronymics both tie the heroes to their fathers whom they emulate, and spur them on to differentiate themselves and surpass them. Sthenelus, for example, insists that he and Diomedes are better than their fathers (IV.405–10). In contrast, the sons of “Priam of the ashen spear” do not regard him as a spur to glory; none borrows his armor or speaks of his example. Nor have they separated themselves physically from him. His children marry out of the family, but their domestic arrangements suggest that Troy is not fully exogamous in character and remains more like a family than a city. The fifty sons have remained with their own wives in their father’s compound, a warren of apartments and houses set off from the rest of the city. The husbands of Priam’s twelve daughters have also been absorbed into the clan on the citadel. In the fifty marriage chambers great Priam’s great family grows ever larger (Taplin 1992, 117; Anderson 1997, 32–33). One storeroom holds the collective possessions and booty of the extended family. In contrast, each Achaean hero has his own hut, and booty is completely distributed to individuals. There is no leftover loot or common store.

There is a collateral line in Troy, that also descends from Tros and Dardanus, through Priam’s cousin, Anchises. In the catalogue of Trojans, Anchises’ son Aeneas leads the Dardanians, accompanied by Antenor’s sons, of an unrelated family. Thus, the one independent line of any note in Troy does not command a battalion of its own, but fights under the leadership of a cousin of the king. Aeneas does not replace the sons of Priam, although Achilles taunts him with this desire (XX.182–83). Vergil tells how this only son who fathers

only one son survives to reestablish the breed of Dardanus in another land (XX.330). Priam's future, which should be assured by his many offspring, is cut off with the fall of Troy.

Priam's family seems peculiarly absorptive of those who become close to them, and not just by marriage. Imbrius (XIII.171), and Melanippus (XV.547) are honored equally with Priam's own children, among whom there is little distinction between legitimate (*nomos*) and illegitimate (*nothos*) ones. A few bastard offspring, like Ajax's half brother Teucer, are mentioned among the Greeks. But the Achaeans take only one captive mistress at a time and do not father large numbers of children by them. No man in Homer has as many women and children as the patriarch king.

Since Priam is the progenitor of so many Trojans, many in his army are, quite literally, brothers-in-arms. The number of Trojans whose names contain the root "*lao-*" suggests just how tightly woven a "folk" they are. A few of these brothers have specified positions: Polites is sentinel, Helenus augur. But these roles are politically of little consequence. An old proverb advises, "When your sons grow up, treat them like brothers." But Priam retains authority over his adult sons. The Achaeans consider the sons untrustworthy and insist that he himself swear the oath. In a more developed polis, Priam's boys might rise to natural equality with their father. But in this family, the exhortation to fraternity cannot be followed; there are simply too many brothers. Since Hector, the presumptive heir and, in that sense, Priam's most valued son, leads the Trojans in battle, some claim that there is divided authority in Troy. But, as we shall see, even Hector remains a son of Priam until he deliberately—and tragically—declares his independence.

Compared to the Achaean host, the Trojan side seems relatively poor in individualized heroes. This is not a poetic accident or a sign of national bias on the part of the poet, but a consequence of life in Troy. Treacherous Pandaros, rash Asius, thoughtful Poulydamas, and careful Aeneas make cameo appearances, but they do not capture our imaginations and sympathies as do the sustained and vivid portraits of Agamemnon, Menelaus, Diomedes, Ajax, Nestor, Phoenix, and Patroclus. The most impressive warriors on the Trojan side are foreign allies like Glaucus and Sarpedon, for whom the war is not patriotic self-defense, but an opportunity to prove themselves the best of the Lycians (VI.205–11). The Greeks repeatedly claim to be "best of the Achaeans." But Priam's folk do not so often claim to be "best of the Trojans" (Mackie 1996, 137). Again, Hector will prove the tragic exception.

Troy, then, lacks a variety of naturally distinguished others outside the extended royal family. Most noteworthy among the Greeks are Achilles and Odysseus, who surpass the conventional king in physical and mental prowess. After Agamemnon foolishly encourages the Greeks to flee, Odysseus, “scepter in hand” (II.279; 186, 199), restores order and rehabilitates the “lord of men” to his conventional status. In a wonderful passage that translations frequently fail to convey, Odysseus declares:

Not a good thing is a multitude of lords (*polukoironiē*); one lord (*koiranos*) let there be, one king (*basileus*), to whom the son of crooked-counseling Cronos has given the scepter... (II.204–206)

“Thus *lording* it” (*koiranaōn* II.207), Homer says, Odysseus made his way through the army. There are no surrogate “lords” like Odysseus, Nestor, or Achilles in Troy; there is only one *koiranos*, one *basileus*.

It is not surprising that the catalogues in Book II reveal social and political differences between Achaeans and Trojans. The order of the former conveys the complex political relations of the Achaeans as well as a geographical survey of the Greek lands and their leaders. Odysseus is central here, as he is in the line of ships, and the different strengths of Achilles and Ajax seem to balance around him. The Greek catalogue concludes by highlighting the “best” among warriors and horses. The shorter, less detailed Trojan catalogue, like Troy, is arranged from the top down, starting with Hector, the “son of Priam,” who leads “by far” the “most numerous and best folk” (*polu pleistoi kai aristoi laoi*, II.816–18). No other “Trojan” is named. The list then radiates out in four directions to the allies who are geographically the farthest from Priam’s central city.

Even a comparison of the worst man on each side is instructive. Thersites with his rounded shoulders, lame foot, and stubbly head, lacks the looks of the great-chested, swift-footed, long-haired Achaeans. Nevertheless, he seems to have an ongoing, almost civic, status among the Greeks. He is given no patronymic or fatherland (Benardete 2000, 29, citing BT Scholiast on II.212) and thus cannot be placed in the Achaean catalogue. In the assembly, he chatters on, without formal recognition, without the scepter (Finley 1965, 120). But before Odysseus uses the king’s scepter to beat him into silence, bold Thersites manages to stand out “alone” (*mounos, oios*) and speak his mind. Some of what he says is true and has already been said by Achilles, who refuses to be treated like a nobody (*outidanos*). But Thersites too, base though he is, is an Achaean somebody who must be dealt with before he is silenced and never heard from again. The Trojan Dolon, in

contrast, is an unfortunate bungler from a family of girls. Like Priam's sons, he is sure that his rich father will ransom him. Although he is "swift-footed" and his name means "guile," he is quickly outrun and outwitted; he dies appropriately, by losing his head. Oddly, this Trojan nobody stands out as a memorable Trojan.

There are, in fact, very few anonymous warriors in the *Iliad*, and most deaths are individually described. It is not surprising, however, that most of the men who meet their deaths en masse are Trojans. We never hear the names of the twenty-seven Trojans killed by Patroclus (XVI.84–85), the twelve men who drop dead when Achilles arises and shouts (XVIII.336–37), or the twelve youths he sacrifices on Patroclus's pyre (XXIII.175). These unidentified Trojans are the most unfortunate nobodies in the *Iliad*, but Homer suggests that even many of the named Trojans among the multitudinous but homogeneous people of Priam are, in effect, nonentities.

Finally, it is not surprising to find that, in Troy, where full political life has not emerged around the dominant *oikos*, friendship is not a theme. Again, the most memorable companions on the Trojan side, Sarpedon and Glaucus, come from elsewhere. Trojans who fight together are often full or half brothers, rather than chosen partners like the two Ajaxes, Diomedes and Sthenelus, or Idomeneus and Meriones. As for the sons of Priam, when you have forty-nine brothers, it is unlikely that you will seek friends elsewhere. Those generated by the same father, many from the same womb, are, from birth, surrounded by other selves, attached to each other by nature, not by choice. In contrast, the story of the wrath of the one-and-only Achilles, and his love for another like himself, but not kin, painfully exposes the tragic paradox of his desire for both individual glory and shared friendship. As we shall see, for both Paris, who sees only his own desires, and Hector, who always looks out for others, there is no friendship outside the royal family.

Priam's other children are lost and ransomed and go forth to be lost again. Because they are many and because they have limitless resources, they and their father expect that they will remain at home or easily return there. The principle of family that governs their lives makes them reluctant to punish or cut off one of their own who transgresses, even to save the wider community. Tragically, for father Priam, family allegiance ends by destroying even the family in whose name it acts. His two most prominent sons, as different as they are, are fruits of the same family tree.

II. PRIAM'S SON: PARIS

In addition to living in a beautiful city and being rich in beautiful things, the Trojans are themselves beautiful. Laomedon's uncle Ganymede "was born the fairest of mortal men" (XX.232–33), so beautiful that Zeus bought him from Tros for a breed of immortal horses. As cupbearer to the father of the gods, Ganymede became immortal, but, unlike the horses, was destined to be sterile, a dead end in the family line. King Priam has beautiful daughters. Nodding as he occasionally does, Homer even calls two of them the "most beautiful" (III.124; XIII.365).

Their brother Paris is every mother's worst nightmare, the child whose gift of physical beauty precludes the development of any inner beauty by the possessor himself. Such external beauty, an essentially private possession, is a pleasure to those who behold it, but often a burden to one's family, city, and even to oneself. Before Paris was born, Hecuba did, in fact, dream that this child would be a disaster; she imagined she gave birth to a firebrand and saw her home and city burning. The old stories tell how she and Priam had the infant exposed. But the baby survived, growing ever more beautiful, and lived as a shepherd on Mt. Ida. The convergence of Achilles' story and Troy's began at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus, when Strife gave Paris a golden apple to give "to the fairest." Rejecting the offers of the other goddesses, Hera's political rule and Athena's military glory, the beautiful prince awarded the prize to Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty and desire, who promised him the most beautiful woman in the world. When he wanted to return to Troy, Priam took him back into the family and even sent him on public business to Sparta where he was welcomed as a guest-friend. But the guest betrayed his host, looted his household and stole his beautiful wife, making a mockery of a civilized convention for relations with those outside one's family or city. The violated host, accompanied by a huge army, determined to annihilate the violator, his family, household, and entire city.

The *Iliad* offers a sharp picture of a son who disregards distinctions between one's own and what belongs to others, and of a father who cannot bring himself to distinguish between what is one's own and what is good. Outside, as well as inside, Troy homogenizes, fails to articulate. Paris returned from Sparta to Troy. Priam took him in again and, even more astonishingly, absorbed Helen, the spouse of another man, into his sprawling family. The original violation is evoked in Book III when Paris is shamed by Hector into challenging Menelaus to individual combat to determine whose "wife" (literally "bedfellow," *akoitis*) she will be. A "sweet longing" for her

“former lord” (III.139–40) and the home she left behind brings Helen to the wall that distinguishes Priam’s city from what is outside Priam’s city.

We have already noticed Priam’s failure to act on the opinion of the elders at the wall who think that, “for the sake of our children [*tekessi*] after us” (III.16), Helen should be sent home. But, when he meets her there, he calls her “dear child” (or “own child,” *philon tekos*, III.162). She responds to him as “dear father-in-law” (III.172) (*philon hekure*). Their conversation allows Homer to introduce the major Achaeans who have been fighting for ten years to bring her home. As they view the Greek heroes, Priam and Helen are also on view to them (Austin 1994, 45, calls her a “hostage”). Seemingly oblivious to what he is doing, the old king who began his own reign as a ransomed hostage now exhibits Helen, the trophy from Sparta, to the Greeks below. Perhaps here, and in all the scenes that take place on the Trojan walls, we should remember the original walls of Troy, the ones Priam’s father refused to pay for. The last Greeks she looks for are her “own two brothers” (*autokasignētō*), Castor and Polydeuces, “whom one mother bore” (III.238). As a result of her adultery, she has exchanged these two for a whole family of new “brothers.” Are they all, in her eyes, potentially interchangeable husbands as well? Her behavior in Book VI has suggested to some readers that she would be willing to be more than sister-in-law to Hector. And legend tells us that, after Paris died, she remained in the family as the “wife” of another brother, Deiphobus, until Menelaus repossessed her when the house of Priam fell.

Priam never blames the son who brought on the war, and is always gracious and affectionate to the additional “daughter in law,” who elsewhere is referred to as Paris’s “wife” (*gynē, akoitis, alochos*, literally, “bedmate”). Paradoxically, the Trojan paterfamilias, like his wayward son, fails to respect the integrity of another man’s family. This is not because he himself would violate others, but because he is so comfortable as the father of his own ever-expanding family. Perhaps the accumulation of women—although, presumably, his own are not abducted from guest friends—has something to do with his acquiescence in the theft of another man’s wife, and with the way she is passed to the next brother after her Trojan “husband” dies.

Paris’s challenge to Menelaus reveals his essential passivity. He first reminds Hector of the value of Aphrodite’s lovely gifts—his looks “that by his own will no man could seize” (III.66), and then says that “if you will me to war and do battle, [you] set me in the midst...to do battle for Helen and all her possessions” (III.67–70). There’s something domesticated about the man who brought Helen home. The son who has spent the most time away from home

is most comfortable among women, at home in the “beautiful palace” he made for himself (VI.313–15). He has the aesthete’s appreciation for beauty and, in one respect, he is active: not content merely to view the beautiful, he takes what he admires, with no thought for the future and no looking back. The first time we see Paris, he is wearing a leopard skin (III.17). As he arms for his duel, Homer describes, from ankle-pieces to helmet, the physical details of his beautiful armor (III.328–39). Unlike “warlike Menelaus,” who arms in one line, shallow Paris, seems to be entirely surface: handsome looks or beautiful armor. His epithet is “husband [*posis*] of fair-haired Helen” (III.329, and often); instead of leading men into battle, he leads her to the bed (III.447). He’s an archer who “busies” himself with his arms “in his chamber” (VI.321–22), when he should be fighting outside. He refers to Achaea, which has sent mighty men to destroy his city, as the land of “fair women” (*kalligynaika*, III.75). Unlike those who face each other in close combat, Paris peeps out from behind others, shoots from afar, and turns his back in retreat. Although he is not incapable of manly battle, the Greek Diomedes taunts him as “bowman, reviler, proud of his curly hair, and girl-ogler” (XI.385). But the Trojans all hate him too (III.454), and Hector calls him “best in looks [*eidōs ariste*], woman-crazy, beguiler,” and wishes he’d “never been born and had died unwed” (III.3940). On two occasions Hector addresses him as *Dys-paris*, “non-Paris,” annihilating his very name (III.39; XVII.142). In Book VI, he cannot bring himself to say his name at all (VI.352, 363, 521).

Homer mentions that the breastplate Paris dons belongs to his brother Lycaon; apparently the archer does not have his own body armor (Edwards 1987, 72). This is the first borrowed armor in the *Iliad*, appropriated to protect the life of a man who carelessly “borrows” the lives of all his brothers, who must risk them to save the city he has endangered. All are tainted, held captive, by his violation; the sins of the son are visited upon the father and on all the brothers as well. We shall meet this Lycaon late in the *Iliad*, as one of the last of Paris’s brothers to die at the hands of Achilles. Lycaon will not come home. But when Paris’s embroidered helmet strap breaks, even when the borrowed breastplate is pierced, he evades death. Just as he “snatched” (III.444) Helen when he first desired her, so Aphrodite now “snatched him up” (*exērpax*, III.380), and “covered” (*ekalypse*) him in mist. She conveys him back to his beautiful chamber, and tells Helen he looks as if he were coming from a dance, not combat. Note how the desiring agent, while actively aiming at an object, is himself “seized” and “covered over.” Unlike the manly warriors who wish to stand out, in his first encounter with Menelaus, Paris “shrinks back.” Nor does he resist returning to the comfortable *oikos*. He tells Helen that

“never yet has desire [*erōs*] so covered up my wits [*phrena*]” (III.442). His words anticipate those of Zeus who later tells Hera he has never been so overcome by desire (XIV.315).

The echo suggests that Paris, often described as “godlike in looks” (*dios, theoeidēs*) lives as though he were a god, regardless of the future consequences of his behavior. Paradoxically, the man with the beautiful body lives as though he were not embodied, not subject to time and place. Helen later tells him his “wits” are not “stable” (*empedon*, literally, “[firm] on the feet,” VI.352). His common-law “marriage” does not promise exclusive fidelity through time. The old stories report that, like his father, he has already abandoned a wife. He seems to expect an infinite future in which every choice can be remade, every deed redone. He assures Helen that, if Menelaus has defeated him “now,” at “another time” he’ll defeat him (III.439–40). Later, he tells Hector that “victory shifts back and forth [*epameibetai*] between men” (VI.339), as if they themselves had little to do with it. Unlike mortal men who must plan ahead and make choices that are mutually exclusive, Paris lives as though all things are possible: bravery *and* cowardice, involvement *and* detachment, war *and* peace, depending on how he feels at the moment. “Multiplicity of attitudes and emotions [is] characteristic of Paris” (Atchity 1978, 39), just as limitless ransom, chambers, textiles, and women characterize Priam’s palace. Unlike Hector, who returns to battle with a heart weighed down by his choice and by sorrow for those who will suffer for it, Paris runs as lightly back to battle as he runs away from it. Homer compares him to a stallion running to the mares (VI.509–11). Even his spiritedness is described in a simile of desire. Finally, like Ganymede, this handsome lover boy, who, like the gods, seems perpetually young, is sterile. Like the young warrior whose home is “half-finished” (II.701) because he died without children, Paris, the prince of desire, leaves no offspring to replace him when he dies. Unlike his prolific father, he does not think that far ahead.

III. PRIAM’S SON: HECTOR

In the old fairy tales, the bad brother often has a good brother whose fate is determined by his irresponsible sibling (Reinhardt 1997, 184). In Troy, the city as expanded household, this brother, who is also a son, husband, and father, is, like Paris, somehow domesticated, but in a different way. Hector, whose very name, the “protector” or “holder” (from *echō*), indicates his close relationship to his family and city, is first seen as the son devoted to holding on to what his father will leave to him. Hector already holds authority in military

matters, but his status as a civic leader is limited. When he does assert himself in a spontaneous assembly outside the city (VIII.489–96), he speaks while leaning on his spear (Griffin 1980, 13; Mackie 1996, 25–26). Later, at another hastily called assembly (XVIII.243–314), the Trojans remain standing and, again, no scepter is mentioned. Only once does Hector preside with the scepter. There his ambiguous promise to the scout Dolon (X.328) bears an uncomfortable family resemblance to the false promises his grandfather once made to Apollo, Poseidon (XXI.441–60), and especially to Heracles, who also was hoping for immortal horses (V.638; XIV.250–51; XX.144–48).

The good brother hates Paris but cannot disown him without disowning the family that produced them both. Hector's heroic quest for glory requires that he first distinguish himself from the throng of brothers sired by his polygamous father. Unlike that of the Greek heroes, his growing consciousness of himself as an independent actor cannot come from its exercise among other equals in political deliberation and internal competition. Hector emerges from his family only as he too comes to see that his own worth lies, not in the homogeneous manyness that characterizes Troy, but in singularity. Finally on his own, he faces an *only* son, who, convinced of his own worth, isolates himself even from the comrades on whose admiration he depends. Achilles is instructive here; he imagines that he and his best-loved companion—"we two...alone" (*oioi*, XVI.99–100)—might conquer Troy. But the dual here is impossible. After sending Patroclus out to fight "alone" (*oios*, XVI.243), Achilles must acknowledge that the glory of the *warrior* hero cannot be shared, even with one's dearest friend. Appreciation must come from a man of equal worth, but being "best" requires the elimination of the one whose admiration one most desires. On the *battlefield* only *one* man can be "best of the Achaeans." In the end, Hector too chooses his own glory and stands out in manly isolation, abandoning Troy, to be the best of the Trojans. And just as Achilles acknowledges that he himself has "destroyed," as well as "lost," Patroclus—*ton apōlesa* (XVIII.82) means both things—so Hector knows that he has "destroyed" as well as "lost" the Trojan folk: *ōlese laon* (XXII.107).

Hector derides Paris for sailing "over the sea to get mixed up [or, to have intercourse] with an alien folk," and for returning with "a good-looking woman from a distant land" (III.47–49). Although Hector is a dependable fighter, he himself seems to have spent little time away, either on campaign or diplomacy. His manslaying has been predominantly defensive. After ten years of war, Priam and his household exert a powerful hold on the son who holds their fate in his hands. His disengagement comes about in

several stages in which he dissociates himself from the various members of his family or household. His distancing is indicated by how “alone” (*oios, mounos*) he is said to be, and by his repeated attempts to remove himself from the physical center of Priam’s palace and the walled city of Priam, literally, to get outside.

Early in the *Iliad* Hector attempts to terminate the war by restricting fighting to the principal enemies, and the violation to one brother. After Pandarus breaks the oath, Hector is still a protector, in marked contrast to Diomedes who emerges as a glittering hero who wishes not only to best the Trojans, but to be “best of the Achaeans” as well. Homer says it is difficult to tell whether he is fighting for the Trojans or Achaeans (V.85–86); in truth, he is fighting for Diomedes, alone. In contrast, Sarpedon suggests the unity of Priam’s extended family when he chides Hector: “You said that without hosts and allies you would hold [*hexemen*] the city *alone* [*oios*] with your sisters’ husbands and your brothers” (V.473–74). The *oikos* may stand alone, but its members are not regarded as independent agents.

In Book VI, Hector’s brother Helenus, urges him to return “to the city” (*polinde*) to “your mother and mine” to bid her and the other women to make offerings to Athena. Hector “in no way disobeyed his brother” (VI.102). It is here that Homer describes the living arrangements of the extended royal family (VI.242–50). Hector declines his mother’s offer of a chair and wine, an invitation to sink back into the bosom of the family, among the “deep-breasted Trojan women.” He urges her instead to go immediately to petition Athena in the temple. She chooses the “fairest and amplest” robe in Priam’s storeroom, the one “dearest to herself” (VI.90–91, 271–72). But Athena denies her prayers. This is not surprising, since the robe is one that Paris brought when he brought Helen home to Troy (VI.288–92). As usual, Priam and his household have appropriated, apparently with no qualms, whatever beautiful things their beautiful boy desired and brought home.

Hector’s next encounter is with the returned playboy himself, and with his consort. Helen is referred to as Paris’s “wife” (*alochos*), and she makes a point of addressing Hector as “my brother” (*daer*, VI.344, 355). Like his mother, she invites him to “enter in,” to take time out from the troubles that she and Paris have brought on them all. Typically, she blames Zeus for their “evil fate” and then shifts her attention—and, perhaps, his—to the possibility that, some day, “we shall be sung about by men who are yet to be” (VI.357–58). Again Hector declines to sit, telling her that the Trojans “have a longing” (*pothēn*) for him in battle (VI.362), and exhorting her to rouse his indolent

brother. His use of the word “longing” echoes Achilles’ ominous warning in Book I, when he predicts that “a longing [*pothē*] for Achilles shall someday come upon the sons of the Achaeans” (I. 240–44). From the beginning of the *Iliad*, it is clear that Achilles “longs for” battle where men win glory. Homer only gradually reveals that Priam’s good son, who has always defined himself as the protector of his brothers and *oikos*, also longs for glory. Familial and civic duty in a place like Troy are not sufficient to validate his life. He says he will go to his home (*oikonde*), to see his housefolk (*oikēas*), his dear wife, and his little son, for he knows not “whether he will come to them again” (VI.365–67). Hector’s frantic search for Andromache, from outside to center, and back to the edge of the city, mirrors his psychological journey. Paris can always return home, as have many of his ransomed brothers; but, after this visit, Hector, alive, will not go home again.

Some think it is unlikely that Homer invented Priam’s polygamy or harem, but that he did invent the monogamy of his sons (Hall 1989, 43). Especially poignant, for modern readers, is the personal attachment of the polygamous king’s son to his one-and-only wife. Aphrodite figured in this marriage too, but Hector wooed Andromache with pleasing bride gifts and led her forth from her father’s house (XXII.468–72). She was not seduced, bought, or taken as a war-prize. Unlike Paris and Helen, who are barren and look only at each other, Hector and Andromache look together at the child whom they have generated. But on this brief return, Hector reveals that he views his worth to the family not merely in his holding on to his own life in order to preserve theirs, but in exposing himself and risking glorious death in order to be a son, husband, or father worth remembering. His manly valor originates in the needs of women and children, but ends in separating him from them. Andromache, who has lost her own family to another outstanding warrior (Achilles), tries to define Hector, as he has always defined himself, by his responsibility for others: “you are to me father and queenly mother, brother and my stalwart husband” (VI.429–30). He fully understands that the price of glory will be the “grief of the Trojans, of Hecuba and lord Priam, of my many and brave brothers” (VI.450–52), and the likely servitude or death of his wife and child. Unlike Priam, who even tries to keep a beloved son from battle, Hector here resembles the Greek heroes in wishing that his own son will someday be even better than his father. But this requires alienating the very son whose good he wishes. Like Diomedes, who has no memory of his father (VI.222), Astyanax, if he survives, will know his father’s renown (*kleos*) only as reported by others. Hector’s crested helmet, the symbol of his glory, necessarily separates him from his child. In this brief moment one feels the

tremendous power that Homer has compressed into a conventional formula. Only when we see that baby flinch from his father do we understand the full meaning of the oft repeated “Hector of the shining helmet.” He laughs and removes it, kissing and holding the child in his man-slaying arms. But Andromache, knowing he’ll soon don it again, smiles through tears. He sends her home (*eis oikos*) to her loom and her handmaids, who know he will never return and lament him while yet he lives.

Book VI ends with Hector once more in the dubious company of his brother Paris, who dons his gleaming armor and, laughing, runs to catch up. “Dear brother” (*ēthei*), he says, “my tarrying has delayed you in your haste” (VI.518–19). He is right; all that Hector does has been affected by this shallow brother who feels neither the burdensome constraints of necessity nor the exhilarating freedom of liberating himself from them. Readers are often puzzled when Hector later throws himself into battle in the same galloping dactyls about the stallion and mares (XV.262–68). Perhaps Homer suggests that, just as Paris borrows Lycaon’s breastplate, so, here, Paris’s simile rubs off on Hector. In the house of Priam it is difficult to separate oneself. As he emerges in battle, however, first triumphant and finally tragic, Hector will be more akin to the alien, free-fighting Achilles and Sarpedon, than to the familiar, housebound sons of Priam.

In Book VII, Apollo, in the guise of another brother, Helenus, urges Hector to take on the Greeks in single (*oios*, VII.39, 42, 226) combat. Hector and Ajax are the most civic-minded warriors on each side, so it is striking that their duel is a *personal* contest like that of Paris and Menelaus. But this time there is no mention of Helen, the Trojan violation, or civic duty. Echoing Achilles, who speaks of his *kleos aphthitos*, “unperishing glory” (IX.410), Hector imagines what men will say in the future: “my glory [*kleos*] will never die” (VII.91).

Hector now emerges as a heroic warrior in his own right. At the end of Book VIII he exults over the retreating Achaeans and wishes that he might be “immortal and ageless all my days” (VIII.539). No longer fixed in the nexus of his generated and generating family, he aspires to a kind of permanence later articulated by Sarpedon, who comes to Troy to win immortal glory precisely because he himself is *not* “forever ageless and immortal” (XII.322). From now on, Hector will be described as independent and detached, like a star, a tempest, a rolling rock, fire, an unstoppable wave, a lion, and an eagle, as Zeus’s heart is “set on giving glory to Priam’s son Hector” (XV.596–97).

As Hector exerts himself less on behalf of his city and more on his own behalf, Homer shifts the action from the walls of Troy to the wall that the Achaeans have built to protect their own community of ships. This puts the Trojans, and especially Hector, in the position of besiegers, rather than city defenders. In the second half of the poem, Hector's isolation increases with his separation from Poulydamas. Though not literally his brother, Poulydamas was born on the same night as Hector (XVIII.251) and they have spent their lives together. He claims he has always supplemented Hector's courage with his own counsel. But, as we have seen, the habit of giving and receiving "counsel" is not fully developed in patriarchal Troy. Even the disagreement with Poulydamas feels more like a personal exchange than a public debate (Mackie 1996, 33–36). Poulydamas earlier advises the Trojans not to cross the Achaean ditch with their chariots, and Hector heeds him, leading his men on foot, while Asius rides his chariot to disaster. After the eagle-snake omen, Poulydamas urges the Trojans not to proceed against the ships. This time Hector angrily rejects his advice in a famous exclamation often quoted out of context: "one omen is best, to fight for one's fatherland" (XII.243). But Hector's driving motive is no longer to save his "fatherland." He is the first Trojan to leap within the wall of the Achaeans, after lifting "alone" (*oios*) a heavy stone to smash the gates. Later, Poulydamas holds back the rest of the "folk," but he presses on, claiming to be seeking his brothers. He finds only the unpredictable Paris, who for once, eagerly encourages him; Homer tells us that Paris "turned his brother's wits" (XIII.788).

When Patroclus drives the Trojans back from the ships to Troy, Hector is "divided" over whether to pursue the Achaeans or gather "the folk within the wall" (XVI.712–14). He drives straight for Patroclus who kills Cebriones, a "bastard son of glorious Priam" (XVI.738). When Hector kills Patroclus he exchanges his own armor for the immortal armor of Achilles, finally resembling in looks, as well as motive, the glory-seeking hero he is soon to face in single combat. Like Achilles, he is called, with increasing frequency, "man-slaying" (*androphonos*, I.242; VI.498; IX.351; XVI.77, 840; XVII.428, 616, 638; XVIII.149; XXIV.509, 724), and "short-lived" (*minynthadios*, XV.612). Realizing that Achilles himself will now come forth, Poulydamas attempts for the last time to convince Hector to remain in the city, protected by "the walls and high gates and by the tall well-polished doors...bolted fast" (XVIII.274–76). But Hector scorns being "pent-up within the city" (XVIII.286); he intends to "win glory...and pen [*elsai*] the Achaeans beside the sea" (XVIII.294). He terminates this makeshift assembly and its brief exchange, warning that no Trojan will listen to Poulydamas: "For I will not allow it.

Come, as I [*ego*, not required in Greek] say, let us all obey” (XVIII.296–97). Homer says the Trojans were fools to reject Poulydamas’s “good counsel” (XVIII.313).

In the books preceding his confrontation with Achilles, the field is also cleared of Hector’s other familial attachments. His cousin Aeneas retreats (XX.332–39). Achilles kills his brother Polydorus (XX.407–18). Lycaon, only recently ransomed and returned to Priam, now falls into the hands of Achilles again. He pleads for mercy on the grounds that, like Polydorus, he is not of the “same womb” (XXI.95) as Hector. But this time there will be no return to the city of many women and many sons. Achilles, abandoning his former respect for families of captive or dead warriors, brutally threatening to feed the body of Lycaon to the fishes (XXI.122–35), and doing just that to the body of Asteropaeus (XXI.203): “Unhappy are they whose children face my might” (XXI.151). After the battle with the river, the Achaeans drive the Trojan brothers and their allies back to the city.

Watching in horror from the walls, Priam now sees the man who was missing when Helen identified the other Achaean warriors in Book III. He orders the Trojans to open the gates and take all the “folk” into the city (XXI.526–36.), and begs Hector not to face Achilles “alone” (*oios*, XXII.39), but to “enter within the walls and save the Trojan men and women” (XXII.56–57). He addresses him, as he did Helen earlier, as his “dear child” (*philon tekos*, XXII.38) and “my child” (*emon tekos*, XXII.56). Unable to see the two sons, Polydorus and Lycaon, whose fate we already know, he speaks not of the impending ruin of his city, but of his ruined family, his *oikos*.

...my sons perishing and my daughters haled away, and my treasure chambers laid waste, and little children hurled to the ground in dread conflict, and my sons’ wives haled away at the hands of the Achaeans. (XXII.62–65)

Finally, he attempts to move Hector with the prospect of the dogs feasting on the “nakedness,” literally, “genitals” (*aidō*) of his father. Ironically, the domestic king imagines his mutilation, not by wild dogs on the battlefield, but by watchdogs in his own home. Hecuba similarly appeals to Hector as “my child,” “dear child,” and “dear plant, whom I myself bore” (*philon thalos, hon tekon autē*, XXII.82–89). Once again recalling him to the bosom of the family, she too calls his attention to herself as progenitor, loosening her robe and holding out her breast. But Hector thirsts for glory and cannot be satisfied by appeals to familial ties or civic duty. Described now in the very terms in which she once dreamed of his firebrand brother, flaming, “unquenchable” (*asbeston*) Hector

remains *outside*, and the city and people of Priam are doomed to burn.

Hector realizes his folly as soon as he too sees Achilles. Aware that he no longer holds the city, his own dear child, or even his own life in his hands, he attempts to hold on to his sense of his own worth. He cannot save himself without shame, so he rejects the options of admitting his error and entering the city, or of humbling himself to Achilles and offering to give up Helen and the treasure. When he sees the Pelian spear, the one part of Achilles' armor that Patroclus had not worn because Achilles "alone" (*oios*) could wield it (XVI.142), Hector takes flight at the periphery of the city. He flees like a trembling feminine dove before a falcon, a male bird of prey, like those that feed on corpses. Three times he circles Troy, tethered to it by an invisible cord that asserts its hold on him, even as he insists on remaining outside. Homer reminds us of peacetime life "before the sons of the Achaeans came" (XXII.156): watchplace, fig tree, wagon-track, washing tanks, all the familiar Trojan places, fly by as Hector, detached from comrades, parents, brothers, wife, and child, is bound to the only partner left to him, the man who will annihilate him: "There the *two of them* ran, one fleeing, the other pursuing behind" (XXII.157, *paradrametēn*, emphasis added). The duals continue throughout the chase, during which Hector at last tries to seek shelter at the walls, but Achilles forces him away, forces him to remain *with him*.

When Zeus tips his scales, Athena deceives Hector in the cruelest way we can imagine. She comes to him in the guise of Deïphobus, "the dearest of his brothers of the children whom Hecuba and Priam bore" (XXII.233–34), addresses him as "dear brother" (*ēthei*, XXII.239; the word Paris uses in Book VI), and uses the dual. But when the fraternal illusion vanishes, Hector realizes that all his brothers are dead or "within the wall" (XXII.299). He turns and faces Achilles at last, hoping only to accomplish "some great deed for the hearing of men yet to be" (XXII.305). Andromache fears that he is "cut off away from the city alone" (*mounon*, XXII.456). This, finally, is what it means for Zeus to have granted him "honor and glory, alone [*mounon*], among so many [*pleonessi*] warriors" (XV.610–12). In his very last words, Hector predicts that *Paris* will "some day" slay Achilles at the Scaean gate (XXII.359–60). Ironically, the noble brother dies with the name of the one who brought destruction on them all on his lips. Readers are often disgusted when they hear that it is Paris who will kill Achilles. But Homer's audience knew that the man who drags Hector by his ankles will die when Paris shoots an arrow through a tendon in his own swift foot. Achilles insists that Priam's other sons and abundant wealth will not bring Hector's corpse home to Troy, for he himself will feed him to the

dogs. Hector liberates himself from the *oikos* and city of his father and dies valiantly, alone. But just as the singular hero depends on others to recognize his excellence, he depends on others to make his funeral (Benardete 2000, 56). In the end, Hector's memory depends on his father's determination to ransom his dead son and to give him a proper burial at home.

IV. PRIAM AND PELEUS'S SON

The *Iliad* ends as it begins, with an aged suppliant's attempt to ransom a captive child. This time the child is dead and the father is not a priest, but the mild-mannered patriarch who enjoyed a long reign of peace and plenty "before the sons of the Achaeans came." Paradoxically, the death of Hector, which will mean the certain death of Priam, produces in his gentle father a burst of energy that appears to be almost a temporary new lease on life. Now, for the first time in the *Iliad*, the city-bound, always-accompanied king determines to "go forth alone [*oios*] from the city" (XXII.416–17) to face his son's killer. Here begins the last phase of the *Iliad*, one that can be called the *aristeia* of Priam (Macleod 1982, 115, 127), who has not yet exhibited such a display of prowess. In Book XXIV, the aged monarch of a city that is not fully political and the young warrior of a political community that is not fully a city transcend the familial and political circumstances that have made them enemies, and confront each other merely as mortal human beings. Once again a Greek receives a Trojan into his home. From Achilles, the meeting will require approach and contact that heretofore have been precluded by his heroic aspiration to stand out. From Priam, it will require separation and distance that have been precluded by his fatherly instinct to hold together.

Iris finds Priam, groveling in the dirt of the palace, with his sons, typically, "seated around him" (XXIV.161). The king who would not allow his troops to grieve aloud now does nothing to hide his own piteous groaning. Hecuba fears what will happen when he goes "alone" (*oios*) to "meet the eyes" of the "savage and faithless" (XXIV.203–7) killer. Unlike Priam, *she* could not face the man who has dragged her son in the dust. The only vengeance that would satisfy her would be "deeds in kind" (*antita erga*): "to fix my teeth in the middle of his liver and feed thereon" (XXIV.212–13). Her cannibalistic fantasy would reduce Achilles not only to a dragged thing, like Hector, but also to material to be transformed into his living enemy. Closing in to devour him, she would never have the distance to *look at* the man who threatened to feed her son's body to the dogs. But, while she thinks of

vengeance on the living Achilles, Priam's attention is focused on his dead son. He goes to his treasure chamber to collect the ransom. Homer catalogues it, reminding us, for the last time, of Troy's extraordinary plenty: twelve robes, twelve cloaks, twelve coverlets, twelve mantles, twelve tunics, ten talents of gold, two tripods, four caldrons, and, like everything Trojan, an "exceedingly beautiful" (*perikalles*) cup (XXIV.229–37). Unlike Laomedon, who refused to pay what he owed, Priam will offer so much for Hector's corpse that Achilles will not be able to refuse him. Note, however, that there is still no thought of trying to buy off the Achaeans by including *Helen* in the exchange. Priam wants Hector back in the family. The family still includes Paris's stolen wife.

The journey to retrieve the son brings out a new manly vigor in the softhearted father. His wife calls it "iron in the heart" (XXIV.205). It reveals that he does make distinctions among his sons, and that even his extraordinary multiplication of offspring cannot console him for this loss. Ironically, he still calls the son who wished at last to be "best of the *Trojans*" his "best *son*" (XXIV.242, emphases added). Priam drives all the other Trojans from the royal palace to their own homes; this is the only time in the *Iliad* that the king of Troy is said to wield a scepter (XXIV.247). He uses it not to exercise his authority in political assembly, but to send away the assembled populace, and to isolate himself, once again, in his family. The last catalogue in the *Iliad* is a Trojan catalogue consisting entirely of the sons of Priam.

Then called [Priam] aloud to his sons, chiding Helenus and Paris and goodly Agathon and Pammon and Antiphonus, and Polites...and Deiphobus, and Hippothous, and lordly Dius...
 "...I begat sons the best in the broad land of Troy, yet of them I avow that not one is left, not godlike Mestor, not Troilus,... not Hector..."(XXIV.248–58)

Like children, these adult sons "fear his rebuke" (XXIV.265). His exaggeration that "not one is left" and his contradictory wish that they had all died instead of Hector accurately express the magnitude of his loss. Iris tells him to "take courage" (XXIV.171), to go to the hut of Achilles "alone" (*oios*, XXIV. 148, 177, 203), accompanied only by an aged herald. But Priam has already told Hecuba that his "own strength and spirit" bid him to go (XXIV.198).

He departs through the palace gates and portico, through the city, to the plain, where his sons and sons-in-law turn back, leaving the old man with the herald, Idaeus. Note again how little time is needed to get from palace to city wall. Beyond the tomb of Ilus, he meets Hermes, who appears in the guise of a young Myrmidon whom Priam treats in his usual fatherly way. When

the youth addresses him as “father,” Priam calls him “dear son,” and asks about his parents and brothers. Hermes assures Priam that Hector’s body is whole and undefiled, that is, that there *is* a body to ransom. The rich king assumes the gods have preserved Hector because he always gave them gifts, and with habitual noblesse, he himself offers his guide a beautiful goblet. Hermes brings Priam to the Achaean wall and leads him “within.” When they come to the hut of Achilles, Hermes departs, and Priam enters alone, leaving Idaeus outside. By the time Priam meets Achilles, the old king is completely divested of his monarchical trappings; unguarded, unheralded, and scepterless, he is merely an aged father with a wagonload of ransom.

From this moment, Priam and Achilles are in a different world from the ones they have inhabited throughout the poem. Many have noted that the long dark journey guided by Hermes suggests a passage to the land of the dead. Unlike the bright and noisy battlefield, where men strive to remain upright, above their enemies, here in the silent darkness, Trojan and Greek bow and rise, and at last sit together to eat. On the high citadel all deferred to the patriarch; but now he kneels to a younger man and kisses “the terrible man-slaying hands that had slain his many sons” (XXIV.477–79). The father who earlier could not endure (or dare, *tlēsom’*) to watch the combat of his “dear son,” now has endured (or dared, *etlēn*) to reach out to the man who killed that son (XXIV.505–6). Achilles, who never expected the king himself to come for the body, wonders how Priam “endured [dared, *etlēs*] to come alone [*oios*]” (XXIV.519) to meet his eyes. Like Hecuba, he recognizes the newfound iron in Priam’s heart (XXIV.521).

We should not think, as some do, that Priam and Achilles become father and son to *each other*. As we have seen, the old king has a habit of absorbing many into his extended family. But Achilles, who refuses virtual adoption by Agamemnon and remains always his own man, is not about to become, even briefly, one more “son” to father Priam. Rather, the patriarch of Troy fully acknowledges the independence of the younger man, reminding Achilles that he is someone *else’s* son, namely what Homer calls him in the first line of the poem: “Peleus’s Achilles.” Unlike the sons of Priam, who walk always in the shadow of their father, Achilles was, literally, born to be greater than his father. Peleus was a second choice when Zeus declined to father such a son. In most of the *Iliad*, Achilles looks more to his immortal mother than to the mortal father they have both left at home in Phthia. The autonomy sought by the glory-seeking warrior denies his dependence even on the one who gave him life. Achilles has, in effect, eliminated his father as well as his friend. But

now, for the first time, he thinks of what he will not give to Peleus, rather than what Peleus gave or might give to him. He realizes that being a one-and-only son means not just that he is singularly great, but that, when he dies, there will be no brothers to care for his aging father. However godlike the heroic warrior strives to be, when he faces Priam, he must at last acknowledge himself the son of his own mortal father.

Nor should we think that Priam *forgives* Achilles. He comes to make an exchange: Trojan riches for a dead Trojan. But he is moved to give Achilles something more: the wondering admiration he deserves as an extraordinary human being, both for his natural prowess, and, now, for his ability to return the corpse of the man who made a corpse of his dearest friend. But their enmity is suspended only temporarily by their mutual admiration. They both know that the war is not over and that this extraordinary man will kill more of Priam's sons if he can. Homer's audience also knows that Priam and his son Polites are soon to be killed by Achilles' own son Neoptolemos. Even if Priam could forgive Achilles, the latter is too sensitive to the fact that giving, and especially forgiving, often elevates the giver and diminishes the receiver. This is what makes him reject Agamemnon's gifts in the embassy (Book IX), and, later, give him an unearned prize in the funeral games (Book XXIII). Here too, Achilles preserves his superiority even as he raises the prostrate Priam and gives him what he came for: his dead son.

But, again, the transaction at the end of the *Iliad* differs from the exchanges, purchases, and ransoms earlier in the book. Just as Priam offers his wonder, as well as the ransom, to Achilles, so Achilles freely gives more than the body Priam came for. Zeus had demanded that Achilles show pity for *Hector*, and respect (*aidēs*) for the gods. This he does. But, in addition, he shows pity and respect, even admiration, for Hector's father, a suffering fellow human being. In doing so he acknowledges that a man is essentially *like* other men, even if he stands out as the patriarch of a great city or as the best warrior in a mighty host. Achilles has killed Priam's many sons with his "untouchable" (*aaptos*, XX.503) hands. But, in the end, emotionally and literally, the old man *touches* him. In turn, Achilles' "terrible, man-slaying" (*deinas androphonous*, XXIV.478–79) hands gently release Priam's grasp (XXIV.508), raise him from the ground (XXIV.515), offer him food (XXIV.618–20), and, finally, clasp his hand to allay his fear (XXIV.671–72).

Achilles and Priam "take their fill" (*tarpēsan*) not only of lamentation and food, but also of "gazing" (XXIV.633). They appear godlike as

Dardanus's son Priam marveled [*thaumaz'*] at Achilles...
 At Dardanus's son Priam did Achilles marvel [*thaumazen*]...
 (XXIV.629, 631)

Greek inflection allows the two lines to mirror each other exactly. The gods frequently “gaze” from a distance. But Achilles and Priam gaze at *each other*, wondering *together* at the suffering of mortal men, and at the courage and generosity with which they sometimes endure and pity such suffering. Hecuba feared the meeting of their eyes, but it is precisely this mutual gazing that enables her husband and her son's killer to transcend the bloody horrors they have inflicted and endured. In their mutual gazing, they differ not only from the gods, but also from those at the other end of the scale of beings in Homer's cosmos, the lions and wolves to whom they are often compared. For the human killers also have the capacity to respect, admire, and pity those they kill. They “gazed at each other” (XXIV.484) means more than that they *saw* each other as lions would. It means that they are self-conscious beings aware of their likeness and of their shared mortality. The meeting of Achilles and Priam displays us *anthrōpoi* in all our complexity. Here we too may gaze in wonder on the being that combines the distance of wonder with the touch of hands, one time in bloody battle, another in a shared supper.

Before they eat, Achilles tells Priam a lengthy tale about Niobe, who continued to weep for her children long after they were buried, even as Priam will weep for Hector. Despite her terrible grief, Niobe ate, and so, Achilles suggests, should Priam. But there is another point to the paradigm. Mortal Niobe's children were killed because she boasted that she had more children—six daughters and six sons—than the goddess Leto, who had only two. Priam may have more children than even Zeus has. His present satisfactions and hopes for the future depend largely on this multitude of children. But the father's extraordinary generative powers have something to do with the collapse of the family he cherishes. Most of his children predecease him, and, as we have seen, even surviving progeny are no consolation for the loss of one.

In addition to pity, admiration, and sustaining food, Achilles gives back to Priam some of the robes he brought as ransom. Homer says that the men took the rest from the wagon, but does not repeat the catalogue. Achilles tells (the dead) Patroclus he has received it, but these brief mentions reduce the importance of the material ransom in his decision to return the corpse. Homer more fully describes the bathing and anointing of the body. For the last time, Achilles touches Hector with his man-slaying hands, as he himself lifts him onto the bier. By wrapping the body he contrives that Priam

will not have to look at his dead son. But again, we must avoid sentimentality and recognize how charged the situation is. Achilles also wants to avoid Priam's possible rage at the sight of Hector and the risk that he himself might respond by killing the old man, contrary to Zeus's command.

Finally, and most important, Achilles gives Priam *time*: time to fetch wood, to wail, to burn a funeral pyre, and to heap a barrow. Homer enumerates the days and the tasks, both here and at the end, just as he enumerated the ransom before Priam's journey. Short-lived Achilles has little time to spare, and long-lived Priam will not, as he expected, live on in his many children and rich city. Both know that, with respect to time, they are *both*, like Achilles, minynthadios, "short-lived," and hale from Phthia, the land of "perishing." Priam's city and the people of Priam will soon be utterly destroyed. The Achaean host will disband and each of the sceptered kings will return to his own fatherland. The Trojans and Achaeans have little time left, yet Achilles gives Priam time.

When the ransom has been accepted and the king sleeps, Hermes worries about how Priam can leave without being noticed. He wakes him with a warning that might remind him—and those who know his story—of his own beginnings:

Now you have ransomed your dear son, and given much.
But for your own life the sons you left behind would give
three times as much ransom... (XXIV.685–687)

Hermes insures that there is no need for a second ransom for the king's son who, years before, returned with a new name to become the ruler of Troy.

That boy Priamos has been a humane and loving patriarch. But the story of Ilium, the one we can properly call the *Iliad*, suggests something problematic about Priam, and about our own human condition. Parents send their children forth from their households, alone, into the great and dangerous world, where they must make choices and live with the consequences, because that is the only way that they can become fully autonomous human beings. Perhaps something in most parents yearns for a family compound, with daughters, sons, spouses, and grandchildren always visible, always deferring to and always benefiting from parental experience and authority. Who does not hesitate at first to send a child into the competitive arena or assembly without parental protection? Who would not wish to keep a favorite child home from war? To take a troublemaker back and protect him from outsiders who might punish him, however justly? Who would not give all to ransom a son, to bring him back where the life his parents gave him can be

preserved and where his primary exertions will be for the safety of his family? What parent does not wonder whether one son will risk his own good to protect his brother, or whether more children might bring greater security and more satisfaction? In one way, the desire to procreate and preserve is essential: it is what it means to *be* a parent.

But children are not one's own as herds of horses, many-chambered houses, piles of fabrics, and beautiful cups are. The sons of Priam will always be Priam's. But they must be their own men as well. The very family that is rightly ready to ransom its children might itself hold them captive and prevent them from attaining full maturity. Such arrested adulthood is most likely in a city that retains many of the features of an expanded family. In a city where the fathers of many different families emerge from their households to govern together as equals, the sons are more likely, as the proverb advises, to become "brothers" to their fathers. As adults, such sons do not leave the family behind, but become fully functioning individuals that belong to families and a city that are mutually dependent.

The sons of Priam respond in different ways to their father's authority and solicitude. Polydorus somehow finds his way to the battlefield. Paris returns home and remains an irresponsible adolescent. Lycaon is ransomed and gets a second chance at life, only to be taken again. And Hector chooses, at last, to remain outside, seeking his own reputation at the expense of his city's survival. His drive for heroic individuality has a different genesis from the self-assertion of the Achaean warriors. But in his world as in theirs, the end is the same: the price of lasting glory is premature death. Priam's noblest son can only come home again if he exposes himself and dies.

And what of Priam himself? The king of Troy does not die in the *Iliad*, but, as we have noted, Homer's audience knows what other literary works do describe, that Priam will be murdered by the son of the man with whom he shares the wondrous moments at the end of the *Iliad*. Other poets also tell how Hector's son is thrown from the walls so that there will be no chance of Troy's revival by ransom and return, as with Podarces/Priam two generations before. No poet, however, adds the insight that later became a theme in sixth century vase paintings: in these appalling pictures the instrument Neoptolemus uses to kill the old man on the altar is Priam's grandson, Hector's child, Astyanax (Woodford 2004, 69–70). In a lost play by Aeschylus, Achilles compares himself to an eagle who recognizes that the feathers guiding the arrow that has mortally wounded him are his *own* feathers (Aeschylus, *Myrmidons*, Fragment 231; Mueller 1986, 35). It is not clear that

Priam, even in his most extraordinary moments, recognizes the tragic truth that Homer and the pottery pictures reveal: that his own proud paternity is the very thing that eventually destroys him and his city and all his sons.

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This essay was written while I was the holder of the National Endowment for the Humanities Chair at St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland (2002–04). I am grateful to NEH and to St. John's for this generous support.

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Civilization and Barbarism: The Somber Liberalism of Domingo Sarmiento*

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Domingo Sarmiento (1811–1888), the liberal theorist and Argentine statesman, was one of the founding fathers of liberalism in Latin America. Not only was he a genuine apostle of democratic culture (Rojas 1915, 17), “the standard-bearer for the ideals of European liberalism in Spanish America” (Kirkpatrick and Masello 1993, 2; Gálvez 1945, 641); he was also the expositor of a distinctive brand of liberalism, a somber, but spirited liberalism, and hence, in this sense, at least, a “creator of new values” (Martinez Estrada 1991, 253). Sarmiento was, moreover, a great writer, the greatest American writer, comparable to Stendhal and Tolstoy, according to the Spanish writer Miguel de Unamuno, and the founder of a distinctively Hispanic American literature and author of the greatest South American book, *Civilization and Barbarism: Facundo*, according to his distinguished critics Ezequiel Martinez Estrada and Paul Groussac (Martinez Estrada 1956, 181; also 174, 177–78, 180; Botana 1997b, 80; Bunkley 1952, 208–9, 221). Finally, Sarmiento was the founder of a new, liberal culture in Hispanic America, the “Teacher of the Americas” (Crowley 1972, 129); the first apostle of primary education in South America, the southern twin of Horace Mann (Rojas 1915, 11, 17); the founder of a popular public education system—“clearly the best school system in Latin America”—in his native Argentina (Bushnell and Macaulay 1988, 229; Bunkley 1952, 467–68; Botana 1997b, 48–9); a tireless, visionary champion of both liberalism and liberal learning: a liberal, Hispanic Moses, according to Jose Ingenieros (1915, 7); a “warrior-Socrates,” in the words of Paul Groussac (Martinez Estrada 1956, 172). Yet, while Sarmiento’s stature as a literary figure has grown steadily over the past century, his stature as a political thinker has declined (see Addendum 1). This key figure in the global history of liberalism

has not received the attention he deserves, especially in the English-speaking world, and especially from political theorists.

WHAT IS CIVILIZATION?

The contemporary neglect of Sarmiento as a political thinker, in both Hispanic and North America, is principally due to a harsh condemnation of his unflinching identification of liberalism with civilization and of his somber belief that liberal civilization is always threatened by the forces of anti-liberal, anti-rational barbarism (Kirkpatrick and Masiello 1994, 7; Martínez Estrada 1956, 36, 63–64, 130, 67, 70, 91–96, 103–5, 158–59, 198, 218–19; Shumway 1991, xi–xii, 134, 137–38, 160–67, 299; Halperín Donghi 1997, 34). Yet it is precisely Sarmiento’s exposition of a confident but somber liberalism which makes his liberalism especially worthy of study. For even though he argues that liberalism is fundamentally in harmony with human nature, it is Sarmiento’s thesis that liberal civilization can never achieve an irreversible victory over barbarism, since the threat of barbarism is also rooted in our unchanging nature, in such passions as anger, vengeance, love of honor and power, the hatred of authority, and, above all, the hatred of reason. He is accordingly more somber and sober than his model, Tocqueville, who, while fearing a soft barbarism and degradation, seems confident that the threat of violent barbarism has passed with the triumph of democracy (2000, 662–63; see Addendum 2). Sarmiento is one nineteenth century liberal who would not have been surprised or shocked by the horrors of the twentieth century, by Hitler or Stalin, or by the terrorists of the twenty-first century. Writing, in 1945, on Sarmiento’s preoccupation with the enduring threat of tyranny and fanaticism, Gálvez asks—amazingly: “Isn’t it ridiculous, in 1860, this remembrance of the bonfires of the Inquisition, as though it were possible to reestablish them in the nineteenth century and as though anyone would long to reestablish them?” (1945, 332). On the other hand, Jorge Luis Borges, writing in the middle of World War II, notes that, when he read Sarmiento’s account of the terrorism of South America’s tyrannical “caudillos” twenty years earlier, “The dangerous reality which Sarmiento describes was distant and inconceivable; now [in 1943] it is contemporary” (1998, 12).

Sarmiento speaks with considerable precision about civilization and barbarism. Contrary to what has been said of him (Kirkpatrick and Masiello 1994, 6; Shumway 1991, 139–41), his understanding of civilization and barbarism is not at all racial or ethnic. In *Conflicto y armonías de las razas*

en América, the work sometimes cited to brand Sarmiento as an “ideological racis[t]” or racial determinist, he explicitly and vehemently attacks racial determinism (Kirkpatrick and Masiello 1994, 6; Shumway 1991, 140–41; DiTella 1998, 14–15): “Some today go so far as to attribute to the Saxon race a special aptitude for free government, which they are pleased to deny to the Latin race. But in addition to the fact that democratic liberty has her cradle in Athens and patrician liberty has her cradle in Rome, in Venice, and later in the brilliant, tumultuous, commercial, and industrious Italian republics, free government is proving to be practicable in France, by dint of falls and blows. It is clear that seven centuries of liberty guaranteed in England by her charters and two or three centuries of struggles and of victories to preserve those liberties must have made hereditary in that race, as hereditary as the form of English letters, the aptitude for free government, for self government [emphasized and cited in English in the text]. But modern liberty is a mechanism of institutions, an art; and this art can be learned and is being learned by all modern peoples, Italy, Spain, Austria, Belgium, etc.” (Sarmiento 1915b, 172). This passage indicates that by “race” Sarmiento does not mean something genetic but something cultural, the inherited habits of a people. But furthermore, he indicates here that he rejects quite emphatically not only racial but also cultural determinism. Liberal civilization is an art that can be learned by all peoples. Consequently, although he certainly appreciates the importance of cultural obstacles to liberalism, Sarmiento rejects racial or cultural determinism and dedicates himself to liberal education, to teaching the art of liberty to all the races of South America (Sarmiento 1915b, 409–11; 1950, 67, 85–91; 1915a, 27–42, 309–10). He portrays the Argentine struggle against barbarism as “a revolution that did not make distinctions on the basis of color or class in honoring merit” (1997a, 151). He contrasts the cosmopolitan idea of civilization with the “idea of nationality as a patrimony of man since the time of savage tribes and which makes him look with horror on the foreigner” (242). He attacks the notion that “the Spaniards” freed Spain from the Moors, arguing that the Moors were not only Spaniards but “the most genuine” Spaniards because they were Spain’s “most educated and civilized inhabitants,” while their Spanish Catholic enemies were “barbarian” (1915b, 209–10, 212, 214). He celebrates Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, praises the black soldiers who fought for the North during the Civil War, but also proudly praises the South American republics for having abolished slavery well before the United States did (1952, 190–92, 220, 213–14; 269, 295). He cites approvingly Harriet Beecher Stowe’s prophecy that Africa will become a great, civilized continent and declares, in his own name, that Africa’s “hour of justice,

dignity, and reparation” has arrived (1915b, 123–24). He hails the black Colonel Barcala as a hero of the struggle against barbarism in Argentina and as the man who brought liberal civilization to the traditionalist Argentine city of Cordoba (1997a, 151; 1949a, 258–59; 1997b, 121). On the other hand, Sarmiento stresses that barbarism has deep roots in Europe herself. Rosas, the barbarian genius of Argentina, drew his inspiration from the Spanish Inquisition, the French Revolution, and the bloody factions of Italy and France (1949a, 257, 259–60; 1997a, 214–15, 219–21, 243–44). All nations can become civilized, Sarmiento insists. But he also insists that, since “Every country contains in its breast elements of disorder,” every country can collapse into barbarism (1949b, 324–25).

What, then, does Sarmiento mean by civilization? In the broadest sense, civilization means the cultivation and perfection of reason and, since “God has given us a reason which distinguishes us from the beasts,” the cultivation and perfection of reason constitutes the cultivation and perfection of humanity (1997a, 254). Now, reason cannot be fully cultivated among isolated human beings, among those who live the life of Robinson Crusoe, nor even among isolated families and nomadic tribes, among those who live the life of Adam or Abraham (1950, 30; 1997a, 37). Reason must be cultivated in settled society, through conversation and discussion, through schools, through social and commercial intercourse, through political debate and deliberation about common, public affairs, and hence through political participation. Civilization therefore requires cities, cities which allow for a thriving, active, intellectual and political life (1997a, 36–39). Accordingly, civilization in this broadest sense is to be found in the free, self-governing city-states of ancient Greece and Rome, in the urban centers of Muslim Spain, and in the urban communities of late colonial Argentina, in conservative, scholastic, religious Cordoba as well as in progressive, liberal, and free-thinking Buenos Aires (1993, 402–3; 1915b, 210–11, 223, 128–53; 1997a, 39, 112–21).

Yet, Sarmiento generally identifies civilization in the fullest sense with specifically modern and liberal societies. In the first place, it is only modern liberal democracies, especially the United States, which allow all or virtually all to become educated, to participate in political life, and hence to cultivate their rational humanity. To be sure, it is in liberal, civilized France “where human intelligence has arrived at its ultimate development . . . where human nature shows herself, in my judgment, in all of her truth” (1993, 122–23). Nonetheless, it is the United States, which displays “the moral and physical perfection . . . [and] the forces which civilized man develops in order

to subject nature for his use” (301); in which, in contrast to Europe, “civilization exercises herself over so great a mass” (313); and which presents the “unique” spectacle in “the history of the world” of a broadly democratic, free, prosperous, rational society (333–34). In the United States “man is finally the owner of himself, elevated in his spirit by education and by his sense of his own dignity” (315). Even in relatively civilized Europe, by contrast, the lower classes are so “degraded” by oppression, poverty, and ignorance that they are “unworthy of being counted among men” (334). But in the democratic United States, “twenty million men . . . read on a daily basis what is necessary to be able to exercise their reason [and] their public or political passions.” “It is said that man is a rational being inasmuch as he is capable of the acquisition and exercise of reason; and in this sense there is no country on earth that counts more rational beings” (Sarmiento 1993, 334, 315; also Botana 1997b, 26–27, 29–31, 42–43; Halperín Donghi 1997, 24).

Secondly, modern liberal societies allow for greater individual freedom, the freedom to use one’s reason, free of religious or social or class restraints. Sarmiento praises the United States especially for its unprecedented religious freedom. “The principle of religious tolerance is North American; it is inscribed in all of its constitutions and has become a popular axiom. It was in North America that this word [tolerance] was uttered, which must stanch the blood which humanity has spilled in torrents and which has come trickling up to us from the first ages of the world” (1993, 350). Moreover, Sarmiento—who founded a school for girls in his native city of San Juan, “one that certainly equaled any girls’ school in the Americas at so early a date” (Bunkley 1952, 127)—argues that the civilization of a society can be measured by the degree to which its women are allowed the freedom to educate themselves, to cultivate their reason, and hence to cultivate their humanity. Accordingly, he hails the growing freedom and literacy of women in France and the United States as a great leap forward in the progress of civilization and urges South America to follow the trail blazed by those countries (Sarmiento 1915a, 120–79; 1998, 111–12; 1993, 122–23, 125–26, 303, 318–19; Bunkley 1952, 108–9, 313).

Finally, modern societies are singularly commercial and prosperous. What is beneficial about prosperity is not merely the material comfort it brings, but also and especially the humanity that prosperity allows for. After describing the homely details of the relative comfort of the average American dining room, kitchen, and dress, Sarmiento remarks: “These details, which can appear trivial, nevertheless constitute a unique accomplishment in the history of the world. I have just traveled in Europe, admired her monuments,

prostrated myself before her science, amazed by the prodigies of her arts; but I have seen her millions of peasants, proletarians, vile artisans, degraded, unworthy of being counted human beings” (1993, 333–34; also 307–8). Human dignity, any human excellence, requires some level of material well-being, however basic, some platform from which humans may strive for the higher things. But poverty dehumanizes humans by condemning them to filth, to a lack of even minimal privacy, and to a suffocating despair, all of which make even the most modestly rational, civilized life impossible. Accordingly, Sarmiento is scathing in his criticism of those who romanticize poverty and belittle the importance of material well-being (1993, 130–31, 136–37). After describing the bright, tidily prosperous homes of the German and Scottish colonies in Buenos Aires, Sarmiento describes the brutalizing poverty of rural Argentina: “dirty children covered with rags, live with a pack of dogs; men lying on the ground in the most complete state of inaction; slovenliness and poverty all around; a little table and bags are the only furnishings; miserable huts are the only rooms; and a general appearance of barbarism and carelessness make them notable” (1997a, 35; also 1915a, 321–23, 29–39). By enabling humans to rescue themselves from such degradation, commerce serves the cause of civilization.

Commerce, moreover, effectively stimulates activity and energy among human beings and saves them from the idleness and sloth which atrophies their intellects (Sarmiento 1997a, 171; 1915a, 133–34). The quest for trading partners and new markets brings peoples into contact and expands their mental horizons (1997a, 256–58). Sarmiento goes so far as to praise avarice as civilizing (1915a, 321–22) and acquisitiveness as the moral foundation of modern, liberal democratic civilization (1993, 338–39; also 1915a, 321–23): “The world is being transformed and so is morality. . . . As in the application of steam to locomotion, as in the application of electricity to the transmission of the word, the United States has preceded all other peoples by adding one principle to human morality in relation to democracy. Franklin! All modern and ancient moralists have followed the tracks of a morality which, accepting as established, fated, and necessary the existence of a great mass of suffering, of poverty, and of abjectness, confines moral sentiment, offering as attenuations the alms of the rich and the resignation of the poor. . . . Franklin has been the first who has said: well-being and virtue; be virtuous so that you will be able to acquire; acquire so that you will be able to be virtuous.”

Benjamin Franklin, whose influence on Sarmiento was immense and whose autobiography Sarmiento had translated into Spanish,

perhaps best embodies what Sarmiento means by civilization. Born in humble circumstances, through the sheer force of his extraordinary nature, Franklin perfects his mind, masters the thunderbolt, and overthrows tyranny. Through his teachings and most emphatically through his example, Franklin shows all human beings, no matter how low-born, the path by which they may rise to their natural level of achievement, prosperity, and virtue (see Addendum 3).

BARBARISM AND TERRORISM

Whereas civilization means the cultivation and perfection of what is distinctively human in us, namely, our reason, barbarism means the degradation and destruction of our reason and therewith our humanity. And since the cultivation of reason requires cities and a certain level of material prosperity, barbarism most obviously finds its natural home in the impoverished rural countryside, where “Each rancher is a Robinson Crusoe; each family is an Adam beginning to form society” (Sarmiento 1950, 30). As long as they remain in such a state of nature, human beings are unable to overcome the ignorance, sloth, and filth that surrounds them.

Yet the more precise meaning of barbarism, for Sarmiento, is not merely the absence of civilization but the hatred of civilization (Sarmiento 1997a, 72–73). Accordingly, the true incarnations of barbarism are not isolated farmers or nomads who live apart from all civilization but those who positively seek to destroy civilization: for example, the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabel and the leaders of the Spanish Inquisition, who annihilated the Arabic civilization that had flourished in Spain for centuries; Robespierre and those who implemented the Terror during the French Revolution, who sought to destroy civilized France; the warlords of South America who attempted to strangle in the cradle the incipient civilization of the newly independent republics; and the pro-slavery forces of the American South who threatened to undermine the liberal civilization of the United States (Sarmiento 1915b, 165–227, 334–35; 1997a, 256; 1950, 50, 63; 1993, 343, 407, 426–27; 1952, 12–17, 291–93). These examples indicate that, for Sarmiento, barbarism is an emphatically political phenomenon. Its natural home is not in the pristine countryside or state of nature but rather in the hearts of human beings who know of civilized life and who react violently against it. Indeed, the barbarians use the very fruits of civilization to destroy civilization.

The clearest example of such barbarism is Juan Manuel de

Rosas (1793–1877), the absolute ruler of Argentina from 1829 to 1852. Rosas is a “barbaric tyrant,” a new Caligula, spectacularly cruel and brutal, guilty of “the most horrific and the longest series of crimes” of the nineteenth century, writes Sarmiento in 1845 (1997a, 233, 200, 178, 189). But he is an astonishingly cunning ruler, a barbarian “genius” (217, 220). This Machiavellian astutely combines the techniques of medieval and modern fanaticism, of the Spanish Inquisition and the French Revolution (Sarmiento 1997a, 16; 1997b, 133; 1949a, 257; Bunkley 1952, 174, 274). By combining a terrifying secret police with a mind-numbing propaganda machine, Rosas establishes his supreme authority in the minds and hearts of all (Sarmiento 1997a, 226, 222). He makes “a system of government out of crime, murder, castration, and massacre” and bases this system on “all the bad instincts of human nature” (254). Although Rosas compares himself to a harsh schoolmaster (196), in truth he rules the Argentines as a rancher rules his cattle (1997a, 191; 1949a, 262). So effectively does Rosas barbarize the Argentines, so effectively does he induce a “systematic enthusiasm” among his formerly civilized subjects, that he becomes, as Sarmiento admits and even emphasizes, a truly popular ruler: “never has there been a government more popular, more desired, and more supported” by public opinion (1997a, 218, 214). Rosas, then, is a stunningly successful totalitarian ruler, the founder of a barbaric and barbarizing system of government, a founder comparable to Moses and Lycurgus, a barbarian version of a Platonic philosopher-king (227).

Now, the chief means by which such barbarians as Rosas dominate others is terror (Sarmiento 1997a, 85). Through repeated acts of stupefying cruelty, Rosas effectively reduces the Argentines to cowering animals, wholly dominated by fear, unable to fight or to think for themselves (1997a, 133, 222–23; 1949a, 278; 1997b, 137–38). Accordingly, a key feature of barbarism, according to Sarmiento, is what he calls “terrorism” (see Addendum 4). Rosas is a “terrorist” who bases his system of government on the “terrorist spirit” and whose rule was a “reign of terror” (1997a, 155, 72, 247). The ferocious warlords who plunged newly independent South America into barbarism warred with the “terrorist spirit” (71–72). The French Revolutionaries who threatened to plunge France into barbarism were “implacable terrorists” (256). Finally, the “barbaric genius” Juan Facundo Quiroga (1788–1836)—whom Sarmiento immortalized in his book *Civilization and Barbarism: Facundo*—the Argentine warlord who held sway over much of Argentina for several years, was a “terrorist” (104, 155, 177, 206). Terrorism means the attempt to inspire such an overwhelming fear of pain and death in other human beings that they become wholly enslaved to that fear and

hence enslaved to your will. Terrorism therefore, according to Sarmiento, naturally culminates in a form of government, a terrorist state. And such a state can be powerful and enduring: “One must not delude oneself: terror is a means of governing which produces greater results than patriotism or spontaneity” (155). Through his depiction of Rosas in particular—of Rosas’s imitation and modernization of the Inquisition, his combination of the spirit of the Inquisition with modern populism, propaganda, symbolism, a cult of personality, and a secret police (195–97, 201–3, 219–28)—Sarmiento invites his reader to face the dangerous possibilities of modern barbarism. In contrast to Tocqueville, who warns against a modern, but soft despotism, Sarmiento presciently warns against a modern, savage despotism, a despotic terrorism, one eerily resembling the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century.

The terrorist is the barbarian par excellence because the terrorist not only lacks civilization but hates civilization and consequently seeks to destroy it (Sarmiento 1997a, 72–73). But what leads human beings to hate civilization and to regard reason as their mortal enemy (1949b, 373)? What leads human beings, whose natural perfection lies in the cultivation of their reason, to seek to destroy reason?

While the example of Rosas shows most clearly the power of barbarism, it is the example of Facundo that shows most clearly the motive and therewith the nature of barbarism. The core passion of barbarism is the desire for freedom, the desire to feel oneself free of any and all limit or authority. Accordingly, Sarmiento suggests that “individualism” is the essence of barbarism since the barbarian hates the limits imposed by society and its laws (1997a, 71, 69–71). But the barbarian’s desire is not simply to live apart from all society but to live without any restraint whatsoever and hence to give free rein to his passions (159). In the first place, then, the barbarian seems to be a kind of hedonist, since he actively indulges in the pleasures of sex, gambling, and material acquisition. Yet, the pleasure the barbaric soul seems to seek most of all is the specific pleasure of feeling himself beyond any moral restraint, even the most sacred. So profoundly rebellious is the soul of Facundo, for example, that he beats his father, he beats his teacher, and he massacres priests (86–89, 172; also 188–89). The barbarian’s desire for freedom is connected with the pleasures of killing (71) and the pleasures of cruelty, especially to those who are revered (156), because, through cruelty, he seems to affirm his freedom from the moral laws that limit other human beings. The barbarian’s desire for freedom leads him to give free rein to his passions: anger, bloodlust, even at times generosity. “Why must he not do good, he who has no restraint on

his passions? It is a prerogative of power, as is any other” (159). But the barbarian’s seemingly anarchic desire for freedom ultimately leads to tyranny. For the barbarian seeks to impose his will on others in order to satisfy his own desire—his lust, his greed, his desire for vengeance. And in order to satisfy these desires without restraint, he needs absolute power.

Now, as we have seen, the chief means by which the barbarian achieves power over others is through overpowering, dehumanizing terror (Sarmiento 1997a, 85). The barbarian’s desire to be free of any limit on his will leads him to destroy the humanity of all those around him. The barbarian’s desire for freedom leads him to terrorize others. By terrorizing others, the barbarian barbarizes them, for he destroys their reason. The barbarian is a terrorist, then, because he seeks to inspire terror in others in order to remove all limits to his own will.

It is not immediately clear why the barbarian’s desire for freedom takes the path of terrorism. Why does the barbarian’s desire for freedom lead him to hate reason? Doesn’t reason also challenge the authority of fathers and law? Doesn’t reason, questioning, skeptical, philosophic reason, lead to the liberation of the mind from the restraints imposed by even the most sacred traditions and conventions? What, then, is the source of the barbarians’ passionate hatred of reason? To discover the answer, we must turn again to Facundo, the barbarian incarnate. Facundo desires so passionately to be free of all limits to his will that he convinces himself that even and especially death cannot limit his will. On the eve of his assassination, Facundo declares “the man has not yet been born who can kill Facundo Quiroga” (Sarmiento 1997a, 206). Perhaps the deepest reason the barbarian rejects reason, then, is precisely because reason reveals with brutal clarity the limits to our desires imposed by our mortal nature. The barbarian longs with all his heart to be free of all limits, conventional and natural. But to cherish the hope that such a longing can be fulfilled, the barbarian must silence the stern voice of reason, both in others and in himself. Perhaps it is for this reason that Sarmiento repeatedly links barbarism to the Inquisition, to the religious fanaticism of medieval and early modern Spain, a fanaticism which sought to crush rational doubt in the name of pious hope (1997a, 133–34; 1998, 80–85; 1915b, 165–227; 1993, 224). The barbarians are not genuinely pious. Their rebellious spirit will not permit them to abide the discipline, for example, of any theology (1997a, 134–36). But there is in their spirit a longing akin to the pious longing and hope for immortality. The barbarian is ultimately unable to face his mortal nature. He is led by his desire for freedom from all conventional and natural restraints to

become a slave to his passion, not only for sex or money or killing or vengeance, but also and above all for life. He is dominated by terror in the face of his own mortality. As Sarmiento puts it, “These terrorists also have their moments of terror” (155). Facundo too is governed by fear (204). The terrorist terrorizes others because he is terrorized himself.

THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL SEEDS OF BARBARISM

Given Sarmiento’s harsh denunciations of barbarism, it has often been claimed as a paradox that he frequently portrays barbarism with considerable sympathy. Bunkley asserts that Sarmiento “was captivated by the object of his attacks” and hence that, for example, his works betray an “unwilling sympathy” for the bloody warlord Aldao and a “hidden admiration” for Facundo himself (Bunkley 1952, 255, 215–16, 197–204, 216–22, 255, 262–63; also Shumway 1991, 152–53; Gálvez 1945, 39, 633, 651, 654–55). Yet, the universal appeal of barbarism is central to Sarmiento’s argument that barbarism is a permanent threat because it is rooted in our universal and unchanging human nature. Natural man is a barbarian, unable to contain his passions and subject them to reason (Sarmiento 1997a, 92). And natural man is within us all. For while our natural perfection lies in the cultivation of reason and hence in civilization, powerful natural longings within us, above all, our longing for freedom from all political, moral, and natural limits, lead us to reject reason. Accordingly, Sarmiento emphasizes in countless lyrical passages throughout his works how singularly moving and charming is the life of those who live close to nature, for example, the gauchos, bandits, and pious peasants and farmers in rural Argentina (1997a, 40, 42, 45–58, 63; 1998, 99–101). In what Bunkley calls “one of the most beautiful passages of his prose,” Sarmiento stresses how powerfully drawn he himself is to the Spanish bullfight, notwithstanding, or, rather, because of its inhuman cruelty: “A barbaric, terrible, bloody spectacle, and yet full of seduction and stimulation” (Sarmiento 1993, 147; also 147–49; Bunkley 1952, 255). Finally, in his portrait of Facundo in particular, Sarmiento describes with a certain admiration the caudillo’s Napoleonic, Alcibidean, Caesarean ambition (Sarmiento 1997a, 86, 92; also 64, 158; 1949b, 345–46, 351; 1993, 80; Halperín Donghi 1997, 19; Romero 1998, 151–52). Like his contemporary Lincoln, Sarmiento knows from within how powerful and dangerous is “towering genius” (Lincoln 1989, 33–35). We are all potential barbarians, because we all feel within our hearts the desire to throw off the yoke of authority and give free rein to our passions: our erotic desires, our thirst for vengeance, our soaring ambition, our lust for

blood, our longing for eternity. We are all potential barbarians because we all cherish hopes which reason calls into question, perhaps especially the hope of overcoming our mortality.

In addition to these natural seeds of barbarism, there are specific cultural seeds. The primary cultural cause of barbarism in Latin America is, Sarmiento argues, Spanish Catholicism (see Addendum 5). Rosas is a son of the Inquisition (Sarmiento 1998, 84; 1950, 49–50; 1915b, 340–41; 1949a, 257, 260). Spanish Catholicism was shaped by its centuries-long struggle against and its final destruction of Moorish civilization, a genuine civilization marked by commerce, technology, and admiration for the ancient world and philosophy (1915b, 210–13; 113). Spanish Catholicism is, according to Sarmiento, marked by a peculiarly intense hatred of reason, a hatred borne of the fear that reason undermines otherworldly hopes, a hatred which gave rise to the expulsion of the Moorish and Jewish guardians of civilization, to the Inquisition, and hence to the death of civilization in Spain (1915b, 218–27; 1998, 80–85; 1915a, 442–45; 1993, 127–28, 160–61). This hatred of reason renders Hispanic Catholic countries peculiarly vulnerable to the sway of passion, to persecution and fanaticism, even at times to anti-Catholic fanaticism, as can be seen in the case of Facundo who massacred priests. But “the seeds of religious persecution were in all of Christian Europe; in Catholicism itself” (Sarmiento 1993, 167, 268–89; 1915b, 213; 1949a, 253–55; Botana 1997a, 454–59; Gálvez 1945, 74, 293–94, 310–12, 662).

Sarmiento suggests that Protestant countries tend to be more open to the influence of reason thanks to the Protestants’ belief in “the capacity of human intelligence to interpret divine and human laws” (Sarmiento 1915a, 330; Ingenieros 1915, 34; Martínez Estrada 1956, 126). Yet the practical result of that belief is disagreement over interpretations of sacred laws and texts and consequently an endless division and subdivision of the Protestant churches. The fragmentary character of the Protestant churches weakens all of them and renders society as a whole less religious, more tolerant and, eventually, more enlightened. Protestant countries tend to be more open to reason than Catholic countries, then, not so much because their Christianity is more enlightened but because their Christianity is ultimately weaker (Sarmiento 1915b, 278–82, 314–15, 441; 1993, 308–9, 346–50, 385). Indeed, Sarmiento sometimes goes so far as to suggest that religion itself may be a cause of barbarism. “Why did not religion, during the eighteen centuries that it was in possession of the earth, educate the world?” (Bunkley 1952, 383; Sarmiento 1915b, 335; 1952, 13; Romero 1998, 146, 154). Not surprisingly, throughout

his life Sarmiento was repeatedly accused of impiety (Sarmiento 1915b, 418–19; Bunkley 1952, 402, 498; Martínez Estrada 1956, 120, 204, 210; Botana 1997b, 49, 65–66; Gálvez 1945, 646–49).

In *Recuerdos de Provincia*, Sarmiento offers deeply respectful and moving portraits of the Catholic piety of his mother (Sarmiento 1998, 172–84, 190–93) and of his uncle Jose de Oro, who was a priest. Oro was a remarkably learned and refined man whom Sarmiento loved dearly (90–101). But Sarmiento delicately suggests that Oro quieted his rational doubts about piety with “the vapors of wine” (100). Even the most enlightened pious man, it seems, requires the narcotic of wine to silence his reason, and so to safeguard his piety.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

So profound are the roots of barbarism in the human soul that Sarmiento foresaw a permanent struggle between civilization and barbarism, between liberal rationalism and the passionate hatred of reason. Yet, Sarmiento was not a pessimist (Sarmiento 1915a, 309–10, 320, 342). Indeed, as Sarmiento stresses, the final purpose of all of his writings was not theoretical clarity or philosophic understanding but practical achievement (Sarmiento 1950, 85–91; 1993, 98–99; Bunkley 1952, 197; Gálvez 1945, 634, 637–38; see Addendum 6). Through his words and deeds, Sarmiento undertook a vastly ambitious project to liberalize Latin America so that it might ultimately join with the United States—the nation destined to be the most powerful nation on earth, he believed—in a hemispheric confederation of liberal republics (Sarmiento 1993, 335–37; 1950, 12, 18, 20; 1915b, 277–78, 427).

Sarmiento has always been criticized for excessive admiration of the United States (Martínez Estrada 1956, 63–70, 215, 218–19; Gálvez 1945, 650–52, 660; Kirkpatrick and Masiello 1994, 4; Shumway 1991, 131–32, 156–57). It is certainly true that Sarmiento encouraged Latin Americans to admire the United States for its liberal, democratic civilization, its Constitution, its religious tolerance, its public education, and its outstandingly intelligent and accomplished women (Sarmiento 1948, 28–30, 112, 185–88, 240–41, 329, 346; 1950, 69). Above all, Sarmiento encouraged Latin Americans to admire the heroism of the citizens of the United States: the pioneers, whose “heroic” bravery and industry make one “proud to belong to the human race” (1993, 323, 329; 1916, 88–92, 136–39, 171, 182, 186, 188, 191); the Union soldiers of the Grand Army, who display “the heroism and glory of a free

nation” (1952, 286); the heroic founders Washington and Franklin, “prosaic, common, without brilliance, but great in their simplicity” (1993, 369–79; also 396, 404–9); and Lincoln, the emancipator of the slaves, the savior of the Union, who combined a “Herculean” will with the eloquence of a biblical prophet and the logic of a Euclid (1952, 190–92, 292–93, 227, 250–52, 18–19, 38; 1915b, 422–23). But Sarmiento did not simply regard the United States as a perfect model for Hispanic America. In important ways, Hispanic America was more just than the United States for, in stark contrast to the United States, virtually all the Hispanic American republics “believed themselves, ever since the first step in the revolution against Spain, duty-bound to emancipate the slaves in order to be justified before their own conscience regarding the principles of liberty and equality which they invoked” and they ended slavery “without a battle” (1952, 213–14). Sarmiento lamented Washington’s “fatal error” of “leaving the southern plantation owners their slaves” and sharply condemned the United States’ conquest of northern Mexico, invoking Lincoln’s own condemnation of the war, as well as his thesis that the war was inspired by the South’s desire to expand slavery (1993, 426–27; 1952, 18–20, 45–46). More generally, Sarmiento suggested that Latin, Catholic America was more alive to beauty—to natural, artistic, physical, and spiritual beauty—and more sensitive to the need for human greatness than the more prosaic, commercial, Protestant United States (1993, 214–22; 1998, 192–93). Sarmiento’s fondest hope for Latin America was that she would give birth to a more spiritual, more refined, and nobler liberalism than one finds in the United States, a liberal democratic order within which the fine arts, music, and literature would rise to the greatest heights, a liberal democracy even more appreciative of human greatness than is the North American republic. But the promise of Latin America is deeply uncertain: “the destinies of Hispanic America are preparing something better than North America or something a thousand times worse than Russia . . . the Middle Ages again, or something great that the world has not seen” (1949a, 257).

Much of Sarmiento’s political program for liberalizing Latin America is familiar: free trade, liberal democratic institutions, immigration from (especially Protestant) Europe (Sarmiento 1948, 112–17; 1916). Yet commerce, free institutions, and immigration would not be sufficient to liberalize Latin America. What was needed was a broad and higher education which would launch a “profound,” liberalizing, cultural revolution, as well as a constitutional executive force powerful enough to wage war against the perennial threat of barbarism (Sarmiento 1998, 266; 1915a, 28; Botana 1997a, 487–89). The heart of Sarmiento’s political program is war against

barbarism: cultural war, certainly, and shooting war if necessary. Without the will to fight such a war, liberal civilization will sooner or later succumb to barbarism.

Sarmiento viewed education, especially primary education, as central to civilization, for education means above all the formation and cultivation of reason. Furthermore, liberal democracies require a rational and liberal citizenry, thoughtful in the exercise of their rights and respectful of the rights of others, and such a citizenry is the product of education (Sarmiento 1915a, 21–23, 39, 64). Accordingly, *De la Educación Popular* was the book of his which he admired most (1998, 279–80). Given the roots of barbarism within human nature, given, that is, the natural tendency of our passions to reject the civilizing rule of reason, it is essential that we human beings be educated from the beginning to contain our passions and follow our reason. Furthermore, Sarmiento warns, traditional, patriarchal, Catholic families, with what he claims are their ignorant and violent fathers and their superstitious and overly indulgent mothers and wet nurses, cannot be trusted with this education. Consequently, Sarmiento argues for the importance not only of elementary school but also of kindergarten, nursery school, and what we would call day care, beginning with eighteen-month-old infants (1915a, 256–59, 263, 268). Children must learn to contain their passions through the acquisition of the simple but fundamental virtues of cleanliness, neatness, punctuality, and propriety (138, 311, 321–29). But these rational virtues and habits should never be instilled through violence or threats of divine punishment, since violence and threats of violence engender those harsh passions of anger and terror which pose the greatest threat to reason (126–28, 138, 304, 386–87). Religion may play a moralizing role in the education of the young, but it must be a religion without fear, without hellfire, without terror (Bunkley 1952, 195; Sarmiento 1915a, 367). Sarmiento acknowledges the naturally short attention span of children, who, “in one minute, pass through one hundred distinct ideas” (1915a, 260). But teachers should accommodate their teaching to the nature of their students rather than war against their nature (279–80). “To give children good habits and to inspire generous sentiments is the object of education of the first years” (303). Teachers must discover ways to guide the young’s energy and enthusiasm toward intellectual and moral virtue through enjoyable activities, through play, music, gymnastics, and discussion (189, 260–61, 303, 315, 385, 452–53). In *De la Educación Popular*, Sarmiento describes such a civilizing education in helpful and loving detail (see Addendum 7).

The education of women also constitutes a crucial element in Sarmiento's cultural revolution of Hispanic America. Following Tocqueville (2000, 563), Sarmiento insists that "never will one alter the way of being of a people without first changing the ideas and habits of life of the women" (1915a, 121). It is women "whom nature has instituted as tutors and guardians of childhood" (128). Women are naturally the best teachers of the young (259–61). Yet, alone among Christian peoples, Hispanic peoples do not allow women to become educated and thereby doom themselves to a condition of barbarism (128). Therefore, the liberalizing enlightenment of the future mothers and teachers of society is the necessary path to the liberalizing enlightenment of society. The civilization of men depends on the civilization of women (156–57).

Popular education will liberate children, boys and girls, from the benighted influence of parents and priests and, in the case of women, of husbands (Sarmiento 1998, 111–12; 1915a, 300). Public schools will replace churches as the centers of the community (1915a, 307, 341). By becoming a home for children, public schools in large measure will replace the family hearth as well (315). Sarmiento decries those pessimists who think that public education is futile and those liberals who believe that the path to civilization lies more surely in the exploitation of natural resources and commerce (309–10, 320, 342). It is schools which will be the seminaries of reason and the incubators of civilization.

But, for a civilized society, education never ends. A lifelong apprenticeship, a continuous, ever higher, education, constitutes the essence of civilized human beings (Sarmiento 1915a, 456). The higher dimension of this liberalizing education is a liberalizing literature which engages our passions and our imaginations in the service of reason, a democratic, Plutarchian education which presents both negative and positive models of human life. "There is a democratic nobility" which must be the aim of this higher education. And the means to achieving that aim is biography. For biography is "the most adequate material on which to engrave good ideas; he who writes it exercises a species of justice, punishing vice triumphant, encouraging virtue obscured. There is something in it of the fine arts which, from a fragment of uncut marble, bequeath to posterity a statue" (1998, 51). Sarmiento sought to create such a literature for Latin America (Crowley 1972, 62, 148). His literary project was thus central to his political project of founding a liberal Hispanic civilization.

Sarmiento wrote a trilogy on barbarians—*Aldao*, *Facundo*,

Chacho—and the first two works especially present an unforgettable portrait of the greatest barbarian of all, Rosas. The goal of these works is to promote, not only a recognition of and an aversion to barbarism, but also an aversion based on a clear, honest appreciation of how naturally appealing and seductive barbarism can be. But a higher education must present positive models as well. For example, “The life of Franklin should form a part of the books for elementary schools. His example is so encouraging, the course that he followed is so accessible to all, that there is no boy, who has a bit of good inclination, who would not be tempted to be a little Franklin, thanks to that beautiful tendency of the human spirit to imitate the models of perfection which it imagines” (Sarmiento 1998, 218–19, 282). Sarmiento’s superb biography of Lincoln, the first ever written in Spanish, has a similarly didactic intention. Lincoln’s life is a school of good government (Sarmiento 1952, 29–30; Bunkley 1952, 431). South Americans should especially study Lincoln, for his example demonstrates that liberalism need not be weak, that constitutional government need not be defenseless, and, perhaps most importantly, that a democratic people can honor and even elevate itself to heroism (Sarmiento 1952, 27–28, 212, 286). Finally, Sarmiento self-consciously presents himself throughout his works—especially in *Recuerdos de Provincia*, his “masterpiece” (Halperín Donghi 1997, 26)—as an example of a noble but democratic human being and hence as a model for imitation: as a full-blooded man, full of spirited passion, soaring ambition, and romantic sentiment but who nonetheless governs himself through reason and liberal democratic principle. Sarmiento was attacked throughout his life as a dangerously arrogant man, but Sarmiento knew that, in the weighty judgment of Aristotle, a just pride is a noble virtue (Sarmiento 1998, 6; Alberdi 1945, 30; Gálvez 1945, 217, 633).

While Sarmiento cherished the hope that education would enable civilization to triumph over barbarism, he always believed that the threat of barbarism is a permanent threat and therefore that “This struggle [against barbarism] will be eternal” (1950, 39; Martínez Estrada 1956, 160–61; Halperín Donghi 1997, 18). Furthermore, education alone, words alone, cannot always overpower the enemies of liberal civilization. For “Eloquence is a useless weapon, among peoples and men with rough hearts and hard minds, when the tenacious will of the barbarian . . . sets its course” (Sarmiento 1998, 255). Accordingly, free peoples must be willing to resort to force (DiTella 1998, 15–16). Sarmiento repeatedly praised Lincoln for his willingness to use the might of the state in order to defend the liberal order (Sarmiento 1949b, 338, 340–41, 380–83). And Sarmiento himself waged a harsh war against the warlord Chacho in order to defend the incipient liberal, post-Rosista republic

of Argentina (1949b). Sarmiento was and continues to be accused of using barbaric means to defeat barbarism and hence of becoming the barbarian caudillo that he so passionately deplors (Sarmiento 1949b, 353–54; Gálvez 1945, 373, 633; Martínez Estrada 1956, 139–40; Shumway 1991, 230–31). But he always argued that a war in defense of civilization cannot be barbaric, and that a strong republican executive is necessary precisely in order to avoid the anarchy from which genuinely tyrannical leaders may spring (Sarmiento 1949b, 339–40, 345). Sarmiento was always opposed to authoritarianism. He insisted that even apparently good despotism is bad (1949a, 278). While he greatly admired Locke, Sarmiento attacked Hobbes, he attacked his illustrious compatriot, the liberal Hobbesian theorist Juan Bautista Alberdi, and he was consequently condemned by Alberdi as an anarchist (Alberdi 1945, 70–71; Gálvez 1945, 244; see Addendum 8). But like Locke, while Sarmiento believed that anarchy was less bad than tyranny, he also believed that a powerful liberal executive, exercising the executive's prerogative even to suspend the rule of law, is vitally necessary for the preservation of liberal civilization (Sarmiento 1949b, 380–85; 1948, 102, 240–41, 329, 333–34; 1941, 36; Locke 1988, *Second Treatise*, paragraphs 13, 137, 159–64, 228).

Sarmiento argues that, since the threat of barbarism is eternal, the struggle against barbarism must be eternal. Hence, even though liberal politics would seem to be a politics of peace, commerce, and prosperity, a central task of liberal politics must be to wage constant war, sometimes through education, sometimes with bullets, against the forces of barbarism and terrorism. For, sadly, liberalism can never prevail once and for all against the all-too-natural forces opposing it. Indeed, since both liberalism and illiberalism are rooted in our nature, human nature would seem to be hopelessly and tragically divided. And given this natural division, and given the impossibility of a final victory for liberalism and hence the impossibility of an end of history, it would seem that Sarmiento's understanding of liberalism is, when all is said and done, not merely somber but bleak or pessimistic or tragic, since liberals are doomed to wage an endless, ultimately unwinnable war against barbarism.

Yet, Sarmiento regarded the struggle on behalf of liberal civilization as an ennobling struggle and therefore, in a sense, as a blessing. For Sarmiento was acutely sensitive to the concern that liberal democracies lacked human grandeur, that they degraded human beings into merely prosaic, calculating, commercial, cowardly beings, into, as Nietzsche was to say, last men. Sarmiento was always eager to highlight the possibility of democratic

nobility and democratic heroism. Because Sarmiento knew the horrors of war, he never romanticized war (Botana 1997a, 368). But he knew that war presented opportunities for genuine heroism, as, for example, the horrific American Civil War was the occasion for Lincoln's greatness. Sarmiento's great adversary, Alberdi, complained that Sarmiento was always waging war, that he was always fighting, that he did not realize that, in the progressive, modern world, "the epoch of heroes is past; we enter today into the age of good sense." (Alberdi 1945, 14; 1998, 75; also Gálvez 1945, 268; Martínez Estrada 1956, 152–53; Romero 1998, 154; Grondona 1999, 226–27; Botana 1997a, 474, 484). But Sarmiento knew that the time for heroes is never past. He knew that future centuries too would need heroes to defend liberal civilization if the forces of terrorism and barbarism were not to triumph. Sarmiento's conviction that liberalism does not destroy human greatness but rather allows it to flourish best explains why his awareness of the natural fragility of liberalism never led him to doubt that the cause of liberalism is, in the modern world, at least, the cause of civilization.

ADDENDA

1. Kirkpatrick and Masiello observe that, "Despite the enormous significance of his place in history, Sarmiento, today more than ever, is visible for his legacy to literature" (1994, 6). Shumway, while harshly critical of Sarmiento, argues that *Civilización i barbarie: Facundo* foreshadows "the most original aspects of contemporary Latin American fiction . . . [and] remains a work of astounding and prophetic creativity" (1991, 162–64). Halperín Donghi claims that, while "The schematic Sarmiento who struggled against barbarism is, then, at every moment, a more faded memory," the discovery has recently been made that he is a "great writer" (1997, 34). Halperín Donghi offers a superb account of Sarmiento's true greatness and importance as a writer (1997, 34–42). Martínez Estrada remarks that, in reading Sarmiento, one is tempted to read him out loud (1956, 189). Even Gálvez praises the beauty of *Recuerdos de Provincia* (1945, 217; also 137, 154, 179, 204). I argue that Sarmiento's literary project is central to his political project and therefore his literary greatness cannot be separated from his political thought.

2. Sarmiento aspired to become, among other things, the Tocqueville of Hispanic America (1997a, 16; 1948, 72–73, 99; Ingenieros 1915, 14; Botana 1994, 105–8; Bunkley 1952, 210). Bunkley rightly argues that Sarmiento is generally more optimistic about the future of the United States

than Tocqueville, but he overlooks Sarmiento's more sober understanding of the enduring threat of a harsh despotism (1952, 300–3; Botana 1997a, 367–68).

3. Sarmiento says of Franklin's autobiography, "no book has benefited me more than this one. The life of Franklin was for me what the lives of Plutarch were for him, for Rousseau, Henry IV, Madame Roland, and so many others" (1998, 218; also 69, 213, 218–19, 282; Bunkley 1952, 58–59, 423; Crowley 1972, 26, 93, 130, 152; Halperín Donghi 1997, 16, 25; Gálvez 1945, 42).

4. Sarmiento may have learned this word from Edmund Burke, whom Sarmiento admired tremendously (1915b, 330), and who coined this word, at least in English, in 1795 (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 1971, s.v. "terrorist").

5. Bunkley speaks of Sarmiento's view of "the Spanish heritage" as a cause of barbarism but fails to focus on or even to mention the crucial element of that heritage, Catholicism (184–86, 171–73).

6. Even such critics as Shumway call Sarmiento's achievements as President "impressive" (Shumway 1991, 253; Halperín Donghi 1997, 30; Botana 1997b, 51–61; Conde 1994, 120–22; Gálvez 1945, 649–50, 659).

7. Martínez Estrada offers a wonderful account of Sarmiento's love of teaching (1956, 22–25). While Sarmiento was an admirer of Socrates, he was, in his understanding of education, influenced above all by Rousseau, especially by his *Emile* (Sarmiento 1950, 89; 1998, 25, 175–76, 260, 93–94; Rousseau 1979, 135–36; Gálvez 1945, 642).

8. Halperín Donghi and Botana offer helpful accounts of the contrast between the "progressive authoritarianism" of Alberdi and the liberal republicanism of Sarmiento (Halperín Donghi 1995, 16–17, 22, 28, 30–32, 34, 39, 84, 97–98; Botana 1997a; 1997b, 29–31). Sarmiento was an admirer of Locke but a critic of Hobbes (1950, 69; 1915b, 190; 1948, 102). Grondona defends Alberdi's authoritarian liberalism by arguing that, while the Anglo-Saxon world is indelibly Lockean, the Hispanic world is indelibly Hobbesian (Grondona 1999, 97–99, 403–10; 1986). Botana argues that both Alberdi and Sarmiento were haunted by the thought of Hobbes (1997a, 338–40, 367–68, 392–97; 1994, 104–5).

R E F E R E N C E S

*The author thanks Alejandra Arce Ahrens Dorf, Robert C. Bartlett, Alejandro Bedoya, Natalio Botana, Montgomery Brown, Russell Crandall, Steven J. Kautz, J. Judd Owen, Carlos A. Rodriguez, and Richard S. Ruderman for their valuable assistance and the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (Fulbright Program), Davidson College, the Earhart Foundation, the Smith Richardson Foundation, and the Universidad del CEMA in Buenos Aires, Argentina for their generous support.

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The Thumotic and the Erotic Soul: Seth Benardete on Platonic Psychology

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I. THE DUAL PRINCIPLES OF PLATONIC PSYCHOLOGY

In the poem, “Ode to Aphrodite,” Sappho gives expression to her “raging heart,” suffering from the experience of unrequited love (see Appendix). Summoned by the poet, Aphrodite comes down from heaven and asks, “Who has committed an injustice against you, Sappho?” In the end, Sappho seeks the promise of the goddess to be her ally in war. In this poem, Seth Benardete comments, love is understood “in terms of right and Aphrodite as a goddess of revenge. The issues of justice and love are presented together, and there is no suggestion that they could be separated once Sappho asks a god to alleviate her suffering.” Benardete discerned in the poem what he took to be the two fundamental principles of Platonic psychology: “Eros and moral indignation seem to be alternative grounds for what constitutes the nature of man” (1991, 195).

These comments on Sappho’s ode appear in the Epilogue to Benardete’s study of the *Phaedrus* and *Gorgias*. In the *Phaedrus*, he observes, Socrates acknowledges the experiential truth of Sappho’s coupling of justice and love through his image of the war chariot of the soul, but he also suggests how it would be possible to uncouple them. (“The result of such an uncoupling,” Benardete goes on, “can be seen in the *Gorgias*, where Socrates anatomizes the will to punish and its appearance of rationality” [1991, 195].) Benardete was working out both possibilities in pairing his reading of Plato’s two dialogues on rhetoric. The art of speaking, which consists in the adjustment of speeches to souls, necessarily takes a twofold form, reflecting the two fundamental and irreducible principles of psychology: in connection with the

longing for justice, which can inspire moral indignation, punitive rhetoric, in connection with love of the beautiful, erotic rhetoric. But the two are not of equal rank: one turns out to be “spurious rhetoric,” which is nothing but “a phantom image of justice,” while “genuine rhetoric is the science of eros” (1991, 2). Benardete indicates their respective status by the title of his book, *The Rhetoric of Morality and Philosophy*.

The nature of the soul reflected in these two forms of rhetoric shows up in the two distinct forms of idealization displayed by the longing for justice, on the one hand, love of the beautiful, on the other. The dual principles of psychology bring in their wake, as a consequence, a twofold theology—of punitive gods, who enforce justice, and beautiful gods, who inspire eros. The two kinds are paradigmatically represented by the gods Benardete singled out as the special creations of the poets, Hades and Eros. (With Hades as the setting of the *Protagoras* and Eros as the subject of the *Symposium*, those two dialogues, Benardete proposes, exhibit the theological dimension of the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* [1991, 3].) Now Hades, as Benardete shows through his reading of the *Republic* as well as the *Protagoras*, “is nothing but a name for the city,” and the god Eros, on Benardete’s reading of the *Phaedrus*, is nothing but “the manifold of human erotic natures” (2002, 35, 83). In the gods of the poets—the higher beings we fear and those we look up to in admiration—Benardete found “the prefiguration of the problematic unity of a Platonic psychology” (1991, 2).

Precisely as such a prefiguration, the gods point to that same “problematic unity” in being itself, more specifically, in the relation of the just and the beautiful: the theology implied by the principles of Platonic psychology is the pointer to ontology. If philosophy always aims at an understanding of being or the beings as a whole, it has, in Benardete’s beautifully paradoxical formula, an “eccentric core,” which is political philosophy (1978, 5); but what links political philosophy to first philosophy is the understanding of the human soul. Benardete formulates this relation in reflections on the thought of his teacher, Leo Strauss, on the occasion of a memorial speech. (He draws this conclusion from his interpretation of *Natural Right and History* as a study of modern political philosophy’s “successive dismantling of the disparate wholeness of the soul” [1974, 3].) The remark he goes on to make in that context—“Plato’s psychology was Strauss’s way to Plato’s ideas”—seems even more obviously applicable to his own thought.

If psychology is the way to the ideas, Strauss’s way into Platonic psychology, Benardete observes, was through the *Republic*; but no

Platonic dialogue, he adds, yields a complete theory of the soul. (The *Republic* itself, Benardete notes in this context, reveals the tension between the political and the natural relation of *thumos* and *eros*, and it does so by the action that accompanies its argument [1974, 4]. Does he mean that the surface argument spells out the political relation of *thumos* and *eros*, while the natural relation between them is suggested by the action of the dialogue? The first, that would mean, belongs to the “best city in speech,” the second to what Benardete came to call the “dialogic city” [1989, 137, 140].) Socrates introduces his psychology in the *Republic* with a warning to his companions—which is Plato’s warning to his readers: the present path they are following, in their search for justice, cannot lead to a precise account of the soul, but a longer and harder road would be required (435d). Socrates suggests one way to interpret that longer and harder road when he later expresses his hesitancy to discuss the good—the final end that every soul pursues and for the sake of which it does everything (504a–505a, e). But since every Platonic dialogue seems to offer its own unique way into the human soul, perhaps the longer and harder road would in fact require putting together all those partial and distorted paths, or understanding why they cannot be put together. Benardete, who traveled far on that longer and harder road in the course of his life’s work, seems to have come to the conclusion that Plato’s plurality of ways into the human soul are all variants on two fundamental and irreducible modes, the thumotic and the erotic, determined by two central experiences, the will to justice and love of the beautiful.

The template of the thumotic soul is worked out in Book IV of the *Republic*, where Socrates addresses the question whether the class structure of the city has a perfect match in the structure of the individual soul. (That template is filled out, Benardete demonstrates, by the sequence of three interlocutors in the *Gorgias*, where rationality of some sort is represented by Gorgias’ praise of his art of rhetoric, spiritedness by Polus’ display of the will to punish, and desire by Callicles’ advocacy of hedonism [1991, 91–92].) The template of the erotic soul is furnished by the chariot image of the soul, which Socrates presents in the “mythic hymn” to Eros he delivers in the *Phaedrus*. The two accounts are typically assumed to be roughly the same; each articulates, after all, a tripartite psychology—the Platonic theory, scholars seem to agree, that marks an advance on the supposedly earlier treatment of the unitary soul, soul as essentially mind, with no place for the passions (Grube 1958, 131, 133; Smith 1998, viii).

The *Republic* and the *Phaedrus* may each present a tripartite analysis of the human soul; but each account is colored, of course, by the

unique role it plays in its particular context. Benardete set out, on that assumption, to uncover the distinctive understanding of the soul caught in the grip of erotic passion in contrast with the soul consumed by moral indignation; yet he was able to accomplish that task precisely because of his recognition of the common way both accounts work, which undercuts the standard view of each. The fixed structure of the tripartite soul, in its two versions, is the official Platonic doctrine that emerges from the speeches of the *Republic* and the *Phaedrus*; by uncovering the deeds that give rise to those speeches, Benardete's reading sets that rigid structure in motion. What he discovers is a dynamic process of shifting self-division, or self-multiplication, through which the soul structures itself. In the case of the soul suffering moral indignation, that self-structuring is the deed of *thumos*; for the soul aroused by the beautiful, it is the product of *eros*. These deeds contain the key to an understanding of the passions of the soul and the ideas with which they are linked. Each account thus proves to be a striking model in miniature of what Benardete came to call "the argument of the action" (2000b, 409).

II. THE THUMOTIC SOUL

The city that provides the model for the soul in *Republic* IV has been constructed out of three classes: the money-making class, the guardians, and the "perfect guardians" or rulers. About that highest class we know almost nothing at this stage of the argument, most importantly, nothing about the philosopher playing such a role. This city has been found to be just insofar as each of the three classes in it does its own thing. To find out whether justice means the same thing in the individual, we have to determine if there are three corresponding forms (*eidē*) in the soul (435b). We would have expected to hear of "parts" of the soul, but there is no talk of parts because, as we shall see, there is no whole. (The term "part" [*meros*] appears for the first time only when the psychology becomes the basis for an account of the virtues [*Republic* 442b–c].)

A construction of the soul parallel to the class structure of the city requires three steps. The first separates desire and reason so absolutely that neither has any trace of the other and they are essentially in conflict with each other. To accomplish this absolute separation, Socrates holds our psychic experience up to the law of non-contradiction—the first time, scholars say, this fundamental principle is articulated: since the same thing is not willing to do or suffer opposites in the same respect in relation to the same thing at the same time, any appearance of such opposition psychologically means it is not the

experience of a single subject (436b). (It is an abstraction of mathematics—the spinning top whose axis is perfectly at rest—that provides the model, Benardete notes, for the soul turned into an ‘idea’ [1989, 95].)

To make desire itself free from any internal contradiction, Socrates must assign to each appetite a syntax, as Benardete puts it, which yokes it to a precisely specified object—much thirst for much drink, little thirst for little drink, while thirst itself is the desire for drink itself, drink that is not hot or cold, much or little, or, most importantly, good. Desire, according to this analysis, has nothing of that natural orientation to the good Socrates will later ascribe to it (505e). To make the separation he does of the rational and the desiderative, Benardete observes, Socrates “must disprove himself—he who seems to insist everywhere that all men desire the goods (438a3–4)” (1989, 94).

If the soul of the thirsty person wants nothing but to drink, anything that pulls it back from drinking when thirsty, Socrates reasons, must be something other than that which drives it like a beast toward drinking (439a-b). Out of nowhere desire is bestialized. With just as little justification, Socrates asks whether it is not calculation that prohibits, restraining the irrational craving of diseased appetite. But why, Socrates should have been asked, must desire always lead forward and reason pull back? Couldn’t desire in some cases pull us back in repulsion and reason urge us forward? Why indeed should desire necessarily be diseased, not to mention bestial? And why should reason have no other function than to restrain desire?

To apply the law of non-contradiction to the soul, Socrates appeals to the image of the archer: we must say he does nothing as a whole, but one hand pushes the bow, the other pulls. Of course, Benardete reasons, those opposite motions yield one result, so if desire and reason are like the two hands, they are in fact bound together from the start, aiming at the good as their target (1989, 137, 140). But at the moment Socrates reaches a conclusion that altogether denies such a possibility: that by which the soul calculates is entirely other than that by which it feels passionate love (*eran*) and hunger and thirst and the flutter of other irrational desires (439d). With no argument at all, Socrates slips *eros* into the class of desire, of which hunger and thirst were the exemplars. Like all the appetites, it has no rationality of its own, and stands over against a reason that has no desire of its own. *Eros* as desire for the good, which is the essential principle of philosophy (*Symposium* 203e-204b), is on this account utterly incomprehensible.

Once desire and reason have been so radically divorced, the task remains of separating spiritedness, or *thumos*, from each in turn. The immediate response of Glaucon, whose character is manly and erotic at once (357a, 402d-403c), is to assume the natural unity of *thumos* and desire. Socrates sets out to disprove such a possibility on the basis of a story he has heard. A certain Leontius was on his way up from the Piraeus when he became aware of corpses lying at the place of public execution. As intensely as he desired to look on the scene, he turned himself away just as intensely in disgust.

And for a while he fought and covered his face, but finally overcome by his desire, he dragged open his eyes, ran toward the corpses, and said, "Here they are for you, O miserable wretches, get your fill of the beautiful sight." (439e-440a) (1989, 99)

The anecdote is supposed to illustrate the cut between *thumos* and desire. Desire was illustrated originally by thirst and hunger and Leontius' case looks as if it fits that model when he commands his eyes to satiate themselves. Their feast is a "beautiful spectacle"; but that is only the sarcastic voice of anger speaking. Commentators have been baffled by the nature of the strange desire that is supposed to be moving Leontius; if they speculate at all, they imagine it some kind of perverse sexual appetite (Cooper 1998, 33-35, 41; Annas 1981, 127-28).

As is so often the case, Benardete's eye was captured by a detail that commonly goes unnoticed, though once brought into one's field of vision, makes the whole picture look entirely different: the corpses Leontius wants to gaze upon lie at the site of public execution. This impulse can be attributed to the faculty of desire, Benardete observes, only because "language decides the issue before Socrates can be asked the right question: what is the desire to see the corpses of publicly executed criminals?" (1989, 99). What is moving Leontius is the desire to see justice done. But this impulse fills him at the same time with shame. Only a spectator, not an agent, of punishment, Leontius must find something disgraceful in the pleasure of vicarious revenge he anticipates; he addresses his eyes, Benardete notes, with a comic word that expresses contempt (*kakodaimones*). But the shame Leontius exhibits goes deeper: he wants to see justice done because it is something noble or beautiful, but punitive justice appears before him in all its ugliness and ignobility. His psychological conflict is the response to a contradiction within the just, in its relation to the beautiful. (Benardete's reading of Socrates' conversation with Polus in the *Gorgias* is an extended reflection on this contradiction within the just and the psychological conflict it engenders [1989, 99; 1991, 54-55]. See

also Benardete's comments on the Athenian Stranger's discussion of the tension between the just and the beautiful [*Laws* IX. 859d2–860c3; 1989, 102].)

Leontius' angry self-rebuke is presumably the expression of his *thumos*; but his desire to see justice done, which is the target of his anger, belongs no less to the spirited part of the soul. The story of Leontius is in fact an illustration of *thumos* in conflict with itself. It has been turned into an illustration of *thumos* warring against desire by a series of poetic tropes. By a double metaphor the demand for justice becomes the desire for a certain sight, and that in turn bodily hunger; then by a double synecdoche, the eyes that stand in for the desire to see become a stomach to be filled; finally, through personification, Leontius treats his eyes as an independent subject with a will of their own. The "cannibalistic eye," as Benardete puts it so vividly, is "a belly hungry for a beautiful sight." And it is only anger that could have created this independent living being in order to satisfy its needs while remaining innocent itself (1989, 99).

Anger, Glaucon agrees after hearing the story of Leontius, sometimes wars against desire as something alien; but the possibility that *thumos* could ever ally itself with desire is something he suddenly finds shocking. The obvious case, Benardete proposes, is the lover who finds his unrequited love unfair; but the denial of that possibility, he notes, reflects the presupposition of the *Republic* as a whole, "that justice and love are wholly separate and never interfere with one another" (1989, 100). (The way "the justified indignation about injustice shifts insensibly into the unjustified indignation about unrequited love" is, Leo Strauss once suggested, "perhaps the deepest secret of spiritedness" [1996, 192-93].)

Whatever the occasion might be, what makes *thumos* boil up, Socrates reasons, is the belief that one is suffering unjustly. In such a condition, *thumos* allies itself with what is believed just and persists in the fight for it until it accomplishes its will or else meets with death—unless it is called back by *logos*, like a dog called back by the shepherd (440c-d). What Socrates has in fact described is the attachment of *thumos* to its own sense of injustice, which can lead to self-destruction if not restrained by an opposing *logos*. But the familiarity of the image of the watchdog—from which Socrates had deduced the possibility of the guardian nature (376a-c)—is enough to convince Glaucon that Socrates has demonstrated the natural allegiance of spiritedness with reason. In speaking of this allegiance, Socrates introduces a new designation—the *thumoeides*. Benardete uncovers here, as he so often does, the argument conveyed through language itself. The *thumoeides*, as its suffix indi-

cates, is only like *thumos*: it is always playing at being the natural impulse of anger. By a kind of pun, at the same time, its name suggests that the *thumoeides* has a role to play in the formation of *eidē*. Now we understand why Socrates asked originally whether the three classes in the city have a counterpart, not in three parts, but in three *eidē* in the soul, the *thumoeides* is in the midst of constructing those forms, whose atomistic independence and absence of internal contradiction seem to reflect the character, on one understanding at least, of the *eidē* as such. The *thumoeides*, in Benardete's words, is "the spirit of eideticization" (1989, 100; 56). (The two features of the *thumoeides*—in its connection with anger and with the "ideas"—first show up together in Thrasymachus [336b and 340c–341a]. Benardete credits Leo Strauss with the discovery of his twofold significance: having learned from Alfarabi about Thrasymachus' ability to play the city in its anger, he went on to connect that with Thrasymachus' insistence on the artisan in the precise sense, who never errs [1978, 9–11].)

If the structure of the soul is to map perfectly onto the class-structure of the city, a cut must still be made between the *thumoeides* and the calculating part of the soul. To accomplish this, Socrates appeals to Homer's portrait of Odysseus in a moment of inner conflict: "He struck his breast and rebuked his heart" (Odyssey 20.17-18). (The line that was cited in *Republic* III to illustrate the virtue of patient endurance [390d], and is now supposed to show how Homer has made [*pepoiēken*] that which calculates about better and worse rebuke the irrationally spirited element in the soul, as if one thing against an other [*hōs heteron heterō*, 441b], is used in the *Phaedo* to support the claim that the unitary soul can oppose the feelings of the body [94b–c].) In this passage from the Odyssey, Odysseus lies on the floor at night in his own home, still disguised as a beggar, watching the slave girls laughing and cavorting as they go to sleep with the suitors. *Thumos* was aroused in his breast, Homer tells us, and his heart growled, like a bitch guarding her babies at the sight of a stranger. (Homer's image seems to have inspired Socrates' description of the nature of the guardians, who are supposed to be spirited and philosophic at once—like a watch dog that discriminates solely on the basis of what is familiar and strange, and must therefore be a lover of learning, that is, a lover of wisdom [376a–c]! With this "evidently forced solution," Benardete remarks, *thumos* "has made the philosophic nature in its own image" [1989, 57].)

Just as he is about to jump up and kill the women, Odysseus holds himself back, remembering his bigger plan to confront the suitors.

When Socrates cited the same passage in *Republic* III (390d), he included the next line: “Endure, heart! You once put up with something even more disgraceful” (*kunteron*, literally, “more doglike”). Odysseus gets control of his anger back home by recalling one of the most terrible moments on his journey—watching the Cyclops seize two of his companions, dash them to the ground, cut them up, and devour them. At that moment, as Odysseus himself later describes it, his *thumos* was possessed by a sense of helplessness. When the Cyclops lay down to sleep, however, he formed a plan in his *thumos* to stab him with his sword; but an other *thumos* then held him back, as he realized the impossibility of escaping from the Cyclops’ cave, blocked by a rock too large to move (Odyssey 9.299). In that situation, Odysseus tells his heart as he watches the laughing slave girls, you endured until wisdom (*mētis*) found a way out of the cave (20.22–24). Odysseus connects wisdom (*mētis*) with “no one” (*mē tis*), the name he gave himself in his encounter with the Cyclops (9.366, 407–414): his profound pun, which lies at the heart of Benardete’s reading of the *Odyssey* (1997, 74–79, 124–128), points to the anonymity of mind and raises the question of the relation between reason and anger in Odysseus’ motivation.

At the moment he reacts to the slave girls, in any case, Odysseus seems to be moved by the passion of anger; and if it is rationality that holds him back, it is a purely instrumental sort, which, by means of beating and rebuking, restrains spiritedness only to help it achieve its own end. If this inner struggle of *thumos* with itself looks like two independent agents in conflict, it is by the silent poetry Odysseus uses to get control: identifying his “self” with the calculation that holds him back, he treats his passion for revenge as something alien, projecting it onto his body. More specifically, he identifies his passion for revenge by a synecdoche with his heart, and then personifies his heart so it becomes an agent with a will of its own, which can be exhorted to behave in the desired manner.

Homer, we realize, has provided the model for the soul in its thumotic mode, of which the Leontius story looks like Plato’s invented variant. Of course, the Homeric passage is a depiction of self-mastery, whereas the story of Leontius is one of self-defeat. Odysseus’ anger is firmly directed outward and his conflict is simply about when to act. Leontius, on the other hand, is torn apart inside as a result of his sudden awareness that the beautiful and the just do not always coincide; his moral indignation toward others, consequently, has taken on a punitive form turned against himself.

Socrates does not call attention to the complex nature of the

thumotic soul as he has disclosed it in deed. Looking back, instead, on his speeches, he breathes a sigh of relief that he has somehow made it through these troubling waters and demonstrated the tripartite structure of the soul in perfect correspondence with the class structure of the city. He can now draw a conclusion on the basis of that political paradigm: justice in the soul must be the condition that obtains when each of the three forms does its proper work, while injustice is faction or disease in the soul. The question that set the whole inquiry in motion—whether being just is truly in our self-interest—now seems ridiculous even to ask, if justice is nothing but the inner order of the healthy soul. Socrates has, apparently, overcome the skeptical doubts of his companions—the *Republic* should end right here; but whether health of soul has been adequately represented is another question.

The speeches of *Republic* IV have confirmed the *eidos* of justice as the proper order of the tripartite soul and the parallel city. But that order has been produced by justice as a passion of the soul—the passion to see the guilty punished. If we follow Benardete’s lead and look to the action behind the speeches, we realize it was *thumos* that was responsible for the bestialization of desire; and it was *thumos* that reduced reason to calculation, with no end of its own. In following the argument of this action, one performs what Benardete calls an “eidetic analysis.” (The *Republic* as a whole is “an eidetic analysis of the beautiful, the good, and the just insofar as they contribute to the understanding of the just” [1989, 5].) In the course of that analysis the spurious character of the *eidē*, in their fixity and independence, is replaced by the fluid structure of an “indeterminate dyad” (2000b, 371–72): *thumos* first melds itself with reason in order to detach desire as the other, then it gets fused with desire in order to detach reason as the other. Behind the doctrine of three separate parts of the soul lies a dynamic relation between thumotic desire and thumotic reason.

Justice as health of soul is supposed to be the inner order that obtains when spiritedness allies itself with calculation in order to suppress desire; but that is an inner order that cannot belong to the philosopher, in whom desire and reason are inseparable and *thumos* seems to have no place. (That, at least, is what Plato seems to imply when he has a variety of figures—from Callicles to Crito—accuse Socrates of being unable or unwilling to stand up and defend himself against injustice. The Athenian Stranger imagines the speech of a legislator who exhorts every man to be thumoeidetic as well as gentle, since it is not possible to escape from incurable injustices other than by defending oneself and punishing, which no soul can do without noble *thumos*

[*Laws* 731b–e]. The Stranger seems to be preparing the ground, Benardete comments, for “the enigma of book 9: how a Socratic principle can be the foundation of criminal law” [2000a, 157].) The argument of the action of *Republic* IV discloses the essential limits of the thumotic soul; what lies altogether beyond its grasp is the erotic soul, which belongs above all to the philosopher.

III. THE EROTIC SOUL

The erotic soul is the subject of the account Socrates presents in the *Phaedrus*, in the last of the dialogue’s three speeches on eros. In this “palinode” or recantation, Socrates sets out to purify himself from his previous condemnation of eros, delivered in competition with the original written speech by the rhetorician Lysias. Lysias represented a sober non-lover seeking to persuade a beloved against granting his favors to the mad lover; Socrates’ revision, while retaining the argument of the non-lover, reveals him to be a seductive lover in disguise. Moved now by shame at giving voice to that argument, and fear of the god Eros, Socrates promises to establish the divine madness of eros as the source of our greatest blessings in life.

To demonstrate this, Socrates must provide an account of the nature of the soul, divine and human. The starting point (*archē*) is the proof that soul is ever-moving self-motion (*Phaedrus* 245c). Socrates seems to leave that principle behind when he turns to the *idea* of the soul, which should exhibit its structure. (On the general tension between principle and structure, see Benardete 1989, 126, and 2000b, 345.) In place, however, of a “divine and long narration” about the *idea* of the soul, Socrates offers a “shorter and human” likeness—the famous image of the chariot team, composed of a pair of winged horses and charioteer (246a). The story that unfolds turns on the relation between the two “motions” of this psychic chariot team: on the one hand, an ascent to the region beyond the heavens where the pure beings are to be seen, on the other, the advance of the lover toward union with the beloved. The wings of the soul are responsible for lifting it upward, the horses for pulling the chariot-team of the lover into the presence of the beloved—or rather, that one of the horses who is obstreperous and hard to control. This unruly horse makes it difficult to remain aloft, contemplating the hyperuranian beings; but without his persistent demands to advance toward the beloved, the upward journey would not be initiated at all. As Benardete here and so often observed, the way is the obstacle. The wings of the soul, he explains, “do not convey the soul straight up; instead the horizontal motion

of the horses interferes with such an ascent. A resolution of the two motions leads to a skewed ascent” (2002, 75).

This skewed ascent is the path the human chariot team follows in the company of a god, one of the eleven Olympian gods—Hestia, the twelfth, stays at home. But in whatever divine troop it follows, no soul can enter into the figure of a human being unless it has caught a glimpse of the beings, however momentary and partial. Mind, according to this speech, looks like the defining feature of the human. The extent of our vision of the beings determines a typology of human beings, which Socrates articulates in a ranking of nine classes. How, we wonder, are those nine cognitive types to be put together with the eleven erotic types, determined by the Olympian god each of us follows? Benardete alerts us to the puzzle of the speech as a whole by calling attention to this sign of the gap between the passion of soul and mind; what bridges that gap, he leads us to see, is the beautiful.

Our rationality, which is supposed to define us as human, consists, according to Socrates, in our capacity to collect many perceptions into one form, which is a recollection of our hyperuranian vision. But there is one experience in particular that has the power to elicit this recollection: while all the other beings, like justice or moderation, have only obscure likenesses here on earth, beauty alone reveals itself to us in all its resplendence. The visibly beautiful, in the appearance of the beloved as an Olympian god, awakens the memory of the truly beautiful. Erotic madness is just this experience, in Benardete’s words, of “being reminded of the non-discursive beautiful itself by the sight of a phantom image of it” (1991, 154; 2002, 77).

As Socrates describes this experience, the soul that is uncorrupted, when it comes upon the sight of a “divine-like face or some *idea* of the body,” is filled with awe and reveres the beautiful one like a god (251a). A stream of beauty flows into the lover’s eyes and warms him, watering the hard and choked passages from which the wings can then begin to grow. The torturous prickings of desire—Socrates likens the experience to teething—fill the lover’s soul with terrible pangs, which can only be relieved, momentarily, by the sight of the beloved. This reception of the beautiful is a universal experience; but everyone undergoes it in a distinctive way. Each lover looks for the traces in his own nature of the god he follows, then seeks a beloved who instantiates the type; and when he finds him, Socrates adds, he molds him into that model. “The response to the beautiful,” Benardete remarks, “is shaped by a prior form of soul that depends not on the beings but on the gods... Accordingly, there is a forced fitting of the

beloved into a previously fashioned image” (1991, 154).

The lover falls in love, literally, “at first sight.” But the vision of the beloved does not alone satisfy his longing. He cannot help but yearn for the requital of his love. There is no reason, however, that the beloved should respond at first sight, if at all. (Lysias’ non-lover blamed the lover for his unjustified appeal to justice, as if his passion brought with it the right to be loved in return [*Phaedrus* 233d–234a].) The lover’s effort to draw the beloved to himself can only be accomplished by fashioning an image in speech that will be persuasive to the beloved: he needs to replace by speech the beautiful vision that aroused his love without any need for speeches. This task marks the moment when the seemingly disparate topics of the dialogue—eros and rhetoric—intersect. The lover’s construction of an image in speech exemplifies the practice of erotic rhetoric, and it contains, as Benardete explores it, the key to the structure of the soul.

It is no accident, then, that Socrates puts the image of the chariot team to work only at the last stage of his speech—in describing the capture of the beloved. (The need for the “capture” of the beloved is especially striking when Socrates begins to speak at just this point of the blessings that will come to “the one befriended” from his “mad friend” because of eros [253c], invoking the natural reciprocity of friendship.) Socrates recalls the beginning of his speech, which distinguished in the human chariot team, as opposed to the divine, one horse that is “beautiful and good” (*kalos k’agathos*)—the ordinary term for a gentleman—from the other, who is just the contrary; but it is only at this point that Socrates is prepared to explain what that difference consists in and how it shows up in our erotic experience. The one horse, we now learn, is well-articulated, high-necked with an aquiline nose, white in color with dark eyes, a lover of honor with moderation and shame, a companion of true opinion, obedient to command and *logos* alone; the other is crooked and heavy, jumbled together at random, thick-necked and snub-nosed, dark in color with bloodshot eyes, a companion of hubris and pride, scarcely obedient to the whip and spurs (253d–e). As is so often the case, one small detail, almost always overlooked, caught Benardete’s eye: a snub-nosed horse? The black horse is Socrates! (*Theaetetus* 148e, 209c; *Rep.* V. 474d). (If the snub nose weren’t enough, the “randomly ordered” character of the black horse [*eikē sumpephorēmenos*] echoes Socrates’ description in the *Phaedo* of his own way of inquiry, which he mixes up at random [*eikē phurō*, 97b].)

The erotic soul as a whole, it seems, is contained in the black

horse alone; who, then, or what is the white horse and the charioteer? Benardete addresses this question by tracing the lover's interaction with the beloved through all its twists and turns. While the black horse, filled with longing, clenches the bit and pulls the team shamelessly toward the beloved, his partner, controlled by shame, is dragged forward against his will. Despite all his resistance, the charioteer at the same time is brought face to face with the beautiful one, and the sight awakens his memory of beauty itself; as a result, he falls back in reverence, inadvertently yanking the reins so violently that the whole mouth of the black horse is covered with blood (254b–d). After enduring this painful experience time after time, the obstreperous horse is finally humbled. His suffering is the condition, it seems, for the paradoxical identity of madness with moderation that distinguishes divine eros from human.

Once the beloved, meanwhile, has admitted the tamed lover into intimate association, the stream of beauty that originally flowed from him into the eyes of the lover begins to overflow from the lover; like a wind or an echo bouncing off a surface, it rebounds into the beautiful one and waters the ducts from which the wings begin to grow. Now he is possessed by the phantom image of love, which he believes to be friendship. Filled with perplexity, he sees himself in his lover as in a mirror but is not aware of what it is with which he is falling in love. He is responding in fact to the model the lover has constructed in speech, which, as Benardete puts it, “renders the lover to the beloved in a joint version of their common nature. The beloved moves in pursuit of an illusory other who is in truth himself. He undergoes self-motion through his self-ignorance.” (If the lover constructs this image irrationally, Benardete continues, “his self-representation takes on the conventional disguise of an Olympian god; if he does it rationally, he is Socrates, and whatever god he fashions for the beloved is a necessary means for a shared ascent to the hyperuranian beings [cf. 256e1]” [1991, 151].)

It is in the plot of this story that Benardete uncovers the genesis of the tripartite erotic soul. The black horse is eros itself, the white horse nothing but the beautiful image he constructs with which the beloved falls in love. “The lover,” Benardete explains, “tries to pair the beloved with himself in his own soul. The white horse is this inserted self as other; it is perfectly obedient. That which does the insertion is the black horse, which thus comes to light as either hubris or madness” (1991, 154). (Benardete focuses on the genesis of the white horse from the black and says little about the charioteer. The black horse, it seems, if he is Socratic eros, should already contain mind and desire in himself. How, then, should one interpret the

detachment of the charioteer? If his only role were pulling back on the reins—like the calculating part of the soul in *Republic IV*—he would look like a product of the black horse splitting off from himself the force of restraint that humbles him. But the charioteer is also the subject who sees the hyperuranian beings and his pulling back on the reins seems to be just the unintended consequence of his falling back in awe when he is reminded of the beautiful itself by the sight of the beloved.)

The action that produces the structure of the erotic soul is at the same time, Benardete demonstrates, that which generates the sequence of speeches on eros. The written speech of Lysias, ascribed to the non-lover who boasts of his sanity and sobriety, comes to light as the representation of the perfectly controlled charioteer. At the same time, Socrates' first speech shows itself to be the white horse by which he tried to draw Phaedrus toward himself; but that means it is the product of the black horse, which must be Socrates' mythic hymn to eros, in which the structure of the whole is being disclosed (1991, 150). This model should be applicable, not just to the speeches on eros, but to the Platonic dialogues more generally, insofar as the *Phaedrus* is the passkey to all of them. The written work as a perfect whole, Benardete suggests, is always a white horse, which "reflects the interlocutor back to himself in a form he can follow and aspire to." That is a beautified image projected by the black horse at the core of every dialogue, which is the erotic impulse of Socratic philosophy. The dialogue thus imitates the double movement of eros, which, as Benardete summarizes it, "splits into the motion of ascent and the motion of self-motion. These two motions are always split and always paired. The motion of ascent is the motion of Socratic ignorance; the motion of self-motion is the motion of self-ignorance" (1991, 154).

IV. ONTOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

The *Republic* and the *Phaedrus* display the human soul in action, structuring itself in distinct ways moved by the experience of moral indignation or erotic madness. The model for the thumotic soul is the class-structure of the city; the model for the erotic soul is an Olympian god. The erotic soul of the human being can be understood, it seems, only in light of its divine counterpart; the thumotic soul is human-all-too-human. Each account presents what appears to be a fixed tripartite structure; but Platonic psychology comes to light in each case only through the action responsible for producing that structure. That action, however, is not the same in both cases.

The thumotic soul constructs its inner order by projecting any conflicting impulses within itself onto something external; the erotic soul acquires an inner order by incorporating the other into the self. Thumos divides the self through an action that turns its punitive impulse inward. But eros, too—this is perhaps a great surprise—seems to involve some kind of self-punishment, however inadvertent; it is the internal taming of the erotic soul, more precisely, of the black horse, that allows for the paradox of divine madness as moderation (1989, 94; 2002, 69).

The common theme of Platonic psychology is, one might say, the idealism that shows up in the longing for perfect justice and the city that would embody it no less than in the worshipping of the beloved like a god. But the two are not of equal rank. Eros, Benardete asserts, “presents an individual whole superior in both its individuality and idealism to the whole of the city and its laws” (1991, 153). Their ranking is determined, ultimately, by the relation of each to rationality: “The individuality of the will and the wholeness of eros seem to be in competition,” as Benardete puts it, “for the hand of reason” (1991, 195). The difficulty of the choice is indicated by the two structures of the self involved in love and punishment. While the internal division of a better and worse self in the case of punishment exhibits the mere “appearance of rationality,” the construction of the white horse by the black looks no less irrational. If Socrates finds that “eros is naturally superior to the will despite the fact that the illusion of the self against the self seems not to differ very much from the illusion of the erotic ideal” (1991, 195), it can only be because of his understanding of philosophy as an “erotic art.” The experience of falling in love is the counterpart of the will to punish the guilty; but erotic passion results, however mysteriously, in the soul’s ascent to the vision of the beings, while there seems to be no equivalent to that for the thumotic soul. It is only the soul in its erotic mode that shows what it means for the good to be that which every soul divines and for the sake of which it does everything (*Republic* 505e).

Benardete moved with imagination and precision, humor and depth, along the road from Plato’s psychology to Plato’s ideas. In one of the last pieces he wrote, on Plato’s *Parmenides*, he examined how the aged Parmenides sets the very young Socrates on his life’s project. To express his reluctance to perform the laborious logical exercise that is apparently required for this purpose, Parmenides borrows Ibycus’ image of an old race horse, compelled to enter the competition once more: “Eros once more glancing at me meltingly under blue eyelids casts me into the endless nets of Cypris with

every kind of enchantment” (see Appendix). Eros, Benardete comments, stands for the beautiful, while Aphrodite, born from the castrated genitals of Ouranos, is connected to the just; Ibycus’ poem makes a claim, through these gods, about the effects of the beautiful and the just on the human soul. The task to which Parmenides is urging Socrates, Benardete concludes, is “to learn how to replace the gods with the ideas and incorporate them into an ontological psychology” (2001, 12–13).

Benardete points out one way into this project in the preface to his commentary on the *Laws*, when he calls to mind the *Minos*, which begins with Socrates’ claim that “Law wants to be the discovery of what is” and ends with the question of how the good legislator makes the soul better. While the *Laws* makes explicit the connection between the legal system and psychology, the primary purpose of his study of the dialogue, Benardete asserts, “is to try to uncover its concealed ontological dimension and explain why it is concealed and how it comes to light” (2000a, xi–xii). Benardete suggests another application of ontological psychology in his interpretation of the *Timaeus*, which turns on the parallel between Timaeus’ likely story of the universe and the *Republic*’s account of the city through the soul. Speaking on the dialogue in a conference on “The Philosophy of Leo Strauss” in 1999, Benardete begins with a response he once received from Strauss to an earlier paper. The *Timaeus*, Strauss claims, had always been sealed for him with 7 to the 7th seals, but he did see two things clearly: “Timaeus’s account of the human soul is in agreement with Socrates’ imprecise and political understanding of the soul in the *Republic*, and Timaeus’s denial of eros to the original constitution of man is a necessary consequence of that agreement” (2000b, 376).

Benardete makes the project of ontological psychology an explicit, and central, theme of his late work on the *Parmenides*, the *Timaeus*, and the *Laws*. But if the core of ontological psychology concerns the nature of desire and spiritedness in their respective connection to the beautiful and the just, the relation of those ideas to the good and of the psychological passions to reason, this is a project in which Benardete was deeply immersed all along in his philosophic work.

APPENDIX

“Sparkling-wreathed, O deathless Aphrodite...
 But you, O blest,
 a smile on your immortal face,
 asked what was wrong this time, why
 was I calling this time,
 what did I most want to happen to me
 in my raging heart. ‘Whom shall I sweet talk this time
 and lead back to your love? Who, Sappho,
 is doing you wrong?’...
 Come to me now once more, and free me from jagged
 sorrow, and make what my heart is
 longing for, happen. You yourself
 fight alongside me.”
 (Sappho, in Bing and Cohen 1991)

“Once more Eros, under darkened
 lids, fixing me with his melting gaze,
 drives me with every kind of spell into the
 tangling nets of Kypris.
 And yes, I tremble at his coming,
 as a horse who’s borne the yoke and won the prize, but aging now,
 when hitched to the speeding chariot, goes to the race against his will.”
 (Ibycus, PMG 287, in Bing and Cohen 1991)

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This paper was originally presented at a symposium on “The Philosophy of Seth Benardete,” at the New School University, Dec. 5th-6th, 2002.

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Darwinism, Magnanimity, and Modernity

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According to some scholars, Darwinian biology, by showing that morality arises from human nature, refutes the assumptions of such moderns as Hobbes and Locke and restores the intellectual credibility of Aristotle's understanding of human nature and morality. This paper contends, in contrast, that Aristotelian magnanimity cannot be fully explained in terms of the Darwinian account of morality. This incapacity indicates that the claimed Darwinian restoration of Aristotle's moral and political science is in fact only partial, and ultimately leads to the conclusion that Darwinian political theory is more fundamentally modern and Hobbesian than its proponents have contended.

Can Darwinian science resolve the celebrated philosophic debate between ancients and moderns? Some scholars think so. Over the last two decades, a body of literature in political theory has emerged contending that Darwinian biology can explain and justify human morality. Advanced by such scholars as Larry Arnhart (1998), Roger Masters (1989), James Q. Wilson (1993), Francis Fukuyama (1999), and Robert McShea (1990), the "new Darwinian naturalism in political theory," as Arnhart himself has named it, makes use of the insights of the contemporary life sciences, especially socio-biology, to illuminate the biological bases of moral activity (Arnhart 1995). According to the principles of evolutionary biology, not only the visible physical structure of organisms, but also their behavioral propensities, are to be understood as subject to the pressures of natural selection. On this view, human morality, like any pattern of animal behavior, evolved because it was adaptive, or useful with a view to the replication of organisms' genes in succeeding generations. Thus the human capacity for morality can be

understood scientifically as serving our fundamental biological interests, and moral action can be justified rationally as good insofar as it satisfies natural human desires—desires initially evolved to serve reproductive success, but now experienced by human beings as good for their own sake (Fukuyama 1999, 172–73 and 181–84; Arnhart 1998, 29–36; McShea 1990, 85).

The Darwinian political theorists present their conclusions as a kind of breakthrough in the history of political philosophy. That history, as has often been observed, can be characterized as a debate over human nature, and in particular a debate between ancient and modern thinkers over the natural status of human morality and sociability. The insights of Darwinian biology, these scholars contend, refute the claims of such modern political philosophers as Hobbes and Locke that human beings are by nature simply self-interested individualists and that, accordingly, morality and sociability are artificial institutions arising from, and sustainable only in the service of, our self-interested passions (Arnhart 1998, 38–39, 72, and 119; Masters 1989, 33 and 150; Fukuyama 1999, 6). On the contrary, the findings of the modern life sciences support the classical conception of natural right (Arnhart 2000, Masters 1987). Darwinian biology confirms Aristotle’s view that humans are by nature sociable and moral beings (Arnhart 1998, 4; Masters 1989, xiv–xv; Fukuyama 1999, 138 and 166–67). Thus the Darwinian political theorists suggest that their arguments offer the basis for a scientific resolution of a (previously) perennial philosophic debate by restoring the intellectual credibility of the ancient notion that morality is not merely a convention devised for the sake of non-moral ends but is by nature “a force in the soul of man” (Strauss 1959, 41).

The problems inherent in claiming the compatibility of the Darwinian and Aristotelian understandings of morality, however, are brought to light by the difficulties that the Darwinian account encounters in explaining the peaks of moral virtue as Aristotle describes them. In particular, Darwinism cannot adequately explain the virtue of magnanimity as Aristotle presents it, and this incapacity suggests that the asserted harmony of Darwinism and Aristotelianism is only partial and therefore misleading. This failure fully to sustain Aristotle’s moral vision in turn calls into question the claim that the new Darwinian naturalism in political theory offers a serious alternative to modern political philosophy. Indeed, the Darwinian approach to morality finally turns out to be not Aristotelian but fundamentally modern and Hobbesian.

THE GREATNESS OF ARISTOTLE'S *MEGALOPSUCHOS*

When encountering such words as “morality” and “ethics,” the modern mind turns reflexively, it seems, to thoughts of minimal standards of moral conduct, to rules tempering the pursuit of self-interest—perhaps our primary concern—with some decent regard for the rights of others. Thus we stand at some distance from, and are powerfully challenged by, the teaching of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, with its emphasis on virtue as excellence (*aretē*) and its understanding of the ethical life as aiming for the noble or beautiful (*to kalon*) (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1098a7–20, 1120a23–25). (All subsequent references to the Bekker numbers are, unless otherwise indicated, to the *Nicomachean Ethics*. I have generally followed Rackham’s translations [Aristotle 1981 and 1999] and Lord’s [Aristotle 1984] while supplying translations of key terms.) Nowhere, perhaps, is this tension between modern decency and ancient virtue more strikingly revealed than in Aristotle’s treatment of the virtue *megalopsuchia*, usually rendered in English as “greatness of soul” or as the Latin-derived “magnanimity.”

Aristotle’s account indicates that this virtue manifests greatness in two distinct though related senses. First, he contends, *megalopsuchia* displays itself in a proper disposition toward “great things” (*megala*) (1123a34). Not surprisingly, in light of Aristotle’s well-known emphasis on the ethical importance of striking the mean, this proper disposition turns out to be a moderate one (1104a12–27). While *megalopsuchia* admittedly involves a kind of extreme (*akros*), insofar as it involves thinking oneself worthy of the greatest things (1123b14), by virtue of an accurate self-assessment the *megalopsuchos* nonetheless achieves a just mean (*mesos*). For Aristotle emphasizes that *megalopsuchia* is characterized by both thinking oneself worthy of great things and truly being worthy of them. Thus the *megalopsuchos* avoids the erroneous extremes of excess and deficiency respectively represented by the vain (*hoi chaunoi*), who foolishly think themselves worthy of great things of which they are not actually worthy, and the small-souled (*hoi micropsuchoi*), who think themselves worthy of less than they actually deserve (1123b2–16). Aristotle further suggests, however, that *megalopsuchia* is more specifically concerned with great honors, and that honor is the greatest of external goods (1125a35, 1123b20–21). Those who display magnanimity, then, deserve to be called great because their particular virtue is inextricably bound up with their posture toward great amounts of a great good. That is, “great things” are a condition of, and therefore in a sense a part of, the activity of their virtue.

Moreover, Aristotle's account indicates that the great honors toward which the great-souled are properly disposed, of which they rightly think themselves worthy, are not merely the verbally expressed praises of fellow citizens, but rather involve the exercise of grave public responsibilities. This much is implied in Aristotle's discussion of the vices contrary to *megalopsuchia*. The small-souled, he contends, err in refusing noble actions and pursuits of which they really are capable, while the vain go astray in taking on honorable enterprises to which they are not equal (1125a25–32). Thus Aristotle suggests that *megalopsuchia* involves not only enjoying deserved commendations but undertaking serious duties. This understanding is also suggested by the *Eudemian Ethics*, in which Aristotle associates *megalopsuchia* with claiming and deserving great "offices" (*archai*) (1232b20–30; Arnhart 1983, 267). The *megalopsuchos*, then, is a great, rather than ordinary, person, capable of shouldering the highest political responsibilities, the successful exercise of which is essential to the well-being of the entire community.

The *megalopsuchos* also achieves greatness in a second and more comprehensive sense, however. This character is great not only insofar as it relates properly to great things, understood as great political honors and duties, but also insofar as it manifests excellence across a range of essentially human activities. For Aristotle associates *megalopsuchia* with "greatness in each of the virtues" (1123b30–31). Such a conclusion would seem to follow from Aristotle's understanding of the primary purpose of politics. If the city has as its principal end "living well" or "noble actions" (*Politics* 1252b30, 1280b39–1281a5), if the aim of politics is to make citizens "virtuous, and capable of performing noble actions" (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1099b30–35), then it appears reasonable that those who are correctly entrusted with the direction of the city's affairs should themselves be morally virtuous.

Aristotle arrives at this conclusion explicitly in his account of *megalopsuchia*, in which he reflects on the nature of that great good toward which the great-souled are properly disposed. Honor, he suggests, is the "prize of virtue," and the "tribute we pay to the good" (*tois agathois*) (1123b35–1124a1). Because of this relationship between honor (properly bestowed) and virtue, one cannot be truly magnanimous without also possessing all moral excellence. (Aristotle acknowledges that honor is sometimes given to those who possess only goods of fortune such as power and wealth, but he insists that honor is rightly accorded only to the good, *ho agathos* [1124a20–26].) *Megalopsuchia*, again, is defined by an *accurate* belief in one's worthiness of the greatest honors, but one cannot *accurately* hold such

a belief unless one is great in all the virtues. Hence Aristotle remarks that the *megalopsuchos* must be the best (*aristos*) of human beings, that *megalopsuchia* cannot exist apart from the other virtues, and that one cannot be truly magnanimous without being noble and good (1123b28–1124a5). Insofar as moral nobility distinguishes human beings from the other animals, insofar as activity in accordance with virtue is the proper work of the human soul (1097b22–1098a19), whoever excels morally excels not merely in some department of life but in a decisive department. Such a person is an excellent human being simply—literally, a great soul (see Addendum).

The *megalopsuchos*, then, is great rather than just ordinarily good. Unlike the ordinary, who may possess one or a few moral qualities to a moderate degree, the magnanimous possess them all and achieve greatness or excellence in each. Unlike the common, who, by virtue of their moral decency, may be suited to ordinary enterprises, the great-souled, by virtue of their comprehensive excellence, may be—ought to be—entrusted with the welfare of the entire political community.

THE DECENCY OF DARWINIAN MORALITY

These reflections on Aristotle’s understanding of *megalopsuchia* raise in a general way the difficulty of fully harmonizing the Darwinian and Aristotelian understandings of morality. One would certainly prefer to deal with the good person, as presented by the Darwinian political theorists, than with the vicious or criminal, those who seek to satisfy their own desires without any decent regard for the desires of others. Nevertheless, there is nothing about the Darwinian good person that savors of greatness in either of the senses indicated by Aristotle’s account of magnanimity. Thus, while Aristotle’s account of morality includes a concern with—indeed, is arguably primarily preoccupied with—human greatness, the Darwinian account focuses exclusively on morality in a much more minimal sense, as ordinary decency rather than transcendent excellence.

Three examples serve to illustrate this disparity. In *The Moral Sense* James Q. Wilson argues that modern biological science supports the “ancient” understanding of “human nature” and, more specifically, restores the credibility of Aristotle’s notion that human beings possess a natural sense of morality (1993, 13). Despite his frequent approving references to Aristotle, however, Wilson’s argument clearly reveals that his is a much more limited, and much less demanding, conception of morality than that advanced by Aristotle.

For example, Wilson, in his treatment of “self-control,” contends that natural sociable development leads “most people” to “become temperate” (1993, 93). Aristotle, in contrast, holds that the virtues, being excellences, are attained only by a few. Indeed, Wilson uses expressions such as temperance, self-control, and continence as if they were interchangeable, while Aristotle is careful to distinguish *sōphrosunē* (temperance or moderation) from *enkrateia* (continence or self-control) in order to make clear the existence of a higher than ordinary moral disposition—one that not merely holds unethical desires in check but in fact desires only to do what is right (Wilson 1993, 90–93; *Nicomachean Ethics* 1145a15–1148b14).

Similarly, Francis Fukuyama, in *The Great Disruption*, contends that “contemporary evolutionary biology would wholeheartedly agree” with Aristotle’s understanding of human beings as naturally political animals, by “nature...capable of the moral virtues necessary to sustain” political communities (1999, 166–67). Ultimately, however, Fukuyama sums up his natural morality as consisting of “the ordinary virtues like honesty, reliability, and reciprocity that constitute the basis for social capital” (1999, 273). Insofar as his political and moral science is guided by a concern with morality understood as nobility, with virtue understood as excellence, Aristotle would have to find such an expression as “ordinary virtue” questionable, to say the least. While they are certainly worthy traits, honesty, reliability, and reciprocity do not seem to add up to moral greatness.

Finally, in *The Nature of Politics* Roger Masters claims that his evolutionary exploration of human nature “leads toward a view of ‘natural justice’” akin to that of Aristotle and hence provides the basis for a scientifically grounded normative science of politics similar to that offered by Aristotle (1989, xv, 225). Elsewhere, however, he suggests that his biological “standards of natural justice” are probably more “useful in identifying injustice” than in revealing the contours of a life that is in principle best for human beings as such (1989, 232). Thus his naturalistic ethics appears to be limited to establishing minimal principles of moral obligation. In contrast, Aristotle indicates at the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics* that his science of politics is concerned with both the just things (*ta dikaia*) and the noble things (*ta kala*), that is, with both decency and greatness (1094b14–15). He would surely, then, regard as radically truncated an account of politics that treated only the former while neglecting the latter.

In sum, then, Aristotle’s political science takes into account a concern with the peaks of moral excellence, of which the Darwinian political

theory, in contrast, takes no cognizance. As we will see, this difference in scope stems from the Darwinian political theorists' efforts to explain morality in terms of our biological propensities for sociability and reciprocity, principles which are insufficient to account for *megalopsuchia* as Aristotle presents it.

MAGNANIMITY AND SOCIABILITY

The Darwinian political theorists contend that morality arises from human sociability, which is itself rooted in our biological nature. For example, Wilson claims that humans are “by nature” social animals and that our “moral nature grows directly out of our social nature,” that the “mechanism underlying human moral conduct is the desire for attachment or affiliation” (1993, 121 and 127). Similarly, Arnhart adopts Darwin’s argument that “our moral sense...originat[es] in the social instincts” and is “largely guided by the approbation of our fellow men” (1998, 76). In Aristotle’s presentation, however, the *megalopsuchos*, the possessor of complete moral virtue, is far from being unproblematically sociable. One therefore suspects that *megalopsuchia* is not simply a manifestation of the natural sociability that its possessor shares with all other human beings.

The limitations of the sociability of the great-souled are evident in their concern with independence or self-sufficiency. According to Aristotle, the *megalopsuchos* “likes to own beautiful and useless things, rather than useful things that bring in a return,” because the former demonstrate a certain independence (1125a11–13). To need useful things, to depend on the “return” that they “bring in,” is, ultimately, to be dependent on other human beings, to need their business, as it were: to need others to need the useful things that one can supply in return for their payment. Human sociability is bound up with such mutual dependence, which the great-souled seek to escape to the extent that they can. Hence, in addition, Aristotle’s observation that the magnanimous happily remember benefits they have bestowed on others but are less mindful of, and less pleased by, recollections of services they have received (1124b12–16).

Indeed, it is fair to say that the great-souled not only desire the appearance of, but actually achieve, an impressive degree of independence in relation to the society of which they are a part. This independence is manifested in the specific activity of *megalopsuchia*, its disposition toward great honors. Again, that disposition is moderate. Thus Aristotle emphasizes that the magnanimous will take only moderate pleasure even in great honors

bestowed by serious people, and will despise honors given by ordinary people for small things, as well as dishonors, knowing such things are unworthy of them (1124a5–12). On virtually any account the human concern with honor and dishonor—with the good or bad opinion of other human beings—must be regarded as central to our sociability. Yet the *megalopsuchos* is able to some extent to rise above, or stand apart from, the desire for honor and hence human sociability itself.

Moreover, if the virtue of the *megalopsuchos* arose simply from an ordinary sociability, one would expect that virtue to manifest itself as a more or less unqualified impulse to serve the community. Yet it does not. As we indicated before, the honors toward which the magnanimous are properly disposed are in fact offices. Thus their aloofness from ordinary honors is in fact an aloofness from ordinary offices—that is, from ordinary opportunities to render service, which they regard as beneath them. Aristotle makes this explicit. The *megalopsuchos*, he says, “will not compete for the common objects of ambition” and tends to be “idle and slow to act,” unless seeking some great “honor” (*timē*) or “work” (*ergon*). The great-souled engage in few actions, undertaking only those that are great (*megalōn*) and notable (*onomastōn*) (1124b23–26).

According to Aristotle, this apparent independence or transcendence of ordinary sociable feelings is characteristic not only of magnanimity but of virtue generally. Aristotle’s account suggests that magnanimity is somewhat detached from a sociable concern with serving the city even when it is at war. Thus he notes that the *megalopsuchos* is “not a lover of danger” and will not “run into danger for trifling reasons,” but will be willing to face death only in a great cause (1124b7-9). Yet in his treatment of courage Aristotle makes essentially the same point, contending that the more one possesses all virtue, and the more happy one is, the more painful will death be. To the virtuous, he contends, life is worth the most, and the possible loss of the greatest goods must be painful to them. Thus the good, Aristotle continues, may not be the best soldiers, but rather those who are less virtuous, with “nothing of value besides life to lose; for these face danger readily, and will barter their lives for trifling gains” (1117b10–20). For Aristotle, true virtue, it seems, is proof against appeals to group solidarity to an extent that seems unlikely were virtue simply a manifestation of human sociability. Indeed, the tension between sociability and morality—and the impossibility of reducing the latter to the former—is indicated with even greater clarity when Aristotle notes that those who endure dangers out of

sociable motives, because of a desire for honor or fear of disgrace, are practicing a *false* form of courage (1116a16–b5).

Finally, if virtue were simply an outgrowth of human sociability one would expect that the virtuous would fit easily into society. Yet Aristotle suggests that relations between the *megalopsuchos* and the community at large are far from perfectly harmonious. On the one side, the *megalopsuchos* tends to have a light regard for other people generally, and perhaps even for many of the leading citizens of the community, no doubt because of their lack of virtue (1124b5–7 and 18–20). (At 1124b18–20 Aristotle indicates that the *megalopsuchos* is “haughty” towards those of “position and fortune.”) On the other side, the moral excellence of the *megalopsuchos* does not elicit unalloyed approbation from other citizens, who associate greatness of soul with disdain for others because of its evident indifference to honor and the other external goods upon which most people place such great importance (1124a20).

None of this is to suggest that the *megalopsuchos* is asocial, a conclusion that is forbidden by Aristotle’s observation that the great-souled *do* take pleasure in certain honors, as well as by his remarks elsewhere that human beings are by nature political and that they cannot achieve self-sufficiency except in a sense that involves living and acting with other human beings (1097b8–12). It is to say, however, that the virtue of the *megalopsuchos* cannot be reduced to sociability, that it cannot be understood as arising solely from biologically grounded sociable impulses. Admittedly moved by the sociable desires to render services to the community and to win the praise of fellow citizens, the *megalopsuchos* is nevertheless apparently moved more fundamentally by something else.

MAGNANIMITY AND RECIPROCITY

The Darwinian political theorists also point to a natural desire for reciprocity as a basis for human morality (Arnhart 1998, 78–80; Wilson 1993, 65–69). In evolutionary history, they contend, adherence to a conditionally cooperative rule of “tit for tat”—that is, a strategy according to which one helps those who have been helpful to oneself, on the one hand, but refuses help to those who have been unhelpful, or retaliates against those who have been harmful, on the other—would have been advantageous for most humans, and therefore most will have evolved a spontaneous inclination toward this kind of dealing. Aristotle’s *megalopsuchos*, however, seems to

transcend the Darwinian concern with reciprocity. We have already observed that in their fondness for beautiful and useless things the magnanimous manifest an aversion to relations of reciprocal dependence with others. Moreover, Aristotle's presentation generally suggests that when the magnanimous serve the well-being of others they do so with little interest in receiving such service in return. Thus Aristotle remarks that the *megalopsuchos* "is fond of conferring benefits, but ashamed to receive them," giving help willingly yet seeking it reluctantly (1124b10 and 18–20). Indeed, magnanimity's transcendence of reciprocity results not only in an indifference to receiving good in exchange for good, but even in an indifference to retaliating for harm. The *megalopsuchos*, Aristotle notes, "does not bear a grudge, for it is not a mark of greatness of soul to recall things against people, especially the wrongs they have done you, but rather to overlook them" (1125a3–5).

One might respond, in defense of Darwinism's ability to explain magnanimity, that greatness of soul is in fact guided by a subtle concern with receiving reciprocal benefits, insofar as the *megalopsuchos* expects to receive honor in return for virtue. Indeed, surely evolutionary theory can sufficiently explain the *megalopsuchos* as a seeker of social status. According to Darwinian biology, human beings, and especially males, try to achieve high status in the communities of which they are members, because such status confers reproductive advantages (Arnhart 1998, 33; Fukuyama 1999, 227–28; Wright 1994, 246–48). Status, after all, often involves access to material resources, which females seek in order to ensure the success of their children. In short, females tend to be attracted to high status males, who therefore enjoy greater access to females and consequently attain a higher degree of reproductive fitness. As the Darwinian theorists point out, however, the process of natural selection has so formed our natural passions with a view to reproductive success that we tend to desire spontaneously, and without calculation, those things that assist reproductive success (see, for instance, Masters 1989, 155). To take the most obvious example, humans do not tend to choose sexual intercourse because they calculate that it is essential to passing on one's genes to the next generation. Rather, they choose it because it is pleasant, and it has evolved to be so pleasant precisely because it is essential to reproduction. It is reasonable, however, to view status similarly. It serves reproductive fitness, but men do not seek it because they calculate that it does so. Men simply like to achieve high status. Those who achieve it can leave behind more offspring, but those who desire it are more likely to achieve it. As a result, the Darwinians would contend, evolution has selected for a male attraction to high status in the community. Such considerations, they

might add, sufficiently explain the behavior of the *megalopsuchos*. For *megalopsuchia*'s apparent indifference to reciprocity in fact looks to the achievement of high social position, which men experience as good and from which other goods come as well. After all, Aristotle indicates that the *megalopsuchos* likes to confer benefits and is ashamed to receive them "because the former is a mark of superiority and the latter of inferiority" (1124b10–11).

Such considerations, however, do not suffice to bring magnanimity as Aristotle presents it within the scope of Darwinism's explanatory powers. In the first place, it would be misleading to suggest that magnanimity's concern with honor represents an interest in receiving reciprocal benefits in return for services to others, that its virtue seeks payment in praise. After all, Aristotle indicates that the great-souled perceive honor as a small thing (*micron*) and that even the great honors of which they are worthy they will merely "deign to accept," viewing even them as unequal to their true deserts, inasmuch as "no honor can be adequate to the merits of perfect virtue" (1124a19 and 5–10). Moreover, as was noted earlier, the honors they accept are responsibilities or offices: opportunities to serve the city in a grand way. The magnanimous seek, it seems, not some external good in payment for their virtue—indeed, their relative indifference to all external goods seems to make reciprocal relations with them exceedingly difficult—but an opportunity to exercise the fullness of their excellence.

Nor can this interest in the highest offices be explained sufficiently in evolutionary terms as a seeking of high status. For, again, the interest of the *megalopsuchos* in even the highest honors and offices is a comparatively detached and limited one. Recall that Aristotle says that the *megalopsuchos* will find "pleasure in a moderate degree" in honors bestowed by the morally serious or earnest (*ton spoudaion*) (1124a7). When one reflects that the highest offices are usually in the gift of ordinary citizens, or those who are merely wealthy or of respected families—that is, the sort of people by whom the magnanimous would *not* want to be honored—it seems that the great-souled would not seek high status so much as accept it with measured pleasure when (seemingly rare) circumstances allow them to do so in a manner that is consistent with their real worth.

What, then, of Aristotle's remark that the *megalopsuchos* likes to confer benefits but is ashamed to receive them, because the former bestows a superior position while the latter bestows an inferior one? Surely this bespeaks a concern with status. One could contend, however, that the magnanimous man's concern with superiority relates more to his

self-understanding as a good man, and his understanding of virtue as the best of goods, than to his position in the community. That is, here the interest of the *megalopsuchos* may be in the superior, more truly human, pleasure that comes from being the performer, as opposed to the mere recipient, of virtuous acts. Or he may be mindful that it is less than fitting that a virtuous person, one who excels in the best good, should be subordinated to, because dependent for benefits on, a less virtuous person who excels in inferior goods, such as wealth. In any case, it is clear that the *megalopsuchos* does not seek to convert this superiority into positions of power and status with anything like the ardor that the Darwinian account would predict.

NOBILITY, MORALITY, AND MODERNITY

What accounts for the relative detachment of the *megalopsuchos* from the natural feelings of sociability and reciprocity that the Darwinian political theorists present as the basis of morality? Not an inhuman poverty of feeling. As was suggested before, the *megalopsuchos* is not so much indifferent to the goods associated with sociability and reciprocity as more interested in some other good. This independence of others, and of the external goods with which they tend to be preoccupied, arises from a preoccupation with what is to the great-souled—and, to Aristotle, objectively or humanly—more valuable: the noble or beautiful (*to kalon*). Aristotle contends, as we have seen, that the *megalopsuchos* must be morally good and indeed the best of human beings, achieving greatness in all the virtues. Yet Aristotle also affirms repeatedly throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics* that the truly good perform virtuous actions because of their own nobility or beauty and for no ulterior motive.

Just as the virtue *megalopsuchia* cannot be adequately explained in terms of biological principles like sociability or reciprocity, however, neither can the noble itself, which is the primary concern of the magnanimous and the object of all the virtues. To perform virtuous deeds for the sake of their own beauty or fineness alone is necessarily to do them without regard to the possibility of winning praise or securing reciprocal benefits in the future—considerations with which the good actions of the decent person as understood by Darwinism are necessarily intimately bound up. This investigation of *megalopsuchia* thus brings to light a crucial difference between the basis and character of virtue as Aristotle understands it and as it is understood by those political theorists who offer a science of human morality that is purportedly both Darwinian and Aristotelian.

This is not to deny these scholars' genuine insights into the real similarities between the Darwinian and Aristotelian accounts of human nature. The Darwinian Aristotelians are correct, of course, to note that Aristotle, more than many philosophers, recognizes with Darwin that much of human nature, including much that we commonly take to be distinctly human, is in fact rooted in biological propensities that we share with other animals. Thus, for example, while Aristotle presents humans as the most political of animals and suggests that their ability to distinguish good from bad is unique among living beings, he also notes that the city itself can trace its roots to the rather basic animal desires for self-preservation and reproduction (*Politics* 1252a24–1253a40). Similarly, Aristotle sees with Darwin that much of what we commonly call morality stems from our proclivities for sociability and reciprocity. Thus Aristotle admits that a concern with the opinion of others is, though not strictly a virtue, at least praiseworthy in a sense, and that our conception of justice is bound up with a natural desire to return good for good and bad for bad (1108a31–35, 1132b32–1133a6). Nevertheless, unlike the Darwinian understanding, Aristotle's treatment of morality takes these phenomena into account but is not limited by them. While Aristotle recognizes that human beings act out of a concern for sociability and reciprocity, he also sees that in rare cases they rise above such considerations and act for the sake of the nobility or beauty of the action. Thus ethics as Aristotle understands it includes but transcends ethics as presented by the Darwinian political theorists.

Insofar as Aristotle's moral and political science possesses a wider scope or higher reach than that of the Darwinian political theorists, the claims of the latter to have restored Aristotle's understanding of human nature by means of modern science are partial and therefore misleading. For while they do plausibly show that humans are, as Aristotle contends, by nature moral, the quality of the morality that they show to be natural falls short of that held to be natural, and the perfection of human nature, by Aristotle. This criticism, moreover, is no mere quibble, for the noble, although rare, is not for that reason peripheral to Aristotle's account. Rather it is central. Aristotle's interest in an excellence that rises above the ordinary goodness of mere sociability and reciprocity is at the heart of his account of morality and politics. As we have seen, *megalopsuchia* is not just one unusual virtue among many common ones but instead the "crowning ornament" of them all, depending on their presence and magnifying their greatness (1124a1–5). As we noted before, Aristotle affirms both in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Politics* that the aim of political life is not merely the maintenance of the decent

sociability and reciprocity the Darwinians describe but ultimately nobility of character (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1099b30–35; *Politics* 1252b30).

Because of its narrower scope or less lofty reach, the Darwinian account not only fails fully to harmonize with Aristotle, however. In its demotion of virtue from greatness to decency, in its emphasis on the extent to which morality is bound up with the winning of non-moral goods—such as the esteem of one’s fellows and the benefits they may provide in the future—the Darwinian account seems to veer back in the direction of the modernity it claims to repudiate. In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes criticizes certain past “Writers of Morall Philosophie”—and he doubtless had Aristotle in mind—for failing to see that the virtues are praiseworthy not in themselves but instead “as the meanes of peaceable, sociable, and comfortable living” (Hobbes 1991, 111). Yet, as we have seen, the virtues do not seem to be much more than that for the Darwinians. Indeed, even Arnhart admits the similarity of Darwinian and Hobbesian standards when he notes that “most of Hobbes’s ‘laws of nature,’ which dictate the establishment of government, reflect the natural inclinations to mutualism and reciprocity that human beings share with other primates” (Arnhart 1994, 474).

The Darwinian political theorists are correct that Darwin and Aristotle stand together in opposition to Hobbes, insofar as the former hold that moral principles receive direct support from our natural sociable passions while the latter contends that they are merely “dictates of Reason...Conclusions, or Theorems concerning what conduceth to the conservation and defense” of human beings (Hobbes 1991, 111). On the other hand, surely it is at least as worthy of our notice that Darwinism and Hobbes stand together in opposition to Aristotle in their (limited) understanding of what the principles of morality finally demand. For the Darwinians sociability and reciprocity are natural, while for Hobbes they are products of covenant. Yet for both they define morality with a comprehensiveness that seems to exclude Aristotle’s concern with the noble.

Hobbes and the Darwinians admittedly disagree on the precise character of the dominant natural passions of human beings. Hobbes emphasizes, of course, the desire for self-preservation and concedes to natural sociability next to nothing, recognizing only the “naturall lust” upon which rests the “government of small families” (Hobbes 1991, 89). In contrast, the Darwinians, while recognizing these passions, emphasize in addition, and with Aristotle, a broader natural sociability that inclines humans to desire just dealing at least with those, whether kin or not, with whom they have regular

face-to-face interactions. The new Darwinian naturalism in political theory, however, is fundamentally Hobbesian and modern, and certainly not Aristotelian, insofar as it takes its moral bearings from the most powerful passions of the most ordinary human beings rather than from the most elevated passions of the best human beings. It seems, then, that, contrary to the claims of the Darwinian political theorists, those who would seek a full restoration of classical natural right must seek elsewhere than evolutionary biology.

ADDENDUM

I am of course aware that whether the goodness of the *megalopsuchos* is fully comprehensive, that is, whether it embraces the intellectual excellence of the philosopher, is a disputed question in the scholarly literature on Aristotle's *Ethics*. I am also aware that on Aristotle's complete account the virtue of the *megalopsuchos*, taken by itself, must be regarded as inferior to the virtue of the philosopher. It is sufficient for the present purpose, however, to note that the virtue of the *megalopsuchos* is, if not inclusive of all human excellence, also not merely narrowly political, in the sense of suiting one for holding office, and that it is, if not the highest virtue, at least an undoubtedly lofty one. The question of the relationship of *megalopsuchia* to philosophy, to say nothing of whether Darwinism can account for Aristotle's presentation of this latter and loftier virtue, would be matter for other papers.

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My thanks to the Earhart Foundation and to the Olin Foundation for supporting research during 2001–2002 that contributed to the writing of this paper.

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Few books have suffered a more bizarre and unjust fate than Maurice Joly's *Dialogue aux enfers entre Machiaveli et Montesquieu*. Immediately after its publication in 1864, Napoleon III's secret police recognized its unusually subversive character, arrested the author, and confiscated nearly all copies of the text. Of the handful of editions that survived, one made its way to Switzerland where it fell into the hands of the Russian secret police, who also discerned its subversive content. Rather than suppress the text, the Russians tore it apart and stitched it back together along with a number of vicious anti-Semitic novels. By adding a setting and characters utterly foreign to Joly's original dialogue, the Russians created a perverse adaptation which was destined to become one of the most widely read texts of the 20th century.

That text, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, presents Joly's *Dialogue* on the nature of tyranny as a secret addendum to the minutes of the first Zionist Congress in Basel. Thus rather than a discussion of the nature of tyranny between Machiavelli and Montesquieu, the text presents a discussion by Jewish conspirators of a policy of world domination. Needless to say, this myth of a small Jewish cabal directing world history has had a terribly pernicious influence. Brought to Hitler by Alfred Rosenberg in 1923, the *Protocols* became a central influence in the development of National Socialism and provided the Nazis with what Norman Cohn described as a "warrant for genocide" (Cohn 1967). To this day, the text's influence continues to be felt throughout the world. Although its influence has declined dramatically in

the West, it enjoys widespread attention elsewhere, particularly in Islamic countries. Egyptian television, for example, recently aired a 41-part miniseries, “Knight without a Horse” which dramatized much of the text. But it would be a mistake to think that its influence is confined to popular television or its largely uneducated audience. At the new library in Alexandria, a display case of the holy books of monotheistic religions includes a copy of the first Arabic translation of the *Protocols* along side several Torah scrolls. The director of the exhibit, Dr. Yousef Ziedan, described his rationale for including the *Protocols*:

When my eyes fell upon the rare copy of this dangerous book, I decided immediately to place it next to the Torah. Although it is not a monotheistic holy book, it has become one of the sacred [tenets] of the Jews, next to their first constitution, their religious law, [and] their way of life. ...It is only natural to place the book in the framework of an exhibit of Torah [scrolls]. (Hussein 2003)

Given its insidious legacy, it is hardly surprising that scholarship on the *Protocols* has focused on either the legacy of the text or on the nature of its forged composition. Scholars have been less interested in the import of Joly’s work. The *Dialogue* has been translated only once into English, by Herman Bernstein as “Exhibit A” in his powerful analysis of the evolution of the forgery, *The Truth About the Protocols of the Elders of Zion: A Complete Exposure*. But Bernstein’s concern with the *Protocols* clearly overshadowed his concern with the *Dialogue* and with rendering a precise translation that preserved the nuances of Joly’s style (Bernstein 1971). Where scholars have commented on the merits of the *Dialogue* itself, they have generally praised the work, especially its “startlingly prophetic powers,” without elaborating on those powers in any great detail (Revel 1968, xix, xx; Heiden 1994; Speier 1977). Clearly the *Dialogue*’s connection with the *Protocols* has hindered an evaluation of Joly’s text on its own terms.

John Waggoner’s new translation and commentary of the *Dialogue* has finally made such an evaluation possible. Waggoner shows that in order to appreciate the relationship between the *Dialogue* and the *Protocols*, we must first understand the dialogue as a whole, apart from its subsequent legacy. He argues that if we pay attention to Joly’s teaching, rather than its sordid legacy, we will acquire an indispensable guide to the rise of modern tyranny. His commentary provides a prescient diagnosis of a propensity to tyranny precisely in liberal democracies that pride themselves on their humanity.

Joly presents his teaching in the form of a dialogue between Machiavelli and Montesquieu, that is, between a proponent of tyranny and a

proponent of liberal democracy (197, 301). Their conversation concerns the possibility of establishing a tyranny in a constitutional republic, a republic equipped with all the institutional safeguards against tyranny that Montesquieu outlines in *The Spirit of the Laws*. In addition to a theoretical examination of tyranny, Waggoner shows that Joly intended the work as a severe rebuke of Napoleon III. Joly undoubtedly chose the dialogue literary form to protect him from persecution and to avoid censorship (296–98). But it also a mark of Joly’s genius as a teacher that he uses the dialogue form to challenge careful readers to think through the prospects of modern liberalism.

As one might expect, Machiavelli initiates the dialogue and it becomes increasingly clear that Machiavelli has “absolute control over the movement of the discussion” and that Joly regards Machiavelli’s “knowledge of politics as superior” (233, 302). Machiavelli remains in control of the conversation even, as Waggoner shows, at those moments when he appears to be at a loss. Throughout the dialogue, Machiavelli feigns deference or confusion in order to encourage Montesquieu to present a more explicit account of his position. As the dialogue begins, for instance, Montesquieu is well aware of Machiavelli’s reputation for deception and trickery. He is so suspicious, in fact, that he attempts to avoid the conversation, sticking instead to trite pleasantries. Recognizing this and divining its cause, Machiavelli launches a preemptive defense of his life and work as a loyal citizen of the Florentine Republic, a defense aimed at appealing to Montesquieu’s own patriotism. He also disavows the teachings of the *Prince* as mere reflections on the political times of 16th century Florence: “What if I told you that that book was only the product of a diplomat’s imagination, that it was not intended for print, that the notorious uses to which it has been put are alien to its author?” (8). This confirms Montesquieu’s own view of the *Prince* and thus disarms his skepticism so that the conversation can begin in earnest. In this way, Waggoner shows, Machiavelli “turns what ostensibly begins as a personal defense into a testing of Montesquieu’s deepest and dearest convictions and thereby cleverly succeeds in revealing his interlocutor more than himself” (158, 167).

But far from dismissing the *Prince* as a personal memoir of a specific (and now obsolete) historical epoch, Machiavelli returns again and again to his most shocking teachings because they provide a true account of political life. Any political teaching must take into account the fact that “all men seek to dominate and no one would not be a tyrant if he could. All, or nearly all, are ready to sacrifice another’s rights to their own interests” (10). Granting that all, or nearly all, men are self-serving, “ravenous beasts,” any

political theory which seeks social stability must not reject the use of force in favor of insubstantial notions of justice and right. Of course, morality does at times play a useful role in controlling the citizenry, but it should not form the basis of the Prince's conduct. To the contrary, great good can often come from actions that by themselves are evil. Joly pays careful attention not only to the substance of Machiavelli's teaching, but to the form of that teaching as well. His *Dialogue* is organized in a fashion similar to the *Prince*, with 25 chapters and a discussion of conspiracies at its center (196–97, 220–21, 213n3).

Montesquieu's response to Machiavelli sets the terms of the debate. He grants that "force and cunning" play a critical role in human affairs but insists that man, being more than animal, seeks governing principles that invoke "morality, justice, religion" (13). By insisting that considerations of the good are not primary to a ruler, and that what is forbidden to the people by morality is permitted to the ruler, Machiavelli undermines the very idea of justice and sets in motion the dissolution of society, Montesquieu contends:

Stop deceiving yourself. Each act of usurpation by the prince in the public domain authorizes a similar infraction where the subject is concerned. Each act of violence in high places legitimizes one in low. Note well what happens to the relations among men in civil society. Rest assured. It will sink into the minds of the people. At the first occasion, they will break their chains on the most trifling of pretexts and take back by force what force has wrested from them. (15)

Princes must respect private morality in their conduct of the state's business, for otherwise they undermine the very notion of justice and set the stage for the dissolution of their own states. Politics cannot divorce itself from morality or justice.

Machiavelli's political teaching, as evidenced by his admiration for great founders throughout the *Prince*, reflects the historical epoch when great men presided over politics. Joly's Montesquieu means to suggest that society, and with it politics, has since become much more rational (and stable), thanks to the founding of a new political science that makes institutions, not individuals, the key ingredient of society. As politics becomes more rational, and political life is structured according to the teachings of men like Montesquieu, "modern men 'from the most remote corners of the world' have not been untouched by several of his ideas, nor have they been immune to the general movement of history" (304, 168).

Joly's Montesquieu argues that such ideas as freedom, equality,

and personal rights are the irresistible hallmark of modern political science. These ideas, combined with a rational political science that comprehends the dynamics of power within political life and regulates them—via separate institutions to frame, execute, and judge the laws, a free press, and a transparent science of budgeting and finance—virtually guarantee the demise of tyranny. It is important to note that Montesquieu’s argument rests on two distinct premises: a scientific understanding of politics in terms of relationships of power and an historical claim about the development of political life. Montesquieu’s historical optimism allows Machiavelli to place great emphasis on the “events of 1848”—a thinly veiled reference to the revolution and subsequent coup which brought Napoleon III to power. Machiavelli is able to show that Montesquieu has not paid very close attention to subsequent historical developments because of his abiding belief in the inevitable march of freedom and equality.

Given these essential differences in their respective views of history and politics, Machiavelli suggests a wager to establish definitively the correct view. He wagers that he can transform Montesquieu’s liberal republic, replete with the “ideas, mores, laws...[and] all the institutions that guarantee liberty” into a thriving tyranny. As Waggoner succinctly puts it: “The anti-Machiavellian design for Montesquieu’s regimes is understood by its architect to be based on the accumulated wisdom of the ages. We are thus meant to see in its subversion the consummate test of tyranny and its most artful demonstration” (197).

The subsequent dialogue is a Machiavellian tour de force that shows in detail how, by applying the teachings of the *Prince*, a tyrant may subvert all of liberalism’s safeguards and institutions. Joly saw with remarkable clarity that the political and economic arrangements of 19th century Europe did not inevitably give rise to ever more enlightened societies, but rather contained the potential for a new era of unprecedented tyranny. Through the voice of Machiavelli, he identifies liberalism’s greatest vulnerabilities in the very institutions which Joly’s Montesquieu believes have rendered tyranny obsolete. The separation of legislative, executive, and judicial powers explicitly mandated by constitutional arrangements can be undermined through various subtle reforms that appear to respect the independence of these branches. At the same time, the prince may press for constitutional changes that weaken the legislative branch and empower the judiciary (which is more easily subverted). Such constitutional changes will require a national plebiscite to make them legitimate. But why would the people voluntarily agree to amend their consti-

tution? Machiavelli has already taught the prince to rely on his own arms rather than the arms of another, and as we learn from the dialogue, “the modern arm *par excellence* against tyranny is the press” (209). Machiavelli proposes a series of measures, including the management of information, the recruitment of talented journalists, the proliferation of newspapers, that effectively convert the press into his servant. With remarkable finesse, he even manages the criticism of his regime so that it confirms the legitimacy of his rule (216).

Waggoner notes that Machiavelli’s teaching on modern finance and budgeting is an unusual feature in philosophical dialogues. The central question is how the prince will raise money for his regime. Montesquieu points out that modern warfare is far too expensive and destructive to make it a feasible source of perpetual revenue. Machiavelli’s infamous remark in the *Prince* regarding the sensitivity of most people to the loss of their property suggests the difficulty in raising substantial amounts of revenue through taxation. Modern princes are forced to borrow money, and deceitful accounting practices can only go so far. If the government wishes to borrow, it must remain solvent and that requires “a system of accountability and public access to information” (106). Here, Montesquieu appears to have finally tamed Machiavelli’s prince by forcing him to make explicit his sources of revenue and his expenditures. But as Machiavelli describes the myriad ways that budgetary statistics may be manipulated, Montesquieu—and the contemporary reader—begins to grow uncomfortable. Machiavelli suggests that the entire financial system can be manipulated by creating massive central banks that are run by the government and in turn lend money to it. Eventually, the government will acquire complete control of the country’s finances by organizing production and distribution of consumer and industrial goods.

These are among a few of dozens of extraordinary examples that demonstrate Joly’s prescience and insight into the nature of modern tyranny. At the same time, Joly’s portrait differs in important ways from National Socialism and Soviet Communism (336). Although force remains the central element of political life, Joly’s tyrant takes great pains to preserve the forms and institutions of liberalism so that he may better hide his tyranny behind them. Joly characterizes this abuse of liberalism as the decisive element which distinguishes it from previous forms of tyranny. As Waggoner points out, “where in fact repression is most thorough, it is most hidden, and the reputation of the prince masks a different reality” (224). Waggoner has contributed a valuable essay in which he elucidates the less obvious ways in

which Joly transformed Machiavelli's teaching on power. While security for the people and glory for the prince remain the primary objectives of the regime, they are accentuated and joined in a dramatic new way (257, 262–63). Waggoner suggests that the obscure political doctrine of Saint-Simon is essential for grasping the novel character of modern tyranny described by Joly (276).

According to the Saint-Simonian view of history, society moves dialectically between organic and critical periods. The organic periods are characterized by strong communities unified in meaning and purpose by a single, comprehensive teaching such as the doctrine of the medieval Catholic Church. Human nature being what it is, such teachings are subject to intense scrutiny and criticism so that eventually they begin to dissolve. In these critical periods of history, the bonds that united communities are dissolved so that they come to consist of individuals whose interests are often at odds with other members of the community. According to the Saint-Simonians, such dissolutions occurred in the Reformation and Enlightenment; these severed the connection between church and state and, in the absence of an authoritative set of values, reduced the community to a group of individuals concerned with the assertion of private rights. But such disunity does not persist; eventually broader doctrines are introduced which create new, stronger communities. The Saint-Simonians believed that post-Enlightenment modernity would feature a universal doctrine that would finally resolve the dialectical movement of history by unifying church with state and authority with freedom.

Waggoner argues persuasively that the tyranny described by Machiavelli in the *Dialogue*, a universal tyranny in a humanitarian guise, “gives voice” to the doctrine of Saint-Simon (273). In contrast to previous tyrannies which repressed the popular will in the name of order and security, this new tyranny accomplishes the same ends by liberating and serving the will and impulses of the people (274). The hallmark of this new tyranny is the quasi-religious nature of its authority. Modern tyranny is supported by a political religion that appeals to the profoundest longings of its citizens by promising salvation here on earth and a definitive set of values. It is what Raymond Aron called one of the “religions séculières” (287; Aron 1980, 32). The regime assumes a religious element that both satisfies the people and justifies absolute authority. If Joly has identified a “common ideological trait of totalitarianism,” it is this unification of religious and political power (287).

By exposing the Saint-Simonian element in Joly's Machiavelli, Waggoner has provided the missing link for grasping the dialogue. Machiavelli

wins the wager not only because he shows that tyranny can flourish within the framework of liberal institutions, but also because he shows that this new type of tyranny does not separate morality or justice from politics—as Montesquieu had accused Machiavelli of doing. To the contrary, once the prince is established as a virtual deity, the glory of the prince and the justice prescribed by the regime are identical.

As we have seen, Montesquieu's confidence at the beginning of the dialogue reflects his belief in the irreversible progress of liberalism as well as his ignorance of European history after 1848. As Joly's arrest after the publication of the *Dialogue* attests, the censors were well aware of the implicit meaning of Montesquieu's ignorance, namely that Napoleon's dictatorial coup d'état in 1851 not only destroyed the Second Republic but heralded a new form of tyranny. Joly discerned that Napoleon III, or as Sainte-Beuve described him, "Saint-Simon on horseback," had set out to blend a despotic state with humanitarian social goals (332-33). This peculiar synthesis represents the greatest threat to liberalism.

Leo Strauss once observed that when contemporary social scientists "were brought face to face with tyranny—with a kind of tyranny that surpassed the boldest imagination of the most powerful thinkers of the past—[they] failed to recognize it" (Strauss, 1991, 23). In the final section of his commentary, Waggoner shows that contemporary historians of Napoleon III have likewise missed the unmistakable elements of tyranny. Joly hoped to cure his contemporaries and us of our "Enlightenment faith in progress" so that they and we can actively defend our freedom from the ambitions of tyrants wearing liberal masks and supported by the passions of the multitude.

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In *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Thomas Jefferson asked: “Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath?” Jefferson himself never provided unambiguous answers and the very way he posed the questions suggests that the people may need to believe that their liberties do come from God, but the truth of that belief is another matter altogether. The same sort of ambivalence is present in many Straussian interpretations of religion and the American Founding. Straussians tend to deplore the “wall of separation” erected by the modern Supreme Court as an unnecessary and imprudent attack on religion in American public life. At the same time, they read the American Founding as a product of Lockean political philosophy and they know that Leo Strauss interpreted Locke as a not-so-covert follower of Hobbes. That makes the atheist Hobbes America’s grandfather, which suggests that jurisprudential efforts to eliminate religion from the public sphere might be the fulfillment of, not a departure from, America’s founding principles.

No one would label Michael Novak a Straussian, but his latest book, *On Two Wings: Humble Faith and Common Sense at the American Founding*, addresses the dilemma at the heart of the Straussian quandary.

Novak asks: Was the American Founding anti-religious? Did it render religion irrelevant or did it depend on religion? He answers that the Founding depends on religion and reason like an eagle on its wings. The Founders, he claims, moved easily between faith and common sense practical reasoning, seeing complementarity between the two. He claims, further, that an unspoken Biblical metaphysic grounds the Founders' natural rights political philosophy.

Novak sets forth that metaphysic in a chapter arrestingly titled "Jewish Metaphysics at the Founding." The Hebraic view of reality he finds in the Founding includes the following beliefs: that history has a beginning and is guided by a providential creator God, that everything in creation is intelligible and ordered for a purpose, that man is created free, and that he is judged by God on how well he uses that freedom. The Founders, according to Novak, rejected atheism, embraced natural law, and interpreted Locke as compatible with the Bible. Their fusion of natural rights and Biblical religion can be seen in the Declaration itself, which refers to God as Lawgiver ("Laws of Nature and Nature's God), Creator ("endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights"), Judge ("appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions") and providential Protector ("with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence"). Echoing Harry Jaffa, Novak claims that whether Locke's philosophy is, in the end, a softer version of Hobbes makes no difference. The Founders understood their "new order for the ages" to belong to the providential order of God.

A historically informed reading of the Constitution, Novak thus reasons, does not lead to the "wall of separation" between church and state. Properly interpreted, the First Amendment prohibits only the national establishment of any one religion; it allows "solid public support for a pluralism of pillars in many religions" (51). Novak introduces as evidence the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780, which explicitly authorized the legislature to support religion because, "the happiness of a people and the good order and preservation of civil government essentially depend upon piety, religion, and morality..." Those familiar with church-state scholarship will find that Novak's position mirrors the "non-preferentialist" thesis long-advanced by Justice Rehnquist. His emphasis on "The Massachusetts Way" and his quotes from John Adams and Samuel Adams add to the mountain of evidence that "strict-separationists" have been, at best, selective in their use of the Founders and lack a thorough understanding of the Founders' thought.

If *On Two Wings* limited itself to jurisprudential advice, one might find little to criticize. Novak's "two wings" thesis, however, hits a bit of

turbulence in his penultimate chapter, “A Religious Theory of Rights.” Disputing Walter Berns and Michael Zuckert, Novak argues “the actual ground on which the Founders turned to natural rights was the ground of faith. That is where they grasped the dignity of every individual and hence the inalienable right of every individual” (81). The roots of the “truth” that “all men are created equal,” he says, “lie in Judaism, carried around the world by Christians” (82). The expanded paperback edition includes an Epilogue that extends this argument by way of a focused critique of Walter Berns’ contention that the Founders’ embrace of religious liberty is incompatible with Christian doctrine.

While Novak is right to criticize Berns’ Hobbesian interpretation of the Founding, he goes one step too far. According to the Declaration of Independence, the truth that all men are created equal is “self-evident”—that is, human equality is a truth that does not require faith to understand or apprehend. While the Founders appeal to God to judge the rectitude of their intentions, the Declaration does not invoke the Bible or revelation to ground the rights of man. An interpretation more faithful to the Founders would have attempted to understand their philosophy of rights as they explain it and not have imported theology to realms where they left it out.

To suggest the Founders found natural rights in philosophic reasoning does not imply, however, that the Founding is hostile to revealed truth as Walter Berns has claimed. Novak correctly points out that in the “Memorial and Remonstrance,” James Madison derives the right to religious freedom from man’s prior duties to God. An attentive reading of the “Memorial” also reveals that Madison’s first argument for the “unalienable” right to religious freedom is epistemological, not theological. That is, Madison appeals both to reason and to faith to ground the right of religious liberty. Novak, ironically, seems to depart from his own “two wings” thesis—that the Founders invoked both faith *and* reason to ground natural rights republicanism—by insisting on the primacy of faith over reason in the argument for the natural right to religious freedom.

A more moderate tack might have emphasized that it is only within the horizon of Christianity that an argument for religious freedom makes sense. Madison’s “Memorial and Remonstrance” and Jefferson’s “Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom” assume that religion is primarily a matter of individual faith. If religious orthodoxy consists in the performance of ritualistic actions or if salvation is dispensed to groups and not on an individual basis, then the coercive force of law can affect religious salvation and the philosophical argument for religious freedom evaporates.

Christianity, moreover, establishes the historical conditions that make religious freedom possible. The fact that Jesus, unlike Moses or Mohammed, did not lay down a legal code for political governance allows for the separation of church and state (though it does not necessarily demand it). The Gospel's command to "give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" embodies Christianity's non-political character, which makes possible the argument for religious freedom. Novak is right to assert that religious freedom first appears within Christianity, but this does not mean, as he claims, that it is necessarily a religious argument built on faith.

Despite these reservations, *On Two Wings* shows that religious citizens, both at the time of the Founding and now, heartily have embraced the American experiment in constitutional government. Michael Novak provides a patriotic service by showing how the Founders' philosophy of freedom is not hostile toward religion or religious believers and by demonstrating how men of reason and men of faith can become, in Washington's words, "friends and fellow citizens."

The theme of faith and reason joining forces also runs through *The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America*, by historian Frank Lambert. Lambert has written the type of book that Straussians rarely do, a history that emphasizes facts and historical contingencies over grand themes of political philosophy. He offers an account of what actually happened at the American Founding as opposed to an analysis of what the participants wrote about it.

Lambert identifies 1639 and 1789 as American history's two defining moments regarding religion. In 1639, New England Puritans drafted a constitution that affirmed faith in God and announced an intention to organize a Christian nation. The Founding Fathers' 1789 constitution, by contrast, failed to mention God and separated church from state. How, Lambert asks, did the Puritan Fathers transform into the Founding Fathers?

While developing his answer, Lambert provides concise and informative chapters on the early colonial settlements in Virginia and New England, both of which were dominated by religion. Seventeenth century Colonial Virginia adopted the "Nursing Father" idea that political government should nurture religious faith. The Church of England was established as the official state church and uniformity of religious practice was emphasized as a necessary means to social harmony. Although the dissenters that settled New England were themselves fleeing religious persecution, they did not seek

religious liberty for all but rather the establishment of a “Holy Commonwealth.” As God’s chosen people, they aimed to create an “American Israel.” Religion thoroughly infused all aspects of the state.

Professor Lambert never makes it an explicit theme, but one of the most helpful aspects of his historical survey is that it helps to reveal what an establishment of religion is. Examples include: limiting citizenship to members of specific religious sects, limiting public office to official church members, the employment and appointment of clergy by the state, state ownership of church property, the licensing of religious ministers who do not belong to the official state church, and the regulation of when and where those ministers could preach. With such examples at hand, one begins to understand the church-state arrangements the Founders sought to end and how far contemporary establishment jurisprudence has strayed from their concerns. Very little that comes before the courts today as a possible Establishment Clause violation—like the posting of the Ten Commandments in a public space or “under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance—would have concerned those who ratified the First Amendment.

Lambert’s primary aim is to explain how America’s Founding Fathers came to embrace religious freedom given the Puritan Fathers’ history. He emphasizes the coming together of two distinct movements: Enlightenment philosophical arguments derived from John Locke and championed by Jefferson and Madison, and the growth and political strength of religious dissenters, who were inspired by the anti-hierarchical and individualistic elements of the Great Awakening and who were tired of paying taxes to support churches whose practices and beliefs they found repugnant. These two forces embraced a common agenda of deregulating the religious marketplace—ending state churches that used their state-created monopolistic position to regulate and limit competing sects.

The loudest voices in the contemporary church-state debate tend to be the most extreme. One side claims that the Founders were religious men who sought to erect a Christian nation. The other side asserts that the Founders were secular rationalists who sought to subvert traditional religious orthodoxy. The best parts of Novak’s and Lambert’s studies teach us that the truth lies somewhere in between. The Founders sought primarily to protect liberty, especially religious liberty, which led them to embrace religious faith politically while also remaining cognizant of its potential political dangers.

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