Democratic
Character

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DEMOCRATIC CHARACTER

The Classical Tradition

The connection between individual character and the body politic is a recurring theme in the classical political tradition. "The type of character appropriate to the constitution," wrote Aristotle, "is the power which continues to sustain it, as it is also the force which originally creates it." ¹ When he spoke of the constitution Aristotle was thinking of something broader than an "arrangement of offices." He had in mind "a scheme of life, directed to attain a particular quality of life," which is conception close to the inclusiveness of the modern idea of "a culture." ² Writing of what we would today call a well-functioning democracy Aristotle emphasized the favorable effect of relying upon men of a middle condition in all "gifts of fortune." "Those who belong to either extreme—the over-handsome, the over-strong, the over-noble, the over-wealthy; at the opposite end the over-poor, the over-weak, the utterly ignoble—find it hard to follow the lead of reason." The privileged ones incline more toward "violence and serious crime," while the underprivileged tend to "roguey and petty offenses." Those enjoying too many advantages are "both unwilling to obey and ignorant how to obey." At the other end of the scale are the "mean and poor-spirited."

We thus have, on the one hand, people who are ignorant how to rule and only know how to obey, as if they were so many slaves, and, on the other hand, people who are ignorant how to

¹ Unless otherwise indicated quotations from the Politics are from Ernest Barker, The Politics of Aristotle, Oxford, 1946. The present phrase is at p. 332.
² Footnote one, op. cit., p. 180.
obey any sort of authority and only know how to rule as if they were masters of slaves. The result is a state, not of freemen, but only of slaves and masters: a state of envy on the one side and on the other contempt. Nothing could be further removed from the spirit of friendship or the temper of a political community. A state aims at being, as far as it can be, a society composed of equals and peers.  

The greatest means of ensuring the stability of any constitution, continues the Politics, is “the education of the citizens in the spirit of their constitution,” which attunes them to the “right constitutional temper.”  

It is also important to institute a magistracy “to supervise those who live in a way out of harmony with the established constitution.” When the selection of officials is the problem, several considerations must be kept in mind, especially loyalty, skill and character. The public good demands the capacity to command the “passions.”

Aristotle concedes that popular government is an acceptable principle when it is based upon genuine discussion. The judgment of the people individually is not as good as that of an expert, but taken collectively it is better “if they are not debased in character.” Moreover, if we have a body of persons who are both good men and good citizens, it is more likely that the entire body will be free from corruption than that one man is free from it.” The citizens of a state “must know one another’s characters” if they are to “give decisions in matters of disputed rights, and to distribute the offices of government according to the merit of candidates.”

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father in the gratification of superfluous desires, and culminates in a tyrannical character.

Changes in the constitution are therefore depicted as being the outcome of varying degrees of unbalance in the individual soul-state, which is described as composed of the desirous, the spirited, and the reasoning parts. Delineating the "state within us" Plato treats the ambitious man as the outcome of the victory of the spirited component over the reasoning part. The oligarch reflects the triumph of the desires over the spirited and the reasoning parts. The democratic man is produced by battles within the desirous parts of the soul, and the tyrannical type is the extreme expression of self-indulgence. More specifically, the democratic man comes from the luxuriant growth of superfluous desires, and the tyrannical man from unlawful desires.

In order to understand the tyrannical man it is necessary to probe beneath the conscious level. In passages which foreshadow Freud it is said that the clue to these subterranean depths of desire is to be found in the interpretation of dreams. In dreams the soul casts off the restraining bonds which have been put upon it by reason, and the bestial part of man awakens, revealing a part of his nature which the individual does not himself know. Plato described the Oedipus-complex, the desire to have intercourse with one's own mother, and a host of other wish-complexes, likewise suppressed, which range from sexual intercourse with the gods to sexual deviations of every kind, and murder.

The Modern Approach

It would be an exaggeration to say that for well over two thousand years Western man made no advances in the study of politics beyond Plato and Aristotle. But it is not exaggerating to say that no one went beyond Plato's insight into the dynamics of the human soul until Freud penetrated once again into the lurid depths of the unconscious, and brought to the surface once more "the state within us," and revealed again the niagara of love and destruction within every living person. Since Plato and Aristotle our advances have not been in the "universal" propositions concerning man, but rather in the invention and adaptation of procedures by which specific individuals and groups, operating in specific historic and cultural settings, can be understood, and hence opened to modification, under some circumstances, through self-understanding or through the self-understood action of others. In a word, the modern approach is toward the building of a body of scientific knowledge by perfecting the instrumentalties of inquiry.

It is customary to oppose Aristotle to Plato in this regard, and to emphasize the impatience of Plato with the apparatus of descriptive investigation. It is true that the spirit of Plato gave to everything "a certain plastic roundness, than which nothing more strenuously resists the analytical urge of Aristotle's thought, which is to Plato's as the anatomical diagram is to the plastic human form." 12 A lively historical sense is essential if one is to realize vividly how "strange and repellant" the procedure of Aristotle was to the average Greek of the fourth century, and what a revolutionary innovation he was making. "The technique of the orderly observation of particulars, methodically pursued, was learnt from the exact modern medicine of the end of the fifth century, and in the fourth century from the astronomy of the orientals with their century-long catalogues and records." 13 Mathematical, poetical and allusive, without thereby admit-

13 Jaeger, op. cit., p. 386.
It is possible to concede that Plato was imaginative, ting that he was indifferent to the descriptive facts of human relations. If in his highest flights Plato thought of himself as celebrating, or even adumbrating, the “permanence” beyond “appearance,” we do not need to believe that Plato was uninstructed by, or unintrigued by, human appearances. From the scrutiny of his life as a whole we recognize in Plato a thinker who was inspired by the urge to be immediately as well as ultimately relevant to human problems. He did not, nor could he, refrain from perceiving and interpreting human relationships, even though he might draw back from subjecting his own imagination to the discipline of prolonged, systematic and patient empirical inquiry. Nor could he fail to inspire successive generations of Aristotle’s who sought to enlarge the applicability of his insights, and to contribute to their continual correction, by erecting a process of perpetual annotation in the light of the data gathered by observing the evolution of man and his societies.

The emphasis which has been put upon Aristotle’s pursuit of the conditioning factors capable of explaining human behavior has often neglected to give sufficient weight to the significance of the fact that the patterns of scientific thought and observation were part of a more comprehensive frame of reference. The modern approach, too, often fails to grasp the wholeness of the intellectual enterprise of dealing with human affairs, and thereby neglects to perceive the wisdom of keeping the scientific part of the endeavor properly related to the total context. But the modern approach is not indifferent to the pivotal importance of “goal thinking,” which consists in the clarification of values. Those of us who strive for the dignity rather than the indignity of man in human relations sense the need of defining our goal values in terms that enable us to find a point of contact between lofty and enduring aspirations and the details of any concrete situation. Hence we seek to specify the meaning of such terms as “the dignity of man” in reference to the shaping and sharing of values in society.14 This calls for the making of “operational” definitions in reference to the institutional patterns found, or capable of being realized, in the body politic.15 Part of the present essay will devote itself to describing the nature of a democratic community, as we now conceive it.

Even as Plato and Aristotle were acutely conscious of living in a time of change, the modern approach proceeds with full stress upon time. And in this regard we have somewhat sharper tools of inquiry than were utilized by the Greeks. I refer particularly to the patterns of thinking about the future. Both Plato and Aristotle sought in forecasting the future to subject it to scientific or, equivalently, to “inner logical” restriction. Aristotle in particular explored the passage of one form of constitution into another, inspired partly by the analogy of the successive stages through which the human being passes from conception to death. There is, however, a way of thinking about the outcome of the past and present which makes use of, though is not subordinated to, such conceptions of “stages.” We can set up “developmental constructs” which are not scientific hypotheses, but which refer only to the possible ordering of events in the “unique” past and present. For example,

14 I am speaking of the clarification of the goals appropriate to the policy sciences of democracy. There can also be a policy science of tyranny. A science of total policy would select either set of postulates and analyze both. A useful historical inquiry into our preference for human dignity is The Dignity of Man by Herschel Baker, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1947.

15 Although modern “operationalism” derives from many sources, an influential statement by a distinguished physical scientist is Percy W. Bridgman, The Logic of Modern Physics, New York, Macmillan, 1927.
when we say that the present day world may be moving from the predominance of "business states" to "garrison states," we are putting forward no "law of politics." We are characterizing a possible ordering through time of the appearance of predominant state forms on the globe. The function of the "construct" is to further our critical thinking about the probabilities of future events. To this end we review what is scientifically known about conditioning factors, and we examine the trends in different parts of the world. Part of the scientific knowledge that bears on such interpretations has to do with the connections between "character and constitution" to which the Greeks made early and original contributions.

We likewise share with the Greek thinkers an active concern for policy. Jaeger remarks that what Plato had to say in examining character and constitution was designed as a "warning against what he knew to be the logically inevitable sequel of the present." And we are aware of the story of Plato as the advisor of the tyrants of Syracuse, and of Aristotle also acting as an advisor. Plato, in particular, was absorbed with the connection between knowledge and choice. Indeed, as Jaeger remarks in interpreting his thought, Plato believed that the "only science which is valuable is the science of choice, which enables us to make the right decisions." And today the recovery of perspective which is expressed in the term "the policy sciences" is symbolic of the same concern for the making of decisions which, in our case, are intended to implement human dignity.

The modern approach then, is configurational in the sense that comprehensive perspectives are sought over human affairs. We utilize several interrelated and mutually facilitating patterns of thought, which we may abbreviate as the clarification of goal values, the assessment of trends, the review of scientific knowledge of conditioning factors, the projection of developmental constructs of the future, and the invention and estimating of policy alternatives designed to increase the probability of the realization of the goal values. Hence the concern with the interconnection of character and democracy enters into our thinking at many points: at the level of goal, trend, science, projection, invention and evaluation of policy.

The Democratic Community

Since we are concerned with the significance of democratic character for the democratic community, our principal frame of reference is the community. Our conception of character, and our judgment of the impact of character upon democracy, will depend upon the empirical study of how the democratic community is solidified, undermined, or on the contrary, brought into being, on the basis of character.

Let us therefore begin by clarifying the characteristics of the democratic community, which is the form of society which it is our purpose to achieve on the widest possible scale in both space and time. A democratic community is one in which human dignity is realized in theory and fact.

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It is characterized by wide rather than narrow participation in the shaping and sharing of values. By the term “value” we refer to a category of “preferred events.” The process we conceive to be comprehensible as “man striving for values through institutions upon resources.” For the statement of goal values, and also for descriptive purposes, it is convenient to operate with a short list of value categories. At present the following eight terms appear to provide a workable list: power, respect, affection, rectitude, well-being, wealth, skill, enlightenment. Sometimes it is useful to sub-divide this set of values according to the degree to which attitudes are important, or are supplemented by relatively impersonal standards. When the attitudes are prominent, we speak of deference values, and put in this category power, respect, affection, and rectitude. When attitudes are supplemented by comparatively impersonal standards, we speak of welfare values, and include well-being, wealth, skill and enlightenment.

Consider briefly the deference values. A power relationship is distinguishable by the prevailing expectation (or application) of violence, or of some other extreme deprivation of value used in support of a choice. No overt use of physical instrumentalities is essential, and it is this aspect of the relationship that justifies the inclusion of power among the deference values. It is obvious that respect is peculiarly bound up with the quality of the attitudes prevailing in an interpersonal relationship. Respect can be indicated by symbolic expressions concerning the total position of the “self” in relation to the “other.” Affection, of course, is understood in terms of feelings and of the accompanying estimates of “self” and “other.” By rectitude we understand the sense of responsibility for sustaining a given order of human relationships. Thus rectitude sustains democracy when there is a sense of responsibility which is interpreted in reference to patterns consistent with, and sustaining, the democratic commonwealth.

We consider well-being to be one of the welfare values, since somatic considerations occupy an important part in the evaluation of a given set of relations in terms of health or disease. Wealth often involves claims to the services of such tangible resources as land, buildings and other facilities. Skill so frequently involves some level of proficiency in the handling of resources that we think of the acquisition and exercise of skill as among the welfare values. The content of the communications which are made in connection with enlightenment are often amenable to relatively impersonal tests for truth or falsity, comprehensiveness or restrictedness.

Equipped with some such list of categories, we are in a position to consider any community according to the old formula: Who gets what (values) when and how? If we think of democracy as general shaping and sharing, despotisms are at the other end of the scale, characterized by the concentration of values in relatively few hands.

Although these distinctions provide preliminary orientation, they do not carry us far toward “operational” definitions. We must specify the nature of the prevailing “myth” which we regard as in harmony with shared values. Moreover, we need to specify the patterns of “technique” which meet the minimum requirements of sharing. The myth, of course, is divisible into “doctrine, formula, and miranda,” the doctrine referring to basic justifications, the formula 

20 In my Politics (1936) which is herewith reprinted I spoke of safety, income and deference as “representative” values. Safety can be treated as equivalent to well-being, income to wealth, and deference, if desired, to the sub-divided list comprising power, respect, affection, rectitude. This list is still to be taken as “representative” rather than “definitive.”
to prescriptions for conduct, and Miranda to popular lore pertaining to a given value.\textsuperscript{21} Although it is beyond the scope of the discussion to deal with these matters in detail, it may be worth while to give some of the definitions that aid in the clarification of the concept of sharing.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{Power}

1. Power is shared when the political myth favors the pattern of general participation in the making of decisions.
2. Power is shared when in fact there is general participation in decision-making.
3. Shared power means that it is assumed that office-holders can be criticized without fear of serious retaliation.
4. Shared power means that the shaping of decisions depends upon values to which access can be had on the basis of merit.
5. Shared power includes the freedom to challenge the lawfulness of applying general rules to concrete cases.
6. Power is shared when there is an effective presumption against the politicizing of human relations.
7. Power is shared when there is a presumption against the use of power in great concentration, particularly in the form of regimentation, centralization, and militarization.

\textbf{Respect}

1. According to the prevailing myth, individuals deserve respect because they are human, and also because of individual merit.
2. In practice, no deprivations are imposed which are incompatible with the merit of the individual as a human being. For example, basic human dignity implies that no "cruel and unusual" punishments are inflicted.

\textsuperscript{21} These and other categories are elaborated in Lesswell and Abraham Kaplan, \textit{Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry}, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1950.


3. Access to the values on which prestige is based depends upon individual merit. That is, no discriminations are practiced. Opportunities are open for the maturing of individual talent into the means of acquiring power, wealth, and all values which influence the giving and receiving of prestige.

4. Positive aid is made available in order to overcome handicaps that would otherwise prevent the achieving of a full human experience. If an individual is handicapped by blindness, for instance, respect is not only a passive matter of offering the identical opportunities open to a person of normal vision. Special aid is needed to overcome impediments to learning imposed by blindness. We know that it is possible for handicapped persons to live a life of full or adequately compensated participation.

5. There is a strong presumption in favor of affording the widest scope to voluntary choice and to privacy. When we speak of a presumption, it is a matter of relative emphasis and not of an irrefutable prescription. In this instance, we are speaking of the presumption in favor of the individual's own judgment until the consequences of such judgments are dangerously destructive of community values.

\textbf{Rectitude}

1. The prevailing myth makes articulate a demand for a sense of personal and collective responsibility for perfecting a free society.
2. The myth includes standards upon which there is a high degree of consensus regarding the conduct consistent with, and facilitative of, human dignity.
3. The sense of responsibility and the standards of right conduct are applied on public matters.
4. The sense of responsibility and the standards of right conduct are applied in private judgments and in the private life of members of the community.
5. There is access on the basis of merit to the values which influence the conceptions and applications of rectitude standards.

\textbf{Afection}

1. The myth emphasizes the desirability of congenial human relationships, and emphasizes the capacity of human beings for entering into such relations.
2. Hostile attitudes are overcome by deliberate efforts to restore friendly attitudes, and these efforts are largely successful in practice. The implication is that positive relations are maintained by clarifying common goals and capacities, and not by substituting one set of hates for another.

3. Hostilities are prevented by reducing provocativeness, as well as by the exercise of self-control directed against impulsive expressions of destructiveness against others. An everyday example of non-provocative conduct is the cutting down of adverse and unnecessary criticism of individuals and groups. On a deeper level is the cultivation in all members of society of the ideal of giving calm consideration to one's impulses, rather than giving way to spontaneous anger and rage.

4. There needs to be equality of opportunity for the exercise of affection as a means of achieving affection; and this implies access to the base values which influence the channels and targets of affection. ("Base" values are those essential for "scope" values, in this case, affection.)

5. Denials of affection should be directed against conduct inimical to the free man's commonwealth. In the ideal commonwealth, affections would be so developed from infancy that incentives would be lacking for conduct inimical to freedom. The withholding of affection is a legitimate means of bringing about and sustaining congenial interpersonal relationships.

6. The scope of affection for human beings needs to be as wide as humanity. Less inclusive loyalties need not be abolished, but made compatible with the harmony of the whole.

**Well-being**

1. The myth emphasizes the importance of somatic and psychic well-being and interprets the ideal in a scientifically correct manner.

2. There is adequate treatment of the diseased, injured, and handicapped.

3. There are deliberate and successful efforts to prevent disease, injury, and handicap.

4. Progress is being made toward optimum somatic and psychic activity throughout life.

5. The motives and circumstances leading to suicide, murder, war and civil violence are reduced or eliminated.

6. Progress is made toward the lengthening of life (under the conditions indicated in 4 above).

**Wealth**

1. The myth emphasizes the importance of expanding production in order to have the possibility of expanding the standard of living; and the myth stresses the importance of a balanced (graduated) distribution rather than a division of the community into "rich" and "poor."

2. A progressively larger aggregate income is available for distribution.

3. The pattern of income distribution is in fact balanced (graduated) rather than dichotomous (bi-modal).

4. Security of basic income is guaranteed in theory and fact.

5. Opportunities are open to every capable person to earn more than the basic income.

6. Opportunities are provided to develop potential capacities as producers and consumers.

**Skill**

1. The myth attaches importance to the maturing of latent talent into socially acceptable skills and encourages excellence in performance.

2. Opportunities are provided for the full exercise of skills (full employment).

3. Opportunities are made available for the discovery of latent capacity, and for its development.

4. The base values upon which the acquisition and exercise of skill depend are accessible to merit.

**Enlightenment**

1. The myth emphasizes the importance of knowledge as a basis for sound judgment on questions of public policy.

2. Everyone has access to media of communication in which news of current developments is reported.

3. The media provide interpretations of the news which place them in relationship to a comprehensive context in which goals, alternatives, trends, factors and projections are included.

4. Members of the community have access to media for the dissemination of facts and interpretations.
5. The source of statements on which policy judgment depends are disclosed. (It is not essential for personal identity to be revealed; the facts about interest, bias, and competence need to be indicated. The separation of editorial and news statements is an example of a means by which attention can be called to the source and nature of the statement being made.)

6. There is a presumption against lying.

7. There is a presumption against non-rational statements (the irrelevant, for example). (Precautions are taken to nullify the non-rational by exclusion, equalization of affect, and the sharing of insight into the nature of the statement.)

8. There is a presumption in favor of statements from competent sources.

9. There is a presumption against advocacy or neutrality, and in favor of inquiry.

Character and Personality

When we speak of character we are referring to a part, not the whole, of personality. The comprehensive term for the enduring traits of an individual which are manifested in interpersonal relationships is "personality." Hence we are speaking of personality when we mention the aptitudes, skills (and knowledges) of an individual. We also refer to personality when alluding to the strength and direction of basic drives, such as the sexual. The personality also includes the automatic and unconscious restrictions and compulsions which modify the expression of basic drives. Such patterns can be made more explicit by considering the "mechanisms" upon which chief reliance is put in mediating among the drives, and between drives and the conscious processes of perception, imagination, recall and the like. The unconscious restrictions and compulsions can be viewed negatively, in terms of the "defenses" which have been evolved by the individual in the course of his experience with other people. Viewed positively, we consider the "ego ideals" which have been elaborated in the course of the same experience. The traditional psychoanalytic categories have divided the personality into the tripartite sectors of the "ego, the superego and the id." These are roughly equivalent to what we have just been calling the "basic impulses"; the "unconscious and automatic restrictions, compulsions and mechanisms" (viewed negatively and positively as defenses and ego ideals); and the "conscious processes."

In the study of interpersonal relations it is useful to examine the ego for the purpose of discovering "the self system." The self system, in turn comprises three main sets of patterns: identifications, demands, expectations. When we refer to ourselves in the privacy of meditation, we are aware of such subjective events as feeling a strong sense of "I" or "me" or "we." The primary symbols are the "I," "me," and "Harold Lasswell"; and they are linked with such secondary symbols as "family, friends, neighbors, nation" and the like. The "others" who are included in the "I-me-we system" are part of the identifications belonging to the self system as a whole. The "others" who are not so included are not part of the self.

We experience ourselves directly as loving and hating, liking and disliking, inciting and moderating many of the features of the self and of the "not-self." Such patterns of preference and determination may be called the "demand" system of the self. The demands can be conveniently classified according to the categories of value which were introduced above, including both the deference and welfare values. Moreover, the demand system includes demands.

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23a As Harry Stack Sullivan called it in his later articles.
23b The classification of the "identifications, demands and expectations" follows my usage in earlier publications. The fundamental distinctions were developed within the general frame of thinking made current by several scholars, notably George Herbert Mead, whose contributions are today receiving such active recognition in the textbooks of social psychology.
“by the self upon the self” and “upon others.” And the demands may be linked with the various identification components of the self system. Thus the part of the identification system related to the “political party” may include demands for power as evidenced by success in winning elections and modifying policies. The identification system pertaining to the family or the fraternity may be concerned with different values, or with different interpretations of these values.

In some ways it is simplest to introduce the “expectation system” as the residual category comprising all of the subjective events not included among the identifications and demands. In general, it is a question of the assumptions entertained about past, present and future, irrespective of likes and dislikes, or of the drawing of the boundaries of the self. Therefore the expectations embrace all of the “fact assumptions” and “projections” (future-pictures) of the individual. The “expectation system,” in turn, can be relatively specialized in sub-patterns which are closely linked with identification and demand sub-systems. Thus all that pertains to power may be closely integrated with the demand for power on behalf of the party or the nation or some other entity.

We are now in a position to introduce the term “character” for the purpose of conferring upon it a meaning which absorbs many of the conceptions which are current in much professional and lay usage. By character we mean the self-system of the person, together with the degree of support, opposition or non-support received from the unconscious parts of the personality. When we say that a man is of steadfast character it is implied that he has sufficient command of the resources of the whole personality to maintain the self system despite environing conditions which may be adverse. If we say that some one is “characterless,” we are implying that he cannot be counted upon to perform a consistent role in human relations, whether where difficulties are to be overcome, or merely from one comparable situation to another. The implication is that inner energies are in such severe conflict that vacillation or weakness continually occurs; or that a level of functioning was never achieved in which consistent responses were integrated. However, the idea of “character” is not that of rigidity and repetitiveness. On the contrary, the preservation of the system as a whole depends upon suppleness in adapting to circumstances that might shatter a less versatile pattern. Pliability must be kept within the limits of the larger contours, so that the pattern “snaps back” when testing conditions are removed.

Conflicting Hypotheses

Why concern ourselves with the study of character? We have already encountered the flat assertion in the classical tradition that character is a factor of such importance in political life that it is capable of determining the constitution of a state. This viewpoint is alive in much of the social science of our time, although in less drastic form. The classical tradition, of course, also expressly stated that constitutions influence character, and that stability depends upon success in moulding an appropriate “temper.” Some of the studies of the interplay of culture and personality appear to assign a significant place to the determinative role of “basic personality.”

generation by the prevailing patterns of child-rearing.\textsuperscript{25} The rise and fall of such political movements as German National Socialism have been in part explained on the basis of the personality structure of leaders and lead.\textsuperscript{26} Many investigators have sought to connect position within the class structure of a culture with a distinctive personality profile.\textsuperscript{27}

There are, however, dissenting voices to the proposition that character is to be taken as a significant dynamic in the living processes of society. The most emphatic dissent comes from the theorists of social development who assign a primary role to “material” as against “ideological” factors. The many varieties of Marxism are substantially at one in affirming the overwhelming impact upon the “superstructure” (ethics, law and other social norms and assumptions) of the “division of labor” which follows the “means of production.” What we are calling the self-system, and the alignment of the self-system with the unconscious patterns of personality, obviously belongs to the realm of the “ideological,” or secondary, factors in the Marxist version of the social process. Even in this domain there are, however, qualifications whose true weight is vaguely indicated. What, for example, can we make of Trotsky’s rhetorical remark to the effect that “We do not at all pretend to deny the significance of the personal in the mechanics of the social process, nor the significance of the personal in the accidental”?\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{26} Henry V. Dicks, “Personality Traits and National Socialist Ideology,” \textit{Human Relations}, 3, (1950), 111f.
\textsuperscript{27} The work of Lloyd Warner, John Dollard, Alison Davis, Robert Havighurst and associates may be noted in this connection.

It is safe to say that among professional students of personality the “tendency to encompass the opposite” has displayed itself in a series of counter-marches which has somewhat modified the stress which was formerly laid upon the early conditioning of personality. Fifteen years ago, for example, the forefront of psychoanalytic theory was the discovery of the patterning influence of culture upon basic urges, and the elucidation of the process by which the situations encountered at successive phases of the career line might affect the individual. Karen Horney is an excellent representative of the pioneers in this direction.\textsuperscript{29} The development of the psychology of the ego, long neglected in orthodox psychoanalysis, gradually focused the attention of psychologists upon the structure of the environment available to perception.\textsuperscript{30} The psychologists of the Gestalt school had already invented a kit of conceptual and experimental tools for the refined study of perception.\textsuperscript{31} During this period a constant incentive was provided by the hope of obtaining the benefits of the depth therapies, like psychoanalysis, without using the prolonged, and therefore costly, procedures involved. It gradually became respectable to explore the potentialities of “short therapies”\textsuperscript{32} and “group therapies,”\textsuperscript{33} and this led to a wave of experimentation with combinations of “insight” experience with facilitative rearrangements of the environment.\textsuperscript{34} The lat-
ter has long been the preferred mode of approach employed by social workers, and by gifted laymen, who look for opportunities suitable for the handicapped, whether the handicap is a criminal record, drug addiction, slow-mindedness, or "personality difficulty." The apparent success of such movements aiming at the creation of a supportive environment as Alcoholics Anonymous, and of boy's club programs to counteract juvenile delinquency, have stimulated new confidence in what can be done by "changing the situation" and thereby "remodeling the personality."

These several currents have challenged the conception of personality, and hence of character, as a relatively "finished" structure organized in early life which persists as a strong selective influence in turning all subsequent life situations to account. Gustav Ichheiser has suggested that the psychologists in our culture may be suffering from the same basic sources of "false social perception" as laymen, with the result that entirely too much unity has been "read into" the personality structure at any given time, and through life. He suggests, for example, that "our interpretations and expectations operate under the silent assumption that other people do not change fundamentally, even if actually they do undergo far-reaching transformations of their personality structure. Other people, so we assume, might have changed their views, convictions, attitudes, loyalties, and sentiments, but essentially they are still the same person. Specifically, John Smith at sixty is 'the same' John Smith when he was, let us say, twelve years of age." We therefore "overestimate the role of personal" and "underestimate the role of situational factors" in accounting for human behavior.35

35 Misunderstandings in Human Relations: A Study in False Social Perception (Supplement to the September, 1949, issue of the American Journal of Sociology).

It may be that the "attrition of personality explanations" is a manifestation of deep-lying and pervasive trends in the structure of American life. David Riesman writes of the diminishing role of "traditional" and "inner directed" varieties of personality in modern American civilization, and of the rise of "outer directed" types who are sensitively oriented to the shifting pressures and opportunities of the specific circumstances in which they find themselves at any moment. To the extent that this interpretation is correct it is evident that the link between the past of the individual and any subsequent behavior is attenuated, if not altogether obliterated.36

When conflicting hypotheses concerning complex processes survive from decade to decade, the explanation may lie in the treachery of words, rather than in the structure of the phenomena. Undoubtedly there are many sources of ambiguity in the traditional and current formulations of the connections between character and culture. Against some of these ambiguities we must put ourselves on guard. The Character-Culture Manifold

There is then, much confusion in opposing "character" to "culture" and seeking to assess the effect of one upon the other. The obvious fact is that terms like character and culture are attempts to refer to recurring features of the same process, namely, the interpersonal relationships of man. And it is exceedingly troublesome to define the intended referent of any term about the social process, since the outstanding characteristic of interpersonal relations is an unceasing zig-zag of interaction. We say "good morning" to the boss on Monday and Tuesday, but we may be in a very different frame of mind on Tuesday than on Monday, and the boss himself may differ in ways that modify his own part in the interaction. We may have received our draft

call, or the boss may have a sick child at home. Hence there may be a somewhat "abstracted" or "withdrawn" quality about the exchange of salutations. Our tone of voice may be less high pitched, and our tempo of speech less quick. The boss may hesitate a split second before noticing us, and "overreact" with a note of "false cordiality." How shall we fit these two observations which we, acting in the capacity of a scientific observer of human relations, have made on the interaction of the boss and his employee? From one point of view, we witness the bearers of the same culture playing roles which can frequently be observed under comparable circumstances. The routine of salutation fits the expected roles to be played by employer and employee in many work situations. From another perspective we can think of two characters as interacting, perhaps observing that the employer seems to deviate somewhat more from the usual pattern of salutation than the employee. This raises the question in our mind whether the character of the boss is as well-integrated as that of the employee, in the sense that the self-system of the employer was unable to mobilize sufficient command over internal energies to conform to the role playing appropriate to the morning contact. However, we might think that further information is needed for the purpose of assessing the relative magnitude of the changes in the total life situation of the two men over the twenty-four hour period. How can we compare the comparative severity of the deprivation represented by the draft call and by the illness of the child? This carries us to the study of the predispositions of the employer and employee in reference to all the major features of family life and of civic responsibility. As we consider these predispositions, we are continually reminded of the perpetual interplay of "patterns seen cross-sectionally" from one individual to another, and "patterns seen developmentally" in the perspective of the whole self- and energy-system of each person. We have defined a character trait as a relatively enduring response, and this implies durability in the recurring circumstances of life. A culture trait is defined as a relatively enduring pattern of action, also; and this implies that the response and the situation reappear together. But all this remains vague unless it is possible to specify the time span which is taken into account by the observing scientist. Do we satisfy our definition of a trait of culture or of personality and character by observations extending over a year or over several years? Must we establish "consistency" of personality trait from early childhood? Must the "consistency" of a culture trait be maintained over an entire generation? A decade? A year?\footnote{Concerning the "event-manifold" see my paper on "Person, Personality, Group, Culture" in Psychiatry (1959), reprinted in The Analysis of Political Behaviour: An Empirical Approach, New York, Oxford University Press, 1947, and A Study of Interpersonal Relations, edited by Patrick Mallaby, New York, Harmitage Press, 1950.}

The Incessant Interplay of Predisposition and Environment

When we remind ourselves of the complexities involved, we do not thereby assert that it is nonsense to explore the interrelations between that part of culture which we call politics, for example, and that form of culture which we call personality or character. We establish only the conditions that must be met before such talk makes sense.

In principle, the interactions among human beings are open to observation. If we think of the immediate personal contacts occurring in the course of a twenty-four hour period, the task of noting them is by no means insuperable. When a busy administrator asked his secretary to keep a record of his direct contacts, the following was not an unrepresentative day (beginning with a brief conference with the private secretary): staff conference with six subor-
ordinates; staff conference with a superior and four colleagues; twenty-four office appointments; forty telephone conversations; ten telegrams sent or received; fifteen letters read; twenty-five letters dictated; lunch with twenty visitors; brief appearance at cocktail party where fifty or sixty persons were present; dinner with family of four; six guests after dinner. Even an incomplete inventory of this kind is a reminder of the ways in which direct interpersonal contacts are patterned in an "office culture," and at the work bench, or in the household, or on the farm, or in school. The preceding inventory could be extended to include the "secondary" contacts through television or radio, or with "name" persons in newspapers and magazines. Furthermore, the "content" of mass communication contacts can be analyzed for the purpose of bringing out the geographical distribution and social role of the individuals or groups referred to. Extending the interactions backward through time, we eventually come to the early years of childhood and infancy. During the first months of life it is not exceptional for the mother in her nursing role to have two thousand major occasions of contact with the infant.

The inventory of direct or indirect opportunities for contact among human beings is a record of the unrehearsed ballet of ordinary life. When we read a calendar of appointments we catch a glimpse of the "hoops of culture" through which the individual carries his soma. Within this changing configuration inner experiences of great intensity or of utter superficiality are taking place. Such reflections as these remind us of another source of ambiguity in talk about character, personality, politics and culture.

The False Opposition of Inner and Outer

Often the connotation of words like character or attitude is that, in contradistinction to culture, they refer to inner experience rather than manifest activities. Hence inquiry into the interdetermination of personality and culture seeks to estimate the effect of the "inner" in shaping the "outer," or of the "outer" as stamping itself indelibly upon innermost thoughts and feelings. In the most generalized form this is often stated as opposition of "ideas" to "material" factors in society.

Now the plausibility of this way of talking is very great, since each of us is aware of his own subjectivity, and of his sense of separation from what is taken to be "out there." Indeed, the chasm may be so great that a sense of alienation is the dominant tone of inner life. Some of the most searching observations made about man in modern society have laid hold upon the disjunction between the inner and outer. One of the most successful formulations was made by Durkheim, whose conception of "anomie" has been firmly planted in the social science of the West. Durkheim was seeking to explain the rising curve of suicide, and he found it in the desperation of the individual who, under modern conditions, is handicapped in arriving at a satisfactory identification with others. Erich Fromm is among those who have called attention to the inner infirmities occurring in the lives of human beings who live in a world in which they must make up their own minds, rather than depend upon traditional solutions. Moreover, our civilization is competitive, and rewards successful mobility in the marketplace, or in the arena of politics, or in any distinctive locale. When the demands upon the "self by the self" are for infinite success in reaching a position of top influence, the likelihood of disappointment and self-deprecation are correspondingly enhanced. The inner stress

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38 Le Suicide, Alcan, 1897.
generated as an incident of the clash between the biological inheritance of man and the requirements of getting along together has been graphically depicted by Sigmund Freud in *Civilization and Its Discontents*. It appears, therefore, that modern man has many sources of secret misery: the miseries of non-identification, of thinking for one's self, of self-appraisal in terms of competitive success, of carrying an "animal" nature into an effort at socialization.

Although the interpretations of our time which have just been reviewed are phrased in terms of inner experience, and appear to trace the miseries of the subjective life to the imprint of "outer" factors, such is not in fact the case. What is the "civilization" which is portrayed as pressing upon the individual? On analysis this "outside" pattern is seen to comprise both inner and outer traits. For if A withholds affection and respect from B, thereby provoking discouragement in B, A is engaged in subjective as well as expressive activities. Part of the pattern is for A to deny himself the free expression of whatever tendencies he has to give affection or respect regardless of B's economic or political success. Indeed, A may in turn suffer from the failure of C to admire and love him, even as he causes B to suffer.

It is evident, therefore, that we are not comparing an inner versus an outer relationship, but rather, we are comparing two patterns both of which are composed of inner and outer elements. If we speak of culture as including "the success pattern," we mean that the giving of indulgence or deprivation depends upon certain subjective appraisals and evaluations. If we think of "discontent" as a pattern of modern civilization, it includes not only subjective events, but the relating of these events to the acts of other persons, which are integrated with the subjective life of those individuals. Indeed, every interpersonal relationship, when complete, comprises a series of events in which each participant is furnishing the other with a stimulating environment, and is in turn initiating and interpreting what goes on. For some purposes it is convenient to think of the acts of A as constituting an "environment" for the "predispositions" with which B enters the relationship. We account for the response of B as a function of the two sets of determining factors, the environmental and the predispositional. It is equally valid and useful to think of both A and B as entering a situation with various predispositions, and to limit the meaning of the term environment to the initial cues which they provide for one another (together with whatever other features of the situation are also cues). The term response can then be applied to the ensuing pattern of interaction. The latter usage is especially convenient when the cues which we are seeking to describe are circumscribed, as when a drillmaster barks a command to disciplined troops, and the resulting behavior, such as discharging a variety of weapons, is patterned in easily characterizeable ways. The intensive study of each individual in a situation is indicated when the cues are not easy to distinguish, and when the ensuing patterns of conduct are exceedingly varied and changeable from one broadly comparable situation to the next.

It is not appropriate, therefore, to interpret the interplay of character and politics as an example of inner versus outer factors, but rather to consider the problem as one of discovering the determinative effect of various "practices." A "practice" is a relatively stable pattern composed of "perspectives" (the subjective events) and of "operations" (externally perceivable events).

Strictly speaking, of course, all inferences about the inner life of other persons are based upon inferences from "outer," that is to say, perceivable events. The significance
of this distinction is reduced, however, when we recognize the phenomenon of communication. Very complicated inferences about the subjectivity of other persons can be made on the basis of “signs,” such as the spoken words of a common tongue, or the written characters of a common language. The signs are directly perceivable events, but they are highly specialized to the function of providing a means of inference concerning the subjective state of the communicator. We interpret the sign made by another individual as part of our own subjective stream of events. But we interpret the common signs by inferring that certain interpretative intentions are part of the perspectives of the other. Any specific interpretation, of course, is subject to correction on the basis of further experience with, or examination of, the deeds and statements of the other person.43

Attempts have sometimes been made to strip the interpretations which are made of the other person to “perceivables,” and to disallow any inference about the perspectives of the other. The supposed scientific justification of this self-denying ordinance was the “inconsistency” or “invalidity” of the results. But it has repeatedly been shown that “inconsistencies” can be held within known limits if observers have been trained to interpret cues in the same way. Moreover, it has often been shown that forecasts of future conduct (or predictions of what the facts were about past conduct) can be relied upon. Hence the problem of “reliability” and “validity” is to be settled, as in all empirical work, on the basis of empirical inquiry, since methodologically there is no fundamental difference between observing the behavior of people or of other living beings (or the manifestations of inorganic events). If the scope of reliable and valid inference is less comprehensive in terms of time or space than in some empirical work on other organisms, this is to be discovered by investigation, and not “settled” by advance definition or arbitrary postulate.42

The Self-System in Democratic Character: The Open Ego

We may now proceed to formulate our conception of democratic character, an enterprise that falls in two grand divisions, the first of which has to do with the self-system, the second with the energy-system. The initial step in characterizing the self-system is to select the system of identifications which appears to be consonant with democratic character. It is, of course, to be understood that the present sketch is designed to serve as an aid to empirical inquiry, and that the “theoretical model” of the democratic character will undoubtedly undergo extensive modification as scientific work in this area gains in scope and depth.

Let us take as the outstanding characteristic of democratic character, in reference to identifications, the maintenance of an open as against a closed ego. By this expression our intention is to convey the idea that the democratic attitude toward other human beings is warm rather than frigid, inclusive and expanding rather than exclusive and constricting. We are speaking of an underlying personality structure which is capable of “friendship,” as Aristotle put it, and which is unalienated from humanity. Such a person transcends most of the cultural categories that di-

43 The modern study of communication has benefited from the work of many scholars, notably Charles W. Morris whose most comprehensive treatise is Signs, Language and Behavior, New York, Prentice-Hall, 1946. Morris uses “sign vehicle” for the physical event here called a “sign.” We use “symbol” for the interpretation, which is the “sign” in the sense of Morris.

provide human beings from one another, and senses the common humanity across class and even caste lines within the culture, and in the world beyond the local culture. In the extreme case we have “saints” who have undergone the deprivations of a concentration camp without losing the serenity of outlook that reaches out hopefully and tolerantly toward other human beings.

The conception of the open ego is something other than the capacity to enter into an intense and all-embracing sentimental bond with another person. Often such passionate attachments represent a socialization of fears and hostilities directed against other human beings. It operates as a preventive of the degree of detachment which enables the individual to sense the feelings and viewpoints of others in the life of an entire group, such as appears to be characteristic of those persons who are well-equipped to function in a democratic manner.43

It is apparent that the prototypes of many later experiences are undergone in the early years of life, and especially in early infancy. So far as we can tell the “primary ego” evolved during the early weeks of life is a fusion of experiences which are not capable of being sorted into a sharply delimited “out there” and “me.” Experiences connected with nursing (the intake of food and body contact) are divisible into those which are gratifying (the indulgences) and non-gratifying (the deprivations). Harry Stack Sullivan has suggested that the first or gratifying experiences become structured around the image of the

43 Helen Hall Jennings; A Study of Personality in Inter-Personal Relations, Second Edition, New York, Longmans, Green and Co., 1950. “The universal characteristic of the leaders in this study may be a ‘logical’ carrying out of their larger insight into the needs of persons generally and at least partially a reflection of greater emotional maturity on their part than appears to characterize the average member,” p. 201. This is a report of an investigation conducted by sociometric techniques of the 400 individuals in the New York State Training School for Girls.

“good mother,” and that the second or non-gratifying experiences are attributed to the “bad mother,” even though the boundaries of the ego are lacking in focus. Soon the limits of the “me” and the “not me” gain in precision, and this in turn redefines the possibilities for symbolizing and localizing the recurring patterns of indulgence and deprivation. When there is a “me,” there is also a stream of characteristics emanating from the environment in terms of “good” and “naughty,” which are usually integrated with a variety of comforts and discomforts on the physical level. The recurring sources of gratification become stably symbolized as “my mother,” “my body” and the like, and the identification-system begins to include and exclude according to the prevailing stratifications of the social system into which the infant is becoming integrated.44

There is reason to believe that in some cultures the possibility of developing an outgoing democratic character is excluded at an early period. The prevailing patterns of child care appear to induce early despair that profound gratifications can emanate from other human beings; yet they prevent this despair from putting a stop to all externalized activity. Indulgences are wrested from the hostile, reluctant universe by a variety of sly maneuvers.45

The Self-System in Democratic Character: Values Multiple and Shared

Our characterization of the democratic community has provided a frame in which the demand-system of the democratic character can be rather clearly set forth. Let us speak of the democratic character as multi-valued, rather


45 Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead have been the most energetic explorers of the impact of child-rearing practices upon the other features of culture. I refer here to the interpretation of the Hobbesian state of Dobu.
than single-valued, and as disposed to share rather than
to hoard or to monopolize. In particular, little significance
is attached to the exercise of power as a scope value.

The characteristics of democratic character have often
been cast into relief by the study of individuals who are
infatuated with the pursuit of one value to such a point
that the integrity of the common life is imperiled thereby:
This is perhaps most obvious in studies that have been
made of the homo politicus, the man who, when compared
with others similarly situated in culture and class, relies
with relish upon the "pursuit of power by the use of
power." Since we understand that power relationships have,
or are assumed by the participants to possess, the element
of severe deprivation, it is apparent that the human being
who is fascinated by power is out of harmony with our
basic concept of human dignity. The psychiatrist feels
at home in the study of ardent seekers after power in the
arena of politics because the physician recognizes the
extreme egocentricity and sly ruthlessness of some of the
paranoid patients with whom he has come in contact in the
clinic. To the power-centered person all human beings and
all contacts with others are opportunities for imposing
his will, or for enlisting the other person in some manner
that contributes to the imposition of his own will in some
future situation. Hence he imposes a wall of insulation and
isolation between himself and others, with the result
that a growing sense of alienation from mankind becomes
one of the recurring complaints of those who attain power,
or only aspire with all the intensity of their being to
acquire it.

In the Salmen Lectures at the N. Y. Academy of Medicine the present
writer developed some hypotheses concerning the power-centered man
which were first outlined in the Psychopathology and Politics, which is here-

When the demand for respect is the consuming passion,
other values are sacrificed for the sake of receiving sym-

dolic acknowledgements of eminence. The vain man has a
special position of dependence upon the human beings by
whom he is surrounded, seeking to elicit a continuing flow
of those reassuring postures, gestures and symbolic expres-
sions which sustain the inflated image of the ego. We are
speaking of the individual who is so sensitized to the ad-

miration of others that he may react with wounded pride
to fancied slights, and burn with fierce jealousies and
resentments against those who receive the plaudits to which
he fancies himself entitled, or against those from whom he
believes that the plaudits ought to come. The respect-
centered character is often disposed to poison human rela-
tions "by taking everything personally" and by needing
a perpetual stream of reassurance about "how am I do-
ing." The clinician is accustomed to see in the over-
sensitive neurotic, or in the grandiose delusions of the
paranoid, the extreme manifestation of what is known to
common sense as abnormal pride. The secret image is not
necessarily connected with power, since coercive inten-
tions are not always the cherished means of obtaining
boundless admiration.

The excessive demand for affection carries with it a
distortion of capacity for full participation in the life of
a democratic community. The most extreme examples in
our culture turn every human contact into a sexual invita-
tion or assault, and are absorbed in the active indulgence
or the fantasizing of success in sexuality. Many of those
who are preoccupied with sexual conquest have no con-

See the examples of how the denial of respect can be used as a base
value designed to influence power in Charles E. Merriam, Political
Power (1934), reprinted in Laoswell, Merriam and Smith, A Study of
Power, Glencoe, Free Press, 1950, chapter VII.
scious interest in affection, but gloat over sexual achievements as a demonstration of virility (well-being) or as a means to fame (respect). At the moment we are referring only to those whose lives are filled with sex as a mode of giving and receiving affection, or who are absorbed in giving and receiving love. The affection-centered person may not be promiscuous in the choice of love objects, but may, on the contrary, develop an intense and all-absorbing bond with one individual. As we have already intimated in connection with the identification-system, these exclusive couplings may represent a withdrawal from fuller functioning in the community. In Western civilization, at least, the woman is expected to specialize upon affection much more than the man, and to stay within the primary circle of the home. The distorting effect of this cultural pressure upon the personality of the woman, and of many with whom she comes in touch, have been described by many observers. An additional source of difficulty rises from the fact that our civilization is in a transitional stage regarding its conception of women, who are gradually being relieved of the disabilities from which they have suffered in theory and in fact. But the "lag" effects are among the sources of distress in modern life.

Hyper-specialization on rectitude produces another set of character deformations. We are speaking of those who are continually beset with questions of right and wrong so that the entire career is transformed into perpetual judgments of the self and others in reference to such standards. These persons may wrap themselves in an impenetrable cloak of self-righteousness, and speak censoriously of the imperfections of their fellow men. They may, however, view themselves in a wholly different light, and engage in private and public confessions of sin and guilt. Human relations are transformed into occasions for the repetitive application of a limited set of rigid categories, a process that squeezes from sight the richness and variety of values which are essential to the democratic community. Physicians are accustomed to meet symptoms of the kind here described in their patients, whom they recognize as suffering from obsessional or compulsive difficulties.

Some characters are taken up with goods (with wealth). When the fixation upon wealth is so intense that other values are almost deprived of meaning, we have miserly, greedy types who are eager to accumulate and to retain goods and services. Such acquisitive and retentive personalities are referred to in the folklore of many cultures with utter disdain, since public service, affection, or other values are all rejected in order to get hold of impersonal and tangible resources.

Over-preoccupation with well-being may take the form of anxious concern for health, which can reach the dimensions of hypochondria, or of disturbing interference in the lives of others in the name of their physical welfare.

46 Described in any textbook that includes the psychoneuroses, such as D. K. Henderson and R. D. Gillespie. A Textbook of Psychiatry for Students and Practitioners, Sixth Edition, New York, Oxford University Press, 1944.

the cult of the body, and of virility as an end in itself, can exclude other values.

Devotion to the exercise of skill may become so complete that an absolute exemption may be demanded from all considerations of rectitude, affection, or any other value. "Art for art's sake" is a slogan which in our civilization is often matched by similar demands in the name of other skills. Scientists, for example, may resent any restraint on the direction or timing of their activities, even when the destiny of mankind is at stake.

Enlightenment, too, can become a "vice" when "being in on the know" becomes an end in itself.

The Self-System of the Democratic Character:
Confidence in Human Potentialities

When we turn from the demand-structure of the democratic character to the consideration of the pattern of expectation we note at once that it is essential to have deep confidence in the benevolent potentialities of man. This affirmative trust is very different from the apathetic endurance of life in the manner of the apathetic orphan.⁵²

Unless there is some early basis for trust in the benevolence of the surrounding world, we can hardly expect that the individual will develop predispositions capable of carrying him through adverse experiences. This is the deep significance of the "good mother" image in contributing to the formation of a perspective that fosters inclusive identifications with other people. It has become amply apparent in the course of research on the infant that the expectation

⁵² Even though this response may enable the individual to survive under such drastically adverse conditions as a concentration camp in later life. See Ralph R. Greenson, "The Psychology of Apathy," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly XVIII* (1949), pp. 290-302.

of benevolence is a factor enabling the infant to put forth the energy to live.⁵³, ⁵⁴

Such rigid specializations as those which have been reviewed in relation to each of the eight values fly in the face of the needs of a democratic community, and prevent the consolidation of a democratic character.

The Energy System of the Democratic Character:
Freedom from Anxiety

The ideal conception of democratic character includes the specification that the self-system shall have at its disposal the energies of the unconscious part of the personality. The deviations from this standard are in several directions. The energies may be so divided and opposed to one another that little is available to the ego, which may be relatively immobilized into the performing of an impoverished social role. The super-ego system of restriction and compulsion may remain at war with the recurring initiatives of the id-system, resulting in immobilization through physical incapacitation. The genesis of the "conversion" response is being traced in detail by modern specialists in psychosomatic medicine. A recent statement of the field by Franz Alexander, for example, reviews the research which confirms the psychogenetic factor in gastrointestinal disturbances, bronchial asthma, cardiovascular disturbances, skin diseases, metabolic and endocrine disturbances,


⁵⁴ The importance of recognizing the potential benevolence of human beings is emphasized, for example, in analyses of democracy by C. E. Mereiian, T. V. Smith, A. D. Lindsay, R. M. MacIver, James Bryce, Hugo Krabbe, Hans Kelsen, and many others.
disturbances of the joints and skeletal muscles (including rheumatoid arthritis and the accident-prone individual), and of the sexual apparatus.\(^5\)

The basis for ineffectual participation in society may lie in the sphere of fantasy (or autistic reverie) rather than organic malfunctioning. We observe “autistic withdrawal” in forms of psychic suffering experienced by some persons who limit their human relationships more and more. Sometimes these disturbances are sufficiently light to be called “neuroses.” But there are many kinds of grave, psychotic processes that carry the individual out of touch with other human beings. However, all internal conflicts do not result in such conspicuous restrictions of overt social activity. In varying degree the person who is suffering from a somatic disturbance with a psychological basis may be able to carry on a regular professional and sociable life. It may even be that the function of the somatic symptom is to dispose of energies that might otherwise interfere with the self-system of the democratic character.\(^6\)

However, the self-system of the democrat may be betrayed chronically or occasionally by eruptions of conduct in flat contradiction to democratic perspectives. In many instances the person is fully conscious of occasional seizures that contradict his conscious demands upon himself. Some men “can’t control their temper” on all occasions. Others go in for jags of alcoholism or sexual debauchery, or for athleticism of a type that does serious damage to the body and endangers others. The deviation may be so pronounced that one can only speak of a psychopathic distortion of character.\(^7\)

Often the self-system of the democrat is betrayed by conduct whose incompatibility with the perspectives of the system are invisible to the man himself, although clear to nearly anyone who observes him. I am not speaking of “hypocrisy,” but of the “self-deluded.” One familiar example is the humorless, sincere individual who unconsciously persecutes everyone with whom he comes in touch. He may be an extreme advocate of order, and puts everything on a timetable. His unfortunate wife, children and employees suffer the despotism of a man whose purity of motive is beyond self-dispute.

The energies of the unconscious system may also express themselves in deformations of perspective which the individual does not recognize. Although he considers himself to possess a democratic character, the person may cling to beliefs that stand in flagrant contradiction of his professed regard for human dignity. It is not a question in these cases of subtle distinctions, but of gross distortions, as when convictions about the equality of all members of the human race are contradicted by statements of belief about specific ethnic groups. Such contradictions within the self-system are screened from self-inspection by the automatic operation of unconscious channels and forces. These individuals differ from the persons cited above in


\(^6\) It should not be supposed that the psychosomatic emphasis is altogether new to physicians. Ralph Waldo Emerson remarked in his essay on the post that he knew “a witty physician who found the creed in the biliary duct, and used to affirm that if there was disease in the liver, the man became a Calvinist, and if that organ was sound, he became a Unitarian.”

that the distortion is within the belief-system and not between beliefs and conduct.58

There appears to be a common element in the organization of energies that distort or betray the self-system of an otherwise democratic character. The element is human destructiveness. We have noted that destructive drives may be externalized against other human beings, or internalized against the body of the person. In the former cases, the drives may be directed against groups who have never been included within the self-system. However, the targets may be selected from within the identification pattern of the self, ranging all the way from peripheral individuals and groups to nuclear groups and individuals. When destructiveness is directed against the primary ego, as in psychosomatic illness, the inner core of the ego system becomes the target. As indicated in the previous analysis, any given course of conduct can express a two-edged aggression, as when the value positions of the individual and of other persons are simultaneously reduced. Partial incapacitation may reduce not only the well-being of the sufferer, and cut down income and capital, political power and other advantages; the reduction in influence may hamper the family, in this way gratifying grudges of which the individual is quite unaware.

May not destructive tendencies contribute positively to the formation of a self-system and to the effective energies available to the democratic character? To take the latter part of the question first, it is apparent that the destructive energies of a person may be directed against enemies of the democratic community. Indeed, any other behavior would betray the opportunities and responsibilities of democratic citizenship. The reply to the first part of the question is less categorical. Modern studies of human development repeatedly show that democratic responses often arise from motives which are incompatible with it, and signify that the individual has achieved part of his democratic outlook by “reaction-formation” against tendencies of an opposite kind. Many democrats appear to develop in opposition to anti-democratic parents, for example. And yet, from the point of view of modern personality research, the characters which are achieved by a complex process of balanced defense are viewed as constituting less enduring formations than those which evolve more directly.

A significant insight into the dynamics of non-democratic character is contained in the studies of prejudice alluded to above. Prejudice was defined in several ways, ranging from denials of respect (as defined in our list of values), to denials of access to all values irrespective of common humanity or individual merit. The intensity of the prejudice might range from mildly derogatory reveries and remarks to militant activism designed to exclude target groups from the community (or from effective participation therein according to democratic norms). The research succeeded in demonstrating that prejudiced attitudes were not only connected with immediate, situational factors, but that they represented a carry-over from early experiences in which a certain pattern of character had been formed during early years of life. Within our culture, at least,
the emerging picture of interconnection was summed up as follows:

The most crucial result of the present study, as it seems to the authors, is the demonstration of close correspondence in the type of approach and outlook a subject is likely to have in a great variety of areas, ranging from the most intimate features of family and sex adjustment through relationships to other people in general, to religion and to social and political philosophy. Thus a basically hierarchical, authoritarian, exploitive parent-child relationship is apt to carry over into a power-oriented, exploitively dependent attitude toward one’s sex partner and one’s God and may culminate in a political philosophy and social outlook which has no room for anything but a desperate clinging to what appears to be strong and a disdainful rejection of whatever is relegated to the bottom. The inherent dramatization likewise extends from the parent-child dichotomy to the dichotomous conception of sex roles and of moral values, as well as to a dichotomous handling of social ingroup-outgroup cleavages. Conventionality, rigidity, repressive denial, and the ensuing break-through of one’s weakness, fear and dependency are but other aspects of the same fundamental personality pattern, and they can be observed in personal life as well as in attitudes toward religion and social issues.

On the other hand, there is a pattern characterized chiefly by affectionate, basically equalitarian, and permissive interpersonal relationships. This pattern encompasses attitudes within the family and toward the opposite sex, as well as an internalization of religious and social values. Greater flexibility and the potentiality for more genuine satisfactions appear as results of this basic attitude.69

We know that repetitiveness is one of the most frequent “defense mechanisms” by the use of which the ego prevents itself from being swamped in a flood of anxieties and hostilities. The rigidification goes so far that the perceiving processes of the ego system are affected, and relevant features of a novel situation are pressed into established moulds, thus preserving the older categories from the changes that rise from new knowledge. Hence the self-system, even when it conforms to democratic requirements, has at its command only some of the energy of the personality as a whole, much of which is tied down to the task of nullifying the hyperaggressive, destructive drives. The inner stability of the rigid person is imperiled in any situation which is comprehended with difficulty. Hence there is low tolerance for ambiguity, which may be one of the most diagnostic traits of such individuals, as Else Frenkel-Brunswik has pointed out.

What is the genesis of the anxiety reactions which play such an important role in personality development? The theory of anxiety is the most fundamental feature of psychiatric theory, since the disorders with which the psychiatrist is concerned are seen as unsuccessful modes of defending the ego against anxiety. By the term is meant something different from fear, which appears in response to such relatively impersonal stimuli in the early environment of the infant as gross temperature change, or falling. Harry Stack Sullivan described sudden severe anxiety in these terms: “(It) . . . is undergone in later life as what I call uncanny emotion, chilly crawling sensations, and the like, often meant by the words ‘awe,’ ‘dread,’ ‘loathing,’ and ‘horror.’” According to Sullivan’s theory the starting point of anxiety reactions can be discovered in infancy when the person who mothers the infant “is anxious, angry, or otherwise disquieted.” “This interpersonal induction of anxiety, and the exclusively interpersonal origin of every instance of its manifestations, is the unique characteristic of anxiety and of the conglomerates of more complex tensions in later life to which it contributes.”60

69 The Authoritarian Personality, p. 971. The essential conclusion is confirmed in many respects by the Bettelheim-Janowitz and the Ackermann-Jaboda investigations.

"While we may be unaware, at least temporarily, of milder degrees of any one of the other tensions connected with living, we are never unaware of anxiety at the very time it occurs. The awareness can be, and very often is, fleeting, especially when an appropriate security operation is called out." A... any event which tends to bring about a basic change in an established pattern of dealing with others, sets up the tension of anxiety and calls out activities for its relief. This tension and the activities required for its reduction or relief—which we call security operations because they can be said to be addressed to maintaining a feeling of safety in the esteem reflected to one from the other person concerned—always interfere with whatever other tensions and energy transformations with which they happen to coincide."

"Anxiety appears not only as awareness of itself but also in the experience of some complex 'emotions' into which it has been elaborated by specific early training. I cannot say what all these are but I can use names for a few of them which should ‘open the mind’ to their nature: embarrassment, shame, humiliation, guilt, and chagrin." A... security operations... are the movements of thought and the actions of which we, as it were, impute to or seek to provoke in the other fellow feelings like embarrassment, shame, humiliation, guilt, or chagrin."

"... fleeting moments of anxiety... mark the point in the course of events at which something disjunctive, something that tends to pull away from the other fellow, has first appeared or has suddenly increased. They signal a change from relatively uncomplicated movement towards a presumptively common goal to a protecting of one's self-esteem, with a definite complicating of the interpersonal action."61

When we observe an infant we are struck by two sets of patterns which can conveniently be distinguished from one another. There are some “terminal” relations in which the infant appears to be receiving gratifications, such as quiet nursing or some skin stimulation or sleep. And there are unmistakeable activities in which the infant does not appear to be receiving gratification, as when he cries and rages, or appears stricken with numb terror. Suppose we label the

to the initial and unconscious energy-channels of the individual. These are also continually modified since the superego and ego systems are ever changing. The energy sources of the personality vary with such factors as glandular balance, and the position that such inner activities occupy when they are "triggered" by ego processes.

Subjective events occurring as part of the terminal state of a libidinal activity are positive gratifications (indulgences). Subjective events may deviate in the direction of non-gratification and anti-gratification (deprivations). The extremes of indulgence are euphoric events; extreme deprivations are dysphoric. We speak of "tensions" when referring to events within the personality which lead to the occurrence of dysphoria. Dysphoria may come about because gratification is deferred, as in the case of ungratified hunger; or the dysphoria may flood the ego before it can be reduced, as in the case of aches and pains. Our basic postulate in examining human activity is that the "maximization principle" applies in accordance with which the tendency is to maximize the indulgences of the system as a whole. It is evident why the reduction and avoidance of anxiety (an acutely dysphoric set of events) occupies such a pivotal position in the evolution of the personality.

The events which the individual accepts as occasions of positive gratification (or of deprivation) are by no means always immediate rather than remote. A self-system may be evolved in which the demands on the primary ego for success include long range plans in politics, business, scholarship, or in some other field of action. Over long periods the self-system (and its supporting energy system) may provide all the self-indulgences which are needed to keep the individual hard at work on his career aims. Although the self-system is to an overwhelming extent made up of acquired rather than innate patterns of activity, the acquired patterns may become relatively independent of receiving indulgences from the environment. We know, of course, that innate physiological patterns are so "built in" the organism that they provide internal sources of gratification which render them comparatively independent of indulgences and deprivations in the environment. For instance, we do not lose the basic reflexes even when we are subjected to grave deprivations as a result of their occurrence. (One of the favorite modes of torture is to penalize the individual for repeating a reflexive and therefore relatively "unconditioned" act, such as jerking the knee in response to a tap, and blinking the eyelids.) When we speak of democratic character, of course, we have in mind the development of self and energy systems which withstand adversity on behalf of democratic patterns of value and practice.

The task is nothing less than the drastic and continuing reconstruction of our own civilization, and most of the cultures of which we have any knowledge. Since the basic postulate of behavior is the maximization of indulgences over deprivations, our task is to consolidate democratic conduct by directing the indulgences toward those who act democratically, and the deprivations toward those who do not. This calls for a reconsideration of adult-to-adult and adult-to-pre-adult relationships for the purpose of achieving a pattern of adult conduct that, in accordance with the maximization principle, gives differential rewards to democratic practice, and thereby provides continuing support for democratic performance, and aids in the development of character systems which are capable of acting democratically in the face of adverse conditions. The aim is to bring into being a democratic equilibrium in societal relations in which deviations are promptly rectified. If we were designing a machine, it would be possible to "build in" a set of servo-mechanisms which perform this re-stabilizing
operation. Since human relations are not mechanized, our task of creating and sustaining a democratic equilibrium is more complex. And the complexity is augmented by the prevailing anarchy in the world community, which keeps alive the expectation and the application of violence in the arena of world affairs, and also in the civic arena of police states. Hence the tremendous task of reconstruction must proceed in the face of adverse contemporary conditions and of anti-democratic inheritances from the past.

Towards a Continuing Survey of Character Trends

An essential step in the task of achieving and sustaining democratic character is the development of continuing surveys of the trends in the structure of character, and in the pattern of determining factors which are currently moulding character. If democratic goals are to be clarified in terms sufficiently explicit for policy, an intelligence network must be built up. Such a continuing survey must cover the entire community; in principle, therefore, it encompasses the globe, or as much of it as is accessible to democratic policy makers.

Such a continuing trend survey is essential for many reasons, one of which is connected with the "index instability" of the terms in which we must talk about the interrelations of character and society. It is gradually dawning upon psychologists and social scientists that it is necessary to find means of overcoming the variability of meaning which is inherent in the social process itself. An interpersonal relation is a "meaning manifold," and is a continuing process of more or less perpetual change. In a "meaning manifold" the significance of each detail is modified as the context alters. Hence the words used to provide an "operational index" with which to describe character and society in one situation are likely to be somewhat inapplicable to other situations. Our operational indices of power, respect, wealth, or other values, and of the institutions by which values are shaped and shared, must undergo modification from one culture to another, and frequently from one social class to the next.

Some of the trend information about character and society can be obtained on a scale that includes the whole community. We speak of such total coverage as a census. But the manpower and other facilities may not be available for conducting a census of many items. Sampling, therefore, must be used, and samples may be in the form of case studies or of quantitative studies. The sample investigations may be primarily contemplative or manipulative, the latter being pre-tests. Most of the research reports in the "Studies in Prejudice" are contemplative inquiries, since they were designed to explore interrelations, without attempting to pre-test a potential policy change in the prejudiced person or group.

Actually the entire battery of procedures which has been outlined is closely interconnected. If we have adequate scientific understanding of a given set of responses, obtained by "contemplative" methods, we should be able to predict the outcome of those deliberate interventions in the situation which we call "pre-testing." For instance, if our scientific analysis is complete, we can correctly foretell...
how a given group of subjects will be affected by exposure to a film with a given content. In practice, of course, our contemplative studies always leave something to be desired, and gain by the perspective and the outcome of pre-tests, since the pre-testing operation is itself a means by which the predispositions are disclosed of the participants in a given situation.

Pre-testing is to be distinguished from policy innovation, employing the latter term to refer to changes in the whole community which so alter the total picture that “control” situations cannot be found. Strictly speaking, a pre-test is to be viewed as a rehearsal on a small scale of a change that might be introduced on a comprehensive scale. Although we often speak of “experimenting” with Federal legislation, for example, this is not a useful application of the term “experiment.” We have a vocabulary for talking about policy innovation, and the term “experiment” has the connotation, which is convenient to retain, of the control of all relevant factors. In most cases in the social and biological sciences this means comparing the results of exposing an “experimental” group to a change to which a “control” group is left unexposed.

By organizing the trend survey so that provision is made for many methods, we obtain the closest potential coordination with policy, and with the needs of scientific study. Moreover, we can make full use of a host of observation-making and processing procedures of varying intensiveness. Let us designate as Procedure A: the member of the community the least intensive perspective. Suppose, for example, that we observe X touching Y with a sword. Is this to be understood as a threat to the physical well-being of Y? By consulting members of the community we may learn that from the point of view of the local culture Y is being “invested” with an office. We are thus witness-

ing an indulgence of Y by X in terms of power. This tells us nothing, obviously, about the character of X or Y. But suppose we make further inquiries into the context from members of the community. We may discover that the advancement of Y is an act of discrimination against Z, who was more entitled to promotion than Y. Assume also that X is a public official elected by a political party opposed to the rapid improvement in the condition of the Negroes (and Z is a Negro). Can we say at this point that the character of X is undemocratic because he did an undemocratic deed? Before reaching this conclusion it is plainly necessary to review the conduct of X as a whole during the time-interval that we have chosen for studying X (or the community). How does he act as an employer? As trustee of an educational institution? As a member of an athletic club? As a participant in the social life of the neighborhood? If we draw all the data together we can prepare a character profile of X based upon information pertinent to democratic values (such as X’s “discrimination score”).

It is possible to intensify the study of X’s character (and of characters in the community) by shifting from the standpoint of a community member to that of a person who is also an intimate friend. Perhaps the friend reports that X is strongly opposed to discrimination, and that he hopes to work into a sufficiently potent position to modify the traditional program of his party. It is now possible to revise our picture of the character of X from the observational standpoint of Procedure B: the intimate friend. (We are not adopting the interpretations made by the friend; we are sifting his testimony about the words and deeds of X.)

Our view of the character of X may be further intensified by taking his private picture of himself into account (as disclosed, perhaps, in a diary not meant for the eyes
of living friends). Our conception may be complicated by the discovery that X is aware of an acute conflict on matters of discrimination, not only as Negroes are affected, but whenever Catholics, Jews, and "foreign" groups are involved. X may confess that he has a strong distaste for persons connected with these groups, but that, since he holds such prejudices to be immoral, he tries to overcome them. We may now re-edit our picture of X's character from the standpoint of Procedure C: intimate introspection.

The most intensive perspective in which X can be studied undertakes to disclose the unconscious structure of his personality. This is accomplished by means of special techniques which reveal the superego and the id. Psychoanalysts use the technique of free association for the purpose; and several projective and other tests have been invented to aid the process. The "depth" perspective may bring to light new complications in our view of X. For example, we may learn that hostility against ethnic groups represents a generalized reaction which has spread from early (repressed) conflicts between impulses to touch the genitalsof ethnic playmates and fear, guilt and shame for having such interests. A battery of "defense mechanisms" may have gone into action, including the projection of feelings of apprehension, guilt and shame upon "bad" symbols which were "colored," "remote," and "big." In this way hostile expectations were perpetuated in relation to "racial" and "alien" groups. At the same time, part of the primary ego may have become identified with the alluring though forbidden, thus furnishing a basis of attraction toward individuals and problems connected with ethnic images. Such connections can be disclosed if X is seen from the vantage point of Procedure D, or special disclosures of the unconscious.

Obviously there is a continuous "manifold" of observa-

tional procedures, varying in length of contact between observer and subject, and in elaborateness of the details disclosed, and of records made and processed. The "Studies in Prejudice" may again be cited as an example of a large-scale research enterprise in which observational procedures of varying intensiveness-extensiveness were employed. 64

A further important possibility remains to be pointed out. Many of the theories of personality development undertake to characterize the entire career-line of the individual from infancy to maturity, and after. If it is necessary to verify such theories only on the basis of data gathered through entire career-lines, many years may elapse before the impact of early patterning on later phases can be ascertained. And by that time the factors that condition the first or second year of existence in the culture may have changed (as when there is a rapid shift from breast to bottle-feeding, or vice versa, or a rapid change from rigid to flexible feeding schedules). Some years ago I proposed that researches be organized to permit "interlapping" observations, in the hope of bringing into view the whole panorama of relationships with an important bearing upon the profile of personality development. 65 For instance, groups matched in as many particulars as possible (and deemed relevant) might be set up on a two-year cycle. Thus one set of observers would be watching infants as they passed through the first and second year at the same time that other observers were recording children who were living through the second and third year. Thus the character

64 See for other examples H. A. Murray and others, Explorations in Personality, New York, Oxford University Press, 1938; Assessment of Men, Office of Strategic Services Assessment Staff, New York, Rinehart, 1948; and many of the studies cited in Gardner Murphy, Personality; A Biosocial Approach to Origins and Structure, New York, Harpers, 1947.

65 Footnote 37, above.
exhibited by some of the three year olds could be traced back (by proper matching) to the significant constellations seen in the first year. In principle, the overlapping system could be applied throughout the entire career line.

Overlapping samples can be set up according to functional rather than chronological periods. For this purpose some of the more creative suggestions about the stages of human development can be used. Harry Stack Sullivan, for example, distinguished seven periods before maturity, which he schematized in one of his last papers as follows:68

1. Infancy to the maturation of the capacity for language development.
2. Childhood to the maturation of the capacity for living with peers.
3. Juvenile Era to the maturation of the capacity for isophilic intimacy (like-sex intimacy).
4. Preadolescence to the maturation of the general lust dynamics.
5. Early Adolescence to the patterning of lustful behavior.
6. Late Adolescence to maturity.

More closely connected with Freud’s original scheme, Erik H. Erikson has recently sketched “eight stages of man” and suggested the polar processes which are the most significant adaptive opportunities and dangers for each. Thus:\67

5. Puberty and Adolescence. Identity vs. Role Diffusion.
6. Young Adulthood. Intimacy vs. Isolation.
8. Maturity. Integrity vs. Disgust, Despair.

68 Footnote 60, above.

An obvious and great advantage to be derived from organizing a continuing survey of character in society is that working agreements concerning the meaning of words must be made among those who conduct the survey. Since we are interested in relating character formation to the attainment of a democratic commonwealth, it will be necessary to engage in a continuous process of clarifying the conception of such a community.

It will also be essential to agree upon the terms and indices to be employed in the study of character formation. However it will not be necessary to agree upon the probable truth of hypotheses, since it will be possible to study a large number of hypotheses at the same time, and to repeat the investigation so long as results are in doubt. Caution must taken to specify the observational procedures (of type A, B, C, or D, for instance) which are involved in verifying any hypothesis.

As a brief reminder of what is at stake, let us consider one of the most comprehensive hypotheses about the formation of democratic character. Stated negatively, the proposition is that failure to develop democratic character is a function of interpersonal relations in which low estimates of the self are permitted to develop.68 Suppose we interpret this hypothesis in reference to situations which can be explored by such procedures as A. We may often find confirmatory evidence, as when we study the composition of anti-democratic movements, and learn that they are heavily recruited from salaried employees and members of the older artisans who regard themselves as losing out, relative to other social groups. On the other hand, it will be possible to find facts that point in another direction. The anti-democrats may be recruited from the top aris-
tocracy, and therefore appear to possess a tradition of superior worth.

The general proposition is more likely to be in harmony with data disclosed by intensive procedures of the C or D type. But it is necessary to specify in detail how the key terms are to be interpreted. For instance, "low estimates of the self" should include indirect as well as direct presentations of the primary ego in the material produced in psychoanalytic interviews. Direct statements, of course, may affirm that the primary ego is, was or will be weak (in terms of power), poor (in relation to wealth), contemptible (in reference to respect), guilty (in terms of rectitude), unloved (in relation to affection), uninformed (regarding enlightenment), clumsy (in reference to skill), and diseased (in terms of well-being). The primary ego can also be presented as deprived, rather than indulged, in indirect statements. The assertion, for instance, can be attributed to someone else; or an alleged reminiscence or fantasy can portray the patient as deficient without putting it in words. Reminiscences of early anxiety would thus be among the relevant indices of a low self-estimate. This is reasonable, since acute dysphoria is a subjective event which swamps the primary ego. "Low estimates of the self" ought also to be interpreted to facilitate the study of infants and young children by direct and intensive procedures of observation. Satisfactory indices would be the manifestations of anxiety on the part of the infant which Sullivan was attempting to describe. (It will be recalled that such "defensive-aggressive" expressions may have no focal points of origin such as are evident when fear-responses occur.)

When we study the equilibrium of factors sustaining or undermining the equilibrium of democratic activity in a specific community, or on the part of a person, during a selected period, it may sometimes appear that democratic conduct does not depend, to a significant degree, upon democratic character. It may seem, for example, that the giving of immediate indulgence to democratic responses, and the inflicting of immediate deprivation upon anti-democratic acts, will outweigh the factors making against democratic conduct. The continuing survey of character and culture is essential if we are to comprehend the interplay of factors affecting democratic behavior, including the importance of the practices called the "self" and "energy" system. By utilizing proper procedures it will be possible to give the classical terms such as "character" and "constitution" a contemporary meaning, and to estimate the impact of practices upon one another.

The following questions are among those whose relevance will not diminish: To what extent is it possible to achieve democratic conduct in adult life without forming democratic character in early life? To what extent can democratic character formed in early life persist against anti-democratic environments in later life? In what measure can democratic conduct in later life form democratic character among adults (and the pre-adults influenced by them)?

Freedom and the Sciences of Man

To some extent descriptive probing into the processes of political life has been held back by inapplicable analogies

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60 Useful hints for studying the first years of life are in Part IV of John Dollard and Neal E. Miller, Personality and Psychotherapy, an Analysis in Terms of Learning, Thinking and Culture, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1950. A much-needed restatement of psychoanalytic theory is now being carried

forward by Drs. Kris, Hartmann and Löwenstein. The choice of operational indices and of "testable" hypotheses should be much facilitated thereby. The equating of anxiety with repressed fear is a point requiring further clarification in the Dollard-Miller treatment, and in much psychoanalytic literature.
from the natural sciences. It is insufficiently acknowledged
that the role of scientific work in human relations is freedom rather than prediction. By freedom is meant the
bringing into the focus of awareness of some feature of the personality which has hitherto operated as a determining factor upon the choices made by the individual, but which has been operating unconsciously. Once elevated to the full focus of waking consciousness, the factor which has been operating “automatically and compulsively” is no longer in this privileged position. The individual is now free to take the factor into consideration in the making of future choices.

This enlargement of the scope of freedom is the most direct contribution of the study of interpersonal relations to democracy. If more individuals can be made aware of the distorting effect of anxiety upon their judgments of personnel and of public and private issues, the continuing reconstruction of civilization toward the more perfect realization of democratic values will be expedited. Hence it is the growth of insight, not simply of the capacity of the observer to predict the future operation of an automatic compulsion, or of a non-personal factor, that represents the major contribution of the scientific study of interpersonal relations to policy. It is by exposing and perhaps destroying the interpersonal relationships which have held true in the past that scientific effort produces the most far-reaching results. Hence all propositions about character or society which are made by the scientific specialist must always read “subject to insight.” In a sense the aim of the science of man is to make such a science superfluous. This is achieved in the degree that insight into value goals, past trends, and past conditioning factors increases the scope of policy choice touching upon the future realization of a commonwealth in which the dignity of man is respected in theory and fact.

We cannot, at this moment in history, pride ourselves upon what we know or what we put into practice about human relations. Nor can we rely upon any one path to the understanding of politics and society. We can, however, congratulate ourselves upon possessing many of the procedural tools which are capable of penetrating further into the interrelations of man in society than has been possible hitherto. And we possess a new sense of direction and of urgency for the effective application of the instrumentalities of science and policy.

From the classical inheritance we have no static tradition, but a vast panorama of inspiration and suggestion for the reshaping of all civilizations and all cultures toward the goal of free men in a society at once universal and free.71

70 There are other ways than direct participation by which we can explore power in society, although we do not exclude the active and self-observing life. “If a man don’t occasionally sit in a senate how can he pierce the dark mind of a senator?” asks Ezra Pound in The Pisan Cantos, New Directions, 1949.

71 Reflected in the work of such a modern minded scholar as the late Karl Mannheim. See his posthumous Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, New York, Oxford University Press, 1950.