THUS MANGLE YE STILL THE HUMAN RACE:

A STUDY IN STRUCTURAL NAVIGATION

A Thesis

by

B. GARRICK HARDEN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

May 2006

Major Subject: Sociology

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ABSTRACT

Thus Mangle Ye Still the Human Race:

A Study in Structural Navigation. (May 2006)

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This thesis places three sociological figures in discourse with one another: Ferdinand Tönnies, Emile Durkheim and Friedrich Nietzsche. I argue, within the contexts of the three theorists' philosophies, that contemporary society is problematic due to its many artifices enslaving individuals. The effects of these artifices are devastating on individuals living in contemporary society as they become encased in simulacra realities reified by engrained beliefs such as socially defined "individuality." I then propose that one possible method of creating individual freedom in contemporary society may be in the establishment of communities based upon deep friendships and trust.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> Ill-omened spectres, ye! Thus mangle ye still
> The human race on thousands of occasions;
> Indifferent days themselves entangle ye still
> In a vile web of mingled tribulations.
> It's hard, I know, from spirits to get free;
> The strenuous spirit-tie we cannot sever.
> Still, Worry, though it great and stealthy be,
> Thy power I shall not acknowledge ever.
> ---------Goethe's *Faust*

I cover a great deal of ground in this thesis. On the one hand I have

attempted to convey a perspective of contemporary society and individuals living

in and with it that illustrates a need for change; on the other, I have tried to find a

possible way of existing in contemporary society that would celebrate the dignity

and humanity of individuals. I have dealt with this topic in three chapters:

society, individuals and communities.

In the first chapter, I introduce the "problems" with contemporary society

as I see them. In concert with Ferdinand Tönnies, Emile Durkheim and Friedrich

Nietzsche I argue that contemporary society is dehumanizing and oppressive on

many levels. Economically, structurally and culturally we are constrained by a

will much more powerful than our own—the collective. We are born into it,

raised in it and by the time we have come to a point where we can question it, we

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This thesis follows the style of *Sociological Theory*.

are too dependent upon it to adequately so do. We become so enmeshed in the

collective that an attack on it is an attack on ourselves. We cannot strike out

alone for we would be unable to survive and besides, with the specter of

globalization, where is there to go? This creates a situation where one can

complacently submit to the dehumanization of society or take positive action

within it. This chapter is the foundational piece from which the last two chapters

come. As such, its topic is dealt with the most extensively while the last two, for

the sake of space, are much shorter, exploratory forays into topics deserving, in

my mind, much further analysis.

After I describe the "problems" of contemporary society, I describe what

individuals enmeshed in the collective of the day have become. The second

chapter on individuals deals in a more direct way than chapter one with the

illusion and possible realization of individuality in contemporary society. I

discuss models of individuality that deal with the question of the "nature" of

humans such as Durkheim's assertion that individuals need to be controlled in

order to restrain our insatiable desires; I also look at models of individuality that

argue our nature is constructed by the societies we live in and that individuality is

either a tool or something to be embraced depending on the nature we are given

by society; I also look at ideal typifications of individuality such as Nietzsche's

hierarchy of human nature leading up to the birth of the "overman" and the

subsequent deconstruction of society. Ultimately I agree that individuality is

socially constructed so we are, in a sense, predetermined by the societies we are

raised in; however, that determinacy does not preclude any agency and once we have become self aware, we are capable of making changes within the bounds in which we are kept.

In the final chapter I discuss past models of communities and how these can never exist again after the advent of contemporary society but they can provide alternative models through which creative people can play—making something entirely new with the remnants of the old. Community construction is offered as one way we may be able to transcend the oppression and dehumanization of contemporary society while still living within it. I discuss many different models of communities that have sprung up in contemporary society to meet the needs for human connection within an alienating society and then analyze the different reasons why what I am proposing is a model entirely different from these communities. I argue communities that spontaneous spring up in an advanced organic society can be no more than simulacra connections based upon varying transitory societal problems whereas I propose a more solid model for consideration.

Someone recently challenged me to explain why I chose this topic for my thesis among a plethora of other possible topics; I was unable to answer. I was not unable to answer because I did not know why but because I had not yet faced why. I could prattle on about abstract concepts but I was not ready to make this thesis personal; I merely wanted to think this thesis not to feel it. I viscerally realized why I wanted to write this thesis one night while I spoke with a friend

about what he planned to do after he finished school and the reason came to me

real and personal in its simplicity: I do not like this model for society; nor do I

do want to reify it; but I see no way out of it. I did not want to admit this to

myself because to do so would be to also admit I had no answer for it. If you do

not like a relationship you are in for one reason or another (let alone because the

relationship is enslaving) you can leave it. But what is there to do if

contemporary society is enslaving? Nothing? Could I accept that possibility? It

is impossible to leave this society because there is no where in the world left to

go. There is really no alternative model left so that any attempts to leave would

necessarily be a perpetual "running from" and never a "running to." What kind

of life is a perpetual "running from?" Not much of one it seems to me.

Nietzsche tells a story in *The Gay Science* that a man was once walking

along a path when he stumbled upon something. He was not certain what it was

so, out of curiosity, he bent and picked it up in order to examine it. He quickly

realized he held a new truth in his hands and quickly dropped it as though

burned. The man ran away saying, "I do not want to see anything that

contradicts the prevalent opinion. Am I called upon to discover new truths?

There are too many old ones, as it is…" (25).[1] I am writing this thesis because I

do not want to be that man. It is too early and I am too young (perhaps still too

naïve and idealistic) to simply become complacent and yet I have no alternative

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[1] For clarification on format, throughout this thesis I will cite Nietzsche's writings according to the aphorism number instead of page number in keeping with the usual format used when dealing with Nietzsche.

model. I suppose I am not really looking for an answer so much as possibilities. This thesis is about two things for me: I am clarifying that there is a problem and what that problem is and then I am trying to present one idea to get around that problem. Some whose ideas have influenced me through the years have projected the answer into the future and an eventual solution that we are inexorably heading towards. For Marx, the solution was revolutions in the modes of production until we reached communism; for Nietzsche, it was the coming of the savior-figure of the Overman. Though these hopes for rosy futures may allow some to sleep soundly at night they are stagnating concepts. If we believe a solution is coming regardless of what we do or do not do then we are placing everything in hope and not action. I believe if any solutions are to be created (and I am not willing to accept the nihilism propounded by some postmodern theorists), we are who must create them. We cannot project our perceived problems into the future and tell ourselves "one day;" if anything is going to change it must start today and we must start it whether our possible solutions are small (as in the possibility I explore in this thesis) or grandiose—at least we will have tried. And that is why I chose this topic.

CHAPTER II

SOCIETY

This chapter briefly describes three different explanations for how society became what it is today according to Tönnies, Durkheim and Nietzsche. All three provide a story of how we came to contemporary society and the stories are instrumental in introducing the different ways each theorist sees the modern world as each tells a different story. Though each of these thinkers has a different way of seeing the social world, I contend that each help, in concert with one another, to understand a three-dimensional picture. Each theorist has their own version of a social will that emanates out of the wills of individuals comprising society but each sees that will doing different things. I argue that the social will can be seen as a kind of alien sovereign that maintains an authoritative grip upon the lives of individuals who are helping reify the very structure oppressing them. Finally, I argue that society comes with a set of valuations we, as both creators of and slaves to the social will, project onto it. Tönnies, Durkheim and Nietzsche are placed in conversation with one another about the values of society. Unfortunately, this topic is not one that can have a tidy conclusion and in the end of this chapter, more description than proof, I discuss the possible methods of addressing the problem of social oppression the three theorists propose.

BIRTHS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES

Tönnies defines his concept of contemporary society (*Gesellschaft*) in largely economic terms. A great deal of Tönnies' analysis of *Gesellschaft* is reliant upon Karl Marx's analysis; so much so that Tönnies wrote an addendum in 1911 after his analysis of *gesellschaft* stating, "[w]hen this treatise was written (1880-1887), the completion of the Marxian system which has, among others, influenced its contents, was not yet made known" (Tönnies, 2002, 101). I make this note at the beginning of my discussion of Tönnies' Gesellschaft for readers familiar with Marx's writings but not Tönnies' so as to avoid confusion as Marx's concepts are used in this thesis only where Tönnies has appropriated them.

Tönnies argues that there was a gradual, yet distinct, shift in human social relations from Gemeinschaft (the German word for community, which definition Tönnies alters to mean community in the sense of simpler societies)[2] to Gesellschaft. The evolution of Gemeinschaft into Gesellschaft can also be expressed as a shift from organic to mechanical formations. Tönnies refers to Gemeinschaft as being 'organic' because he sees it as a quasi-utopian state of nature, which operations are akin to intuition and dialectic interpretation, where social unity is based on customs, folkways and deep felt sentiments for fellow Gemeinschaft members; Tönnies writes, "everything real is organic" (*Ibid*., 35). In contradistinction, Gesellschaft is referred to as 'mechanical' because Tönnies

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[2] I discuss this in much greater detail in Chapter III.

sees it as being artificial fictions operating under logic and rationality that reduce the living to the dead (*Ibid*., 36). A fundamental part of this social evolution was the gradual intensification of individuals' specialization in varying parts of production or, in other words, the creation and development of the division of labor.

Tönnies paints a bleak picture of Gesellschaft where people live in a society in which they are dominated by artificial constructions such as credit and debt as well as reduced to mere commodities. Gesellschaft is marked by people existing together *en masse* without any deep "human" bonds:

> [I]n the Gesellschaft they [humans] are essentially separated in spite of all uniting factors. In the Gesellschaft, as contrasted with the Gemeinschaft, we find no actions that can be derived from an a priori and necessarily existing unity; no actions, therefore which manifest the will and the spirit of the unity even if performed by the individual; no actions which, in so far as they are performed by the individual, take place on behalf of those united with him. In the Gesellschaft such actions do not exist. On the contrary, here everybody is by himself and isolated, and there exists a condition of tension against all others. Their spheres of activity and power are sharply separated, so that everybody refuses to everyone else contact with and admittance to his sphere; i. e., intrusions are regarded as hostile acts. Such a negative attitude toward one another becomes the normal and always underlying relation of these power endowed individuals, and it characterizes the Gesellschaft in the condition of the rest; nobody wants to grant and produce anything for another individual, nor will he be inclined to give ungrudgingly to another individual, if it be not in exchange for a gift or labor equivalent that he considers at least equal to what he has given. It is even necessary that it be more desirable to him than what he could have kept himself; because he will be moved to give away a good only for the sake of receiving something that seems better to him (*Ibid*., 65).

Thus, the unity in Gesellschaft is a divisive one where people exist in a collective that requires a shift in perspective from seeing fellows as ends in and of themselves to seeing them as means to economic ends. This creates a situation where people are not fellows with one another but as means to ends they are material objects. Material objects then stand outside the individual as something separate and other. By example, a carpenter may define him/herself as such through the creative act of manipulating wood into something that was not there before but a tool, such as a saw, stands outside the self-definition of "carpenter" as something secondary and "not-self." In Gesellschaft, it is much the same where other individuals exist as secondary to one another and do not enter into the self-definition of "human." There are many other important points in the above general description of Gesellschaft that Tönnies only implies here such as the division of labor ("Their spheres of activity and power are sharply separated") and the coercive and corrosive positions people take in relation to others ("he will…give away a good only for…something that seems better").

According to Tönnies, the division of labor into specialized camps is one of the defining characteristics of Gesellschaft. To explain the existence of the division of labor, Tönnies describes several smaller shifts that had to occur. Understanding Tönnies interpretation of the division of labor requires the timeline he creates. The question of historical precision is not as important as how the story Tönnies tells of the emergence of the division of labor helps in his analysis of the social phenomenon. The advent of Gesellschaft, and thus the

division of labor, required the commodification of material creations, which, under Gemeinschaft would be, according to Tönnies, held in common by members of the Gemeinschaft for the value perceived according to the uses of materials. Gemeinschaft did not evolve into Gesellschaft overnight though; it was a long process.

Tönnies argues that Gemeinschafts came in contact with one another and could react in varying ways when this occurred; one of which being trade under a bartering system of product for product from which material creations took on the value of being potentially tradable (in other words the products became potential commodities).   Trade leads to a situation of dependence between groups of manufacturers each group of which having its own desires and needs. This situation was one of limited competition and led to the need of a "universal" commodity that could be used in lieu of other commodities, *i.e.*: money (*Ibid*., 69-70). Ironically, money began as a means to an end (the consumption of more commodities) but the subsequent increase in trade between groups of people eventually led to professional traders or merchants. According to Tönnies, merchants stand in an interesting relationship with Gesellschaft and he makes a distinction between them and capitalists. Capitalists, he wrote, accumulate money in order to consume more commodities whereas merchants accumulate money for the sake of money. Thus money, at least for merchants, became an end in and of itself (*Ibid*., 87).

In Europe, this major shift would have begun gaining momentum in the Medieval Era with the advent of towns and it went through three general phases to bring about Gesellschaft as it stood when Tönnies was writing: "(1) simple co-operation [such as production in Gemeinschaft], (2) manufacture [such as with the medieval guilds], (3) industry based on machinery [contemporary factories]" (*Ibid*., 89). The guild division between master craftsman and journeyman can be seen as a proto-division of labor with one major difference: the pedagogical reasons for the division in this case. Master craftsmen would benefit from the labor of journeymen but the two groups worked together on projects and the journeymen would work towards attaining the level of master craftsmen under the tutelage of the guild. During this period of tutelage, the journeyman would learn the entire process of production; however, Tönnies argues, with increases in technology, the knowledge of production was divided among laborers making production more efficient and more profitable (*Ibid*.).

Durkheim, like Tönnies, drew a distinction between mechanical and organic forms of society. For Durkheim, however, the difference ran in the opposite direction. Simpler societies were labeled "mechanical," not because they were seen as artificial, but because Durkheim saw in them an "analogy with the cohesion that links together the elements of raw materials…" (Durkheim, 1997, 84). Individuals form a unity in these simpler societies they are just alike. The very term "simpler societies" points to Durkheim's reasoning: organic beings are complex. Thus, contemporary society was labeled "organic."

Organic societies for Durkheim, just as Gesellschaft for Tönnies, are defined by their high degree of labor division. Durkheim likens the division of labor to the division of organs in an animal; "Each part of the animal, once it has become an organ, has its own sphere of action, in which in moves independently…" (*Ibid.*, 140) yet operates together in order to form the whole complex structure. At its most basic, the difference between mechanical and organic societies is a question of similarity between individuals: "The more primitive societies are, the more resemblances there are between the individuals…. By contrast, among civilized people two individuals can be distinguished from one another at a first glance…" (*Ibid.*, 88-89).

Unlike Tönnies, Durkheim does not have a long story to explain the existence of the division of labor; he argues it has always existed, in one form or another, in human societies; in mechanical societies, he argued, the division of labor was represented by division between gender. The question Durkheim asked was not how did it come to be but how did it come to be so complex. He contends that the division of labor can be understood in evolutionary terms. In mechanical societies, it is analogous to colonies of microscopic organisms; as mechanical society into organic, colonies group together and come to depend upon one another for survival thus developing specialized functions. The "segmentary type" of society, metaphorically represented by microscopic colonies, is so interconnected that individual movements of the parts necessarily affect the whole in visible ways. The segments of homogenous mechanical

society, however, progresses toward greater autonomy and provides the framework for later organs. This social evolution, much like its counterpart in biology, is "natural" according to Durkheim and as such follows a "natural" path from simplicity to complexity characterized by the perpetual assimilation of segments into organized society (though Durkheim wrote there are occasional exceptions where segments are not assimilated which is analogous to humans still possessing wisdom teeth). By "natural" path, he is not, like the poet Alexander Pope, tautologically claiming "whatever is, is right," because, as will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, individual humans are not strictly analogous to individual cells in an organism as humans have wills of their own. Organic society can take on "pathological forms," such as anomie, that deteriorate social solidarity (*Ibid*.).

Organic societies are complex and require an ordering system to respond to such complexity much like complex biological organisms need a nervous system. In mechanical societies, religion permeated all aspects of social life and as religion is repressive, the imposed order (laws) coming from religion is repressive. Repressive laws in organic societies retain the element of "passionate" (*Ibid*., 52) retribution from mechanical societies but also serve more directly as a reification of the moral code for others. In other words, if someone commits a murder and is subsequently killed by a state, the act of killing serves not only to punish the moral offender but also to inject into the populace a fear of committing murder. Due to the differences between individuals in an organic

society, laws that create and maintain certain individual "rights" (such as life, property and the pursuit of happiness) are required. Durkheim calls these laws "restitutory." Restitutory laws, to a large extent, provide negative solidarity or bonds between people and material objects. The existence of negative solidarity, however, first requires the existence of positive solidarity, or bonds between people, so that individuals will recognize others as having rights (colloquially: "your rights end where my nose begins"). As such, violation of restitutory laws does end in punishment in the form of revoking rights but as a forced repair of damaged social bonds. The difference between repressive and restitutory laws can is demonstrated by the Occident's judicial systems distinguishing between criminal and civil court (*Ibid*.).

Laws are not the only social artifacts that produce solidarity; the division of labor is created by a kind of positive solidarity within society Durkheim calls "organic solidarity" (*Ibid*., 85). This assertion by Durkheim directly contradicts thinkers such as Tönnies who maintain the division of labor is, as its label implies, divisive. The unity producing the division of labor is *sui generis*[3] and as such is peculiar to organic society. As Durkheim describes organic solidarity, it is:

> on the one hand each one of us depends more intimately upon society the more labour is divided up, and on the other, the activity of each one of us is correspondingly more specialized, the more personal it is. Doubtless, however circumscribed that activity may be, it is completely original. Even in the exercise of our profession we conform to usages and practices that are

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[3] Latin: "of its own kind"

> common to us all within our corporation. Yet even in this case, the burden that we bear is in a different way less heavy than when the whole of society bears down upon us, and this leaves much more room for the free play of our initiative (*Ibid*.).

Organic solidarity is multi-faceted. The increasing separation of labor into specialized facets requires each individual to depend increasingly upon society. For example, consider a person born and raised in a city like New York; he/she probably does not know how to kill and prepare the meat of cattle but then there are ranchers and butchers who do the job and in turn depend upon farmers and grocers for grains and vegetables, etc. The simple example illustrates the unity based upon dependence from which the division of labor arises. Organic solidarity also provides us with common "usages and practices" that save us from having to perpetually create new methods to accomplish tasks. We are able to have freedom and creative expression through the circumscription of activities produced by this unity because we do not have to concern ourselves with all the aspects of life only the portion in which we specialize. Furthermore, our professions are personal: a carpenter self-defines as such. Our specialization becomes a part of who we are; in organic society, it is an integral part of self-concepts as persons. Therefore, according to Durkheim, organic society and the division of labor are unifying and "natural" conditions of humanity.

Nietzsche also argues there has been a distinct shift between previous and contemporary societies but, unlike Tönnies and Durkheim, he locates the origin shift in primarily cultural terms. He begins his discussion, in *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1989), with an etymological analysis of words used to describe moral

sensibilities. Nietzsche claims the creation of language is an act of power and as such, words are created by the powerful and (presumably) "high-stationed" (2). Etymology can then provide insight into the origins of morality because, as morality is a proscription of social order, the powerful who could create language would also be the ones who create morality. Nietzsche's premise that language and morality were connected by past societies is in step with Tönnies' and Durkheim's assertion that people and cultural motif were intimately inter-connected in simpler societies; they would not, however, agree with Nietzsche that the inter-connectivity was a result of a separate group within the collectives but that morality and language would emerge mutually from the unity of the collective. Nietzsche argues that such perspectives are grounded by a desire to perpetuate a morality that has been disconnected from its "noble" origin then changed into the original meaning's antithesis and finally stagnated by "the herd instinct" (*Ibid.*, 2).

Nietzsche traced the significations of "good" and "bad" in several languages and claimed:

> I found they all led back to the *same conceptual transformation*—that everywhere "noble," "aristocratic" in the social sense, is the basic concept from which "good" in the sense of "with aristocratic soul," "noble," "with a soul of a high order," "with a privileged soul" necessarily developed: a development which always runs parallel with that other in which "common," "plebeian," "low" are finally transformed into the concept "bad" (*Ibid.*, 4).

He argues that his evidence is a "fundamental insight" into the origins of morality (*Ibid.*). The implication of Nietzsche's insights is that, at some point,

those who were thought "good" were dominated by those once thought "bad."

Furthermore, in regards to contemporary society, our moral valuations, which

advocate equality and pacification, make up a progressive act of domination that

took, according to Nietzsche, two thousand years and lasts still.

Nietzsche's explanation of the shift in morality is simultaneously a

metaphoric and literal description of a large track of time he labels *the slave

revolt in morality* [italics in the original]" (*Ibid*., 7). Once society had two

authorities, each with their own set of moral valuations: the "knightly-

aristocratic types" and the "priestly-noble types." The first group, who were

dominant, were characterized by "war, adventure, hunting, dancing, war games,

and in general all that involves vigorous, free, joyful activity" (*Ibid*.) while the

second were craven, ascetic and impotent and who involved themselves in the

destruction of "the" body in order to reach union with God, or as Nietzsche

called "*unio mystica*" (*Ibid*., 6), which Nietzsche equates with "nothingness."

The priestly caste hated and resented the aristocratic caste because of the

aristocrats' power and vitality. They waged a covert war of symbols, which the

ascetic priests won due to their superior cleverness in using a much more

powerful weapon that the aristocrats could not have foreseen: religion. Fear and

guilt were ingrained into society and "good and bad" became "good and evil."

Nietzsche summarizes this shift with poetic fervor as a pronouncement by the

ascetic priests to the vital aristocrats:

> "[T]he wretched alone are the good; the poor, impotent,
> lowly alone are the good; the suffering, deprived, sick, ugly alone

are pious, alone are blessed by God, blessedness is for them alone—and you, the powerful and noble, are on the contrary the evil, the cruel, the lustful, the insatiable, the godless to all eternity; and you shall be in all eternity the unblessed, accursed, and damned!" (*Ibid*).

In this way, the priests packaged the discipline of asceticism into morality and gave it to the herd. To unpack Nietzsche's story is no meager task and to write "Nietzsche means this or that" is arrogant if it is meant to be taken at face value as Nietzsche rarely states what he means in such clear terms; as such, to derive meaning from Nietzsche's writings is a personal act where to read what Nietzsche has written is to simultaneously project a bit of yourself onto the page and write along side him. Thus, to add an important caveat for this thesis, when I write, "Nietzsche wrote…" it can just as easily be read, "Nietzsche and I wrote…."

Part of the problem with relating the slave revolt and contemporary society from Nietzsche's point of view is that description does not seem to have been as important to Nietzsche as analysis. Most of his dealing with society has little description of the properties he is contemplating; he deals in inference, implication and irony. That being said, the situation created by the slave revolt was one of illusory equality. Morality became an instrument for slaves (ascetic priests) to give expression to their wills to power. Not only did religion remain their domain, but they also spread into politics with their artificial promise of democracy and into economics by linking industriousness and selfless hard work to morality (thus keeping the herd tied to tireless production for the sake the

socially dominant).[4] Thus, the reversal in morality brought about the reversal in society: the slaves became masters and the masters became slaves (Nietzsche, 1974, 1989, 1990, 1992, 2001).

SOCIAL/COLLECTIVE/HERD EXPRESSIONS AND EVALUATIONS

Tönnies argues that people living in gesellschaft come together in such a way as to create with their individual wills a social will; Tönnies refers to this social will as "the will of the Gesellschaft" (Tönnies, 2002, 70). The larger social will of the Gesellschaft is discussed as being something artificial in the sense that it is constructed by "real" or single[5] individuals:

> [T]he existence of a Gesellschaft in the sense that it is used here is real at a given time. It is something in the process of becoming, something which should be conceived here as personality of the general will or the general reason, and at the same time (as we know) it is fictitious and nominal. It is like an emanation, as if it had emerged from the heads of the persons in whom it rests, who join hands eagerly to exchange across all distances, limits, and scruples, and establish this speculative Utopia as the only country, the only city, in which all fortune seekers and all merchant adventurers have a really common interest. As the fiction of money is represented by metal or paper, it is represented by the entire globe, or by a circumscribed territory (*Ibid*., 76-77).

It needs to be noted that Tönnies was reluctant to describe Gesellschaft as operating as an independent will; even though he often used this notion and wrote in terms of Gesellschaft willing, owning and having authority, he usually added the caveat that the idea was a metaphorical device for conceptual clarity

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[4] Weber's *Protestantism and the Spirit of Capitalism* echoes and further develops Nietzsche's assertions on the link between work and religion far beyond Nietzsche's own analysis.

[5] Tönnies refers to collections of people in Gesellschaft, such as corporations, as "artificial individuals" I discuss this in more detail in Chapter III.

and not to be taken literally because of Gesellschaft's artificiality (*Ibid*., 68). The reasoning here is that artificial entities are created by the rational will of people and thus dependent upon that will for their continued existence. This is problematic, however, as Tönnies directly describes other artificial entities, such as machines, as having independent wills. Tönnies does not explain this seeming contradiction and it is outside the scope of this thesis for me to attempt reconciliation.

I contend, contrary to Tönnies, that Gesellschaft does have an independent will just as other artificial entities, according to Tönnies, do. I make this contention based on two points: first, Tönnies' uses of the term "Gesellschaft" as an independent will throughout his discussions on the topic and second, as Tönnies also asserts throughout (as in the first line of the above quote), fictitious things still have effects on people as real things. Furthermore, I agree with Durkheim when he wrote in his *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1982), "A social fact is identifiable through the power of external coercion which it exerts or is capable of exerting upon individuals" (56), from which he then asserts, "The first and most basic rule is *to consider social facts as things* [italics in the original]" (60). Though Durkheim would disagree with Tönnies' negative interpretations of Gesellschaft, the concept of "Gesellschaft" does fit Durkheim's definition of "social fact."

Gesellschaft is perpetually recreated through the wills of individuals who are its physical components but then comes to stand as other from them so

humans have become subjugated by their own creation. Ironically, individuals continually reify Gesellschaft and thus perpetuate their subjugation. Thus, as a collective creation, it stands as an alien oppressor to each individual when they are considered separately. Gesellschaft is oppressive in the sense that it wills the freedom of individuals "divided and altered" (Tönnies, 2002, 76) through what Tönnies termed "convention" (*Ibid*.). "Convention" is not used the same as it is commonly; it functions as customs and traditions do but it does not have the same sense of heritage (*Ibid*.). Tönnies implies that Gesellschaft is ahistorical and does not have heritage or tradition because they are things people create communally in concert with one another. Since, in Gesellschaft, people are divided from one another, convention cannot take on the same connotations it would have in Gemeinschaft. Convention is a tool for the unity of Gesellschaft beyond individuals' dependence on one another; it is a type of forced complacency with the existing order, which is, in turn, an internalization, mental dependence and acceptance of the existing social order.

In *Discipline and Punish* (1995), Foucault talks about sovereigns from the example of a monarch. A king monopolizes power and transmits it to others only so that his presence is extended beyond his corporal existence. The monopoly and subsequent surplus of power displayed by the king has the ultimate effect of showing the powerlessness of the ruled (29). Foucault labels any authority figure with such a surplus of power where the subject is forced to acknowledge his/her relative powerlessness "sovereign." Gesellschaft, as an "actual" independent and

acting will, has such power. Tönnies points in this direction when he discusses

the power of Gesellschaft as the objective (distant, rational) judge of value in

exchange (Tönnies, 2002, 67-71) and that no individual is able to "confront"

Gesellschaft (68). To what purpose could something such as Gesellschaft put

such power? One could point out, 'yes, society is more powerful than

individuals so what does it help to look at it in terms of a Foucaultian sovereign?'

Besides the subversion of individuals' wills to its will, there is a global aspect as

well. Tönnies wrote of Gesellschaft:

> The whole country is nothing but a market in which to
> purchase and sell. In the case of domestic trade, it functions
> alternatingly through absorption and contraction as systole, and
> through expulsion and expansion as diastole…. Each country can
> develop into such a trading area. The more extensive the area, the
> more completely it becomes an area of the Gesellschaft, for the
> more widespread and freer trade becomes. Trade tends, finally to
> concentrate in one main market, the world market, upon which
> other markets become dependent (*Ibid*., 79).

Foucault argued to focus on the economies and structures of societies is to miss

the mechanics of power that operate, "psychiatric interment, the mental

normalization of individuals, and penal institutions have no doubt a fairly limited

importance if one is only looking for their economic significance" (Foucault,

2000, 117). If Gesellschaft is looked at as an individual and the world market

(with its contemporary correlate, globalization) is analyzed as an expression of

power, then not only human relations but international relations also become

based upon artificial convention and coercion.

Foucault argues the "web of power" is employed through many artifices by sovereigns for the sake of maintaining the imbalance of power between ruler and ruled. These artifices are highly effective due to their tendency to normalize, individualize and divide the subject through increasingly rational and objective stances outside as well as within the focus of domination. In a word, power in contemporary societies is maintained largely through *precision*. Think of a clock; its mechanisms are relatively simple as is its purpose, *i. e*., to continually cycle through a determined combination of numbers. A clock can also symbolize the power of Gesellschaft. It is something external from us that we accept as being the determinant and divisor of our moment-to-moment experience; in Gemeinschaft, the passage of time was the changes in season; in Gesellschaft, clocks *create* time in ever divisible units. Hours, minutes, seconds and now clocks come with an even smaller division, the millisecond. The precision and efficiency of such machines as clocks has helped determine our expectations of humans to be more precise and efficient. If a bus is a few minutes "behind schedule" people become frustrated that the bus driver does not better conform to the dictate of mechanized time; if someone is habitually late for work or class, he/she is told to buy a wristwatch (if not fired or failed). Wearing a wristwatch then becomes a means of connecting machine and human so that the constant physical presence (not to mention the otherwise internal presence of the clock or as an example, the stress felt by realizing you "are late") is a subjugation of human will to mechanized or "rational" will for the purposes of normalizing and

correcting the individual and simultaneously individualizing him/her through the personal governor of the wristwatch. The example of clocks as an expression of Gesellschaft's power leads in to two interconnected concepts Foucault used in unique ways: gazes and panopticism.

A panopticon is a watchtower built in the center of a circular prison where all the inmates can be observed by guards without the inmates knowing when they are observed. This act of observation is the "gaze" where inmates feel themselves to be watched at all times since they cannot know when they are being watched. The prisoners thus internalize the gaze by self-correcting their behavior to conform to the prescribed discipline of the prison regardless of what that discipline is. As Foucault wrote, "[a] real subjection is born mechanically from a fictitious relation. So it is not necessary to use force to constrain the convict to good behavior, the madman to calm, the worker to work, the schoolboy to application, the patient to the observation of the regulations (*Ibid*., 202)." The internalization of this subjugation by an alien power creates a soul, according to Foucault, which is born from the paradoxical activity of normalizing bodies in space and time. In other words, the panopticon creates individuals by forcing people into normalized routes of behavior.

I argue that Gesellschaft is a panopticon and we are its gazes. Though this is a significant extension of Tönnies' analysis of Gesellschaft, Foucault heads in that direction:

> The Panopticon's solution to this problem [of
> simultaneously intensifying power and production] is that the

> productive increase of power can be assured only if, on the one
> hand, it can be exercised continuously in the very foundations of
> society, in the subtlest possible way, and if, on the other hand, it
> functions outside these sudden, violent, discontinuous forms that
> are bound up with the exercise of sovereignty (*Ibid*., 208).

As Tönnies argues, individual members of Gesellschaft are "the very foundations of society" thus, a part of the perpetual reification of the will of Gesellschaft from our individual wills is to also inverse the relation so as to allow Gesellschaft to recreate us as individuals and then act through us as "gazers" upon one another: people complaining about the bus driver who was late; employers and coworkers, professors and classmates asserting the "late" member needs a watch are all acts of gazing upon the "abnormal" member for the sake of normalization. As an aside for clarity, Foucault distinguishes between panopticism and sovereignty as the difference between abstract and corporeal existence; Gesellschaft analyzed in the present way is peculiar: on the one hand it is an abstract expression of power from the point of view of individuals consisting of it and on the other, it has a physical dimension of existing within geographical boundaries as well. Gesellschaft exists as both sovereign and panopticon in these ways. As an example of sovereignty on this level, think of the "sudden, violent, discontinuous forms" that were manifested by the sovereign USA after the September 11, 2001 bombings. The entire Middle East is presently being bent to the powerful sovereign as a demonstration of its relative powerlessness.

Durkheim directly argued there was a will or consciousness that emerged in both mechanical and organic societies that stands separate from the individuals making it up:

> The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own. It can be termed the collective or common consciousness. Undoubtedly the substratum of this consciousness does not consist of a single organ. By definition it is diffuse over society as a whole, but nonetheless possesses specific characteristics that make it a distinctive reality. In fact it is independent of the particular conditions in which individuals find themselves. Individuals pass on, but it abides. It is the same in north and south, in large towns and in small, and in different professions. Likewise it does not change with every generation but, on the contrary, links successive generations to one another. Thus it is something totally different from the consciousnesses of individuals, although it is only realized in individuals (Durkheim, 1997, 38-39).

The collective consciousness, contrary to my extension of Tönnies analysis, is a unifying and moral entity that does not only extend geographically but temporally as well. It is something diffuse, according to Durkheim, and cannot be located in any one part of society. Since it is not located in any one organ, the government of a society cannot be seen as the collective consciousness; rather Durkheim argues the government is an expression and tool of the collective consciousness. To illustrate, murder is not considered a crime against the government but a crime against "society;" what is invoked by the word "society" is the collective consciousness as it was not society that was murdered but an individual. The murdered individual was a part of the collective consciousness and thus, since the collective consciousness still exists after the death of an

individual, it was the one left offended by the crime. People still maintain wills of their own though and this causes a dual nature in humanity that is not always in congruence. Each member of a society carries with him/her two consciousnesses: the collective and their own. The emotion of embarrassment is demonstrative of the internal existence of the collective in individuals because embarrassment is entirely dependent upon the collective for definition (*Ibid.*).

In mechanical societies, individuals' consciousnesses are wholly melded into the collective's and thus there is hardly any conflict between the two. Idealistically, the same would hold for organic society; along with the expansion of the division of labor, however, comes an expansion of individuality that undermines the collective values and beliefs making up the collective consciousness. Simultaneous expansion of the division of labor and individuality is occurs because organic society grows in two different ways. As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the division of labor expands as it assimilates different segments of society into organs, which Durkheim labels "dynamic density" and involves peoples of different world views coming into contact with one another thus disrupting the homogenized collective consciousness; this growth is analogous to a child growing taller. The other form of growth is population density or, in other words, people tend to reproduce and with fewer environmental checks due to the increasing advancement of society, there are eventually enough people to weaken individual bonds; this growth is analogous to a child overeating and growing fatter. Organic society's growth and the

subsequent weakening of the collective consciousness leads to what Durkheim

labeled "abnormal forms" of the division of labor (*Ibid*.; Giddens, 1984).

The first abnormal form Durkheim discussed was "the anomic division of

labor" and, he argued, the division of labor in society at the time he was writing

had entered this form (Durkheim, 1997, 291). Anomie is created when the

division of labor has, in a sense, "gone too far." Laborers are divided to the point

where they have little interaction with one another and no knowledge of the

entire production process. As a current illustration of this, imagine calling a

large convenience store to ask if it has a certain item, if you end up talking with

someone in sporting they will have no idea about the inventory in electronics and

probably will not know the people who work in electronics either even though

they work in the same store. The laborers are working in a state of anomie where

each individual is individualized by the division of labor. Society does not fall

apart at this point, however, due to organic solidarity; people are still dependent

upon the division of labor for their material survival. Beyond this material

support, however, society provides little. Moreover, when the organs of society

are out of equilibrium with one another, which can occur as a result of several

things such as unregulated economic competition, expansion or consumption, a

state of anomie can arise.

Etymologically, anomie comes from the ancient Greek *anomos*, which

loosely means without custom/law/tradition; Tönnies argued this was a "natural"

condition of Gesellschaft when he explained contemporary society does not fall

apart due to "convention."[6] In this way, Tönnies and Durkheim were describing

similar phenomena when they attempted to explain how contemporary society

avoided collapse. Durkheim argues, contrary to Tönnies, anomie, though

"abnormal," occurs naturally as the division of labor expands much like growing

pains. Whether society will reach equilibrium is dependent on structural, not

economic, reform. In anomic organic society, workers are, as Tönnies argues,

mere tools, means to another's economic ends and as such, conflicts between

labor and capital arise. The answer is not to be found in socialism nor in liberal

education but by re-embedding workers into the collective consciousness by

allowing them knowledge of the process of production, where they fit in this

process and for what they are ultimately working. Knowledge of production

would, contended Durkheim, provide workers with a sense of meaning and a

moral connection with the collective (*Ibid.*, 307-8).

Another aspect of anomie, a moral aspect, is the emergence of what has

come to be called "the cult of the individual" (Giddens, 1984, 80). Durkheim

describes this phenomenon as slightly bolstering the "mutated" collective

consciousness of organic society:

> As all other beliefs and practices assume less and less
> religious a character, the individual becomes the object of a sort of
> religion. We carry on the worship of the dignity of the human
> person, like all strong acts of worship, has already acquired its
> superstitions. If you like, therefore it is indeed a common faith.
> Yet first of all, it is only possible because of the collapse of other

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[6] As discussed above, Tönnies was careful in defining convention to point out custom and tradition (in ancient Greek, *nomos*) could not be incorporated into its meaning as Gesellschaft did not have these things.

> faiths and consequently it cannot engender the same results as that multiplicity of extinct beliefs. There is no compensation (Durkheim, 1997, 122).

Durkheim's introductory clause, "If you like," is interesting. It seems to point to the theoretical difficulties the cult of the individual presents as if Durkheim were reluctantly conceding to a problem due to the religious character the individual takes on in organic society. On the one hand, if the collective consciousness is continually declining in power to be replaced by organic solidarity and anomie then the cult of the individual cannot be looked at as a ubiquitous religious movement because that would imply a stronger collective consciousness than under a multiplicity of faiths; but on the other hand, if the cult of the individual is looked at as a ubiquitous religious movement, then anomie looses relevance and organic solidarity becomes less important because the cult of the individual would point to a re-emergence of mechanical solidarity within organic society and that is a fundamental contradiction in terms.

Anthony Giddens, in his introduction to a selection of Durkheim's writings, states that it is "fallacious" to argue that the conscious collectives of organic societies are as powerful as they were for mechanical societies because, to make such as argument would contradict the concept of anomie in organic society; I contend, however, that an anomic organic society can be said to have a strong, albeit "mutated," conscious collective (Giddens, 1998, 7). The basis for this assertion comes from an analysis not of the inherent structure of the division of labor but in the technological advance that come about because of it and the

ways in which the collective consciousness can be strengthened through them.

Furthermore, the West's shift from a production society to a service/consumer

society, coupled with the technological advances of the division of labor and the

cult of the individual, creates a situation where the collective consciousness of

organic society is fundamentally different than, but just as strong as, that of

mechanical societies without precluding the prominence of anomie. This

assertion seems counter-intuitive but here is what I mean: individuals'

consciousnesses create and reify the collective consciousness *individually* so that

their social connection is directly with the collective but not other individuals.

Baudrillard's (2004) *The Consumer Society* is helpful in extending Durkheim's

analysis in this way.

Firstly, I assert the cult of the individual has evolved to the point where it

is no longer a reverence for the dignity of the individual so much as it is an

ascetic attempt at self-destruction to reach *unio mystica* with a Wholly Other and

thus an attempt by the individual to become Wholly Other him/herself. This is

perpetuated by such service industry companies as marketing firms which extol

consumers to "be yourself" through personalizable products. Items are

advertised to make you yourself; they are claimed to give one a personality that

is your own. Advertisers tell us to "stand out," "be noticed" and "be different."

As Baudrillard pointed out, however, to be different is to be unnamable because

if there is a label to describe you, you are not so different after all. To be

unnamable, in other words, to defy language, is to destroy whatever you were before to become the Wholly Other.

Secondly, as is implied by the above line of argument, anomie is not only present in advanced organic society, it is taken to new heights! I imagine an embodiment of the twentieth century turning to the nineteenth and saying, "well, you guys were able separate from one another all right… gotta hand it to ya, not bad… gonna be tough to beat tha—I got it! We'll do ya one better and separate from our very selves! Ha! Anomie, my ass." Anomie is not only extended in the above sense but also in Durkheim's use of the word through technological advances. Look at how many infomercials there are advertising "work at home with your computer!" or colleges and universities offering online degrees up to Ph.D. People who work in a factory may be anomic in their lack of overall knowledge and connection with others but at least they see other people. There is television, ipod, blogging, blackberry and bluetooth all of which make living in a personalizable world possible where you do not ever have to "see" another person (this takes the above wristwatch analysis to a whole other level of normalization through individualization). Increasingly, when we do have contact with other people it is through machines such as cell phones, instant messaging and electronic mail so that our contact is one dimensional digitized voices or typed messages; I contend this is an entirely new form of anomie when there is contact but the medium mechanizes the contact.

Lastly, the collective consciousness maintains strength in three ways: the cult of the Wholly Other, the individual experience of advertisements and cultural outlets of technology. In other words, the collective consciousness becomes an outcropping of the forms of anomie in contemporary society. The cult of the Wholly Other creates the collective consciousness in much the same way Durkheim hesitantly admitted the cult of the individual "kind of" bolstered it; the cult of the Wholly Other is a more or less hegemonic ascetic moral system that unites people in organic society in the common goal of self annihilation in pursuit one of 976 personalized hair dyes that will make you "you." Baudrillard summed up the individual experience of advertisement when he wrote of the "symbolic, silent exchange between the proffered object and the gaze" (*Ibid*., 166):

> Shop-windows thus beat out the rhythm of the social process of value: they are a continual adaptability test for everyone, a test of managed projection and integration. The big stores are a kind of pinnacle of this urban process, a positive laboratory and social testing ground, where, as Durkheim writes in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, the collectivity reinforces its cohesion, as in feasts and spectacles (*Ibid*.).

Advertisement becomes a dialectic of reflexive power where the consumer gazes upon objects and values while advertisers gaze upon consumers in a perpetual show of consumption. Thus the collective consciousness is emergent through the spectacle of consumption. Finally the cultural outlets of technology provide a direct link to the collective consciousness through such things as television and the internet. Culture producing industries such as Hollywood provide "popular"

culture, which is something that 1) was once just called "culture," 2) was once produced and shared in common and 3) is now consumable in individualized formats (what special features would you like on *your* movie today?) you can download off the internet. Culture is beamed and wired and passed through the air into televisions where you can watch alone in your home. Public opinion can be made and then taken through polls on the internet without there ever having to be any human discussion. The Occident is wired (or wireless at this point) individually; thus each person is individually plugged into the collective consciousness without any need for human contact.

Nietzsche argues that we have a "herd instinct" that causes us to group together and become an indistinct mass. Once we have formed such a herd, he asserts, we then emanate, not a will as with Tönnies and Durkheim *per se*, a herd mentality. He argues that the herd instinct and mentality is just as strong after the slave revolt (if not stronger) as it was before and that the only difference is one of appearance:

> Parliamentarianism—that is, public permission to choose between five basic political opinions—flatters and wins the favor of all those who would like to *seem* independent and individual, as if they fought for their opinions. Ultimately, however, it is indifferent whether the herd is commanded to have one opinion or permitted to have five. Whoever deviates from the five public opinions and stands apart will always have the whole herd against him (Nietzsche, 1974, 174).

Someone once told me it was easy to pick out a non-conformist because they all looked alike; it is much the same with contemporary society lauding of individuality and diversity. There is no diversity or multiplicity if everyone is

diverse or multiple in the exact same ways. Nietzsche contended that there was something inherently limiting about the herd mentality; there are so many "old truths" tied to the herd that anytime a "new truth" is created individuals of the herd and the herd itself will react to it with fear and hatred thus running from the truth or destroying it but never accepting it of its own accord.

As with Durkheim's collective consciousness, Nietzsche saw herd mentality to be a moral entity (that Nietzsche called himself an immoralist is important to keep in mind). Morality is hierarchical; it is a ranking of attributes and actions humans have and/or do. Thus, the herd mentality places a value on human activity, Nietzsche claims, and these value hierarchies are an expression of authoritative power wherein herds attribute different functionalities to individual members. In other words, morality is a tool for differentiating the best ways the herd can use different people as tools themselves. Moreover, Nietzsche argues the relativity of morality can be demonstrated by the varying herd mentalities. Herds survive by responding to environmental pressures with morality as a code of useful and not useful behavior and as there are many different environments, there are many different moralities (*Ibid*., 116). As with Durkheim, Nietzsche argues that in members of the herd there is a kind of dual nature expressed but the "kind of" is important because as Durkheim ascribes agency along with the social determinism of the collective to individuals, Nietzsche sees the herd mentality being a collective expression of the herd instinct of each member but the morality of the herd is not necessarily something

separate in the member. The herd mentality and the herd instinct is so similar,

Nietzsche often uses the labels interchangeably.

Nietzsche does see a difference between herd instinct and herd mentality

though. He states that all people have the herd instinct but some (discussed in

chapter II) are able to overcome this and thus avoid being enslaved by the herd

mentality. An aspect of the herd instinct that stays with us regardless is the

desire to preserve our species. Good and evil as expressions of herd mentality

break down when the whole of the species is considered because every person, in

their own way, gives expression to the desire to preserve the whole of humanity

even if they did not, on the surface, intend it.

> Even the most harmful man may really be the most useful
> when it comes to the preservation of the species; for he nurtures
> either in himself or in others, through his effects, instincts without
> which humanity would long have become feeble or rotten. Hatred,
> the mischievous delight in the misfortune of others, the lust to rob
> and dominate, and whatever else is called evil belongs to the most
> amazing economy of the preservation of the species. To be sure,
> this economy is not afraid of high prices, of squandering, and it is
> on the whole extremely foolish. Still it is *proven* that it has
> preserved our race so far (*Ibid*., 1).

There is a great deal in the above passage that is akin to Durkheim's analysis of

how crime strengthens the collective consciousness. Durkheim argues crime is

normative behavior that sets examples for other members of society and thus, as

Nietzsche claims, helps preserve the species.

Nietzsche, however, is not placing a positive value on the expression of

herd instinct. He argues cultures with strong herd instincts are weak, enslaved

and decadent. The people of such a culture are slaves in need of the domination

they receive from other slaves and the few who are individuals are quickly weeded out by the herd. Higher cultures though are marked by "hovering in an interesting position that is usually dismissed as a mere decay of morals and corruption" (*Ibid*., 149). He describes them as having a high degree of heterogeneity and many moralities. This diversity of culture makes for strength of civilization and points to a possible way out of herd instinct. In the first aphorism of *The Gay Science* (1974) Nietzsche makes the prophetic statement that one-day humanity will have a purpose (the principle of ebb and flood) but until then we can challenge the herd instinct by recognizing it as a comedy and laughing.

VALUATIONS OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES

Though Tönnies, Durkheim and Nietzsche had similar ideas, their texts rarely agree with one another. The labels they chose to use and the definitions they gave to those labels are very telling; contemporary society was "mechanical" for Tönnies, "organic" for Durkheim and a "herd" for Nietzsche. It seems to me that much of the disagreement between these thinkers begins on the manifest content of their writings with their use of labels and then dives into the murky (though in many places in their texts, not so latent) depths of the values they placed upon highly organized society. As Nietzsche argued, at the bottom of things, we find only ourselves; we ultimately play gods and construct the world and give it meanings and values where there were none before: everything is personal and everything comes down to values we project.

The differences between "mechanical," "organic" and "herd" are ones not only of values, but also of focus. Tönnies argued contemporary society was mechanical because it brings people together in artificial, automated ways; we are valuable only in our functionality for each other. Durkheim called society organic because he saw an analogy with cells and organs of a biological body; society brings people together and organizes them not only for the survival of the group, but also to the care and development of each individual dependent upon the group. For Nietzsche, society was a herd because each individual acted as an unthinking thing rather than as a willful human being; we express the same things, carry the same thoughts and even look the same[7] and this sameness, though beneficial for the group, destroyed the "humanness" of the individual.[8] I argue that all three have valid points and evaluations about and of the "nature" of contemporary society.

In Tönnies' analysis of Gesellschaft, in regards to its division of labor, he argues the majority of people (the laborers) are enslaved to capitalist and merchant classes. Laborers must sell the only thing they own, their labor, in order to survive. Laborers have no agency; their lives are constructed for them around the goal of creating profits for others. Moreover, it is not necessarily another human being to whom they are subjugated: "the tools, organized as

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[7] I discussed how this does not contradict with anomie above. Furthermore, in *The Rules of Sociological Method*, Durkheim wrote: "If I do not conform to ordinary conventions, if in my mode of dress I do not heed to what is customary in my country and in my social class, the laughter I provoke, the social distance at which I am kept, produce, although in a more mitigated form, the same results as any real penalty" (51).
[8] We carry with us similar valuations from popular culture through the years; look at Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, Cary Grant's *Father Goose* and Bryan Forbes' *Stepford Wives*.

machines in systems of production, are served in their work by, and dominate, the toiling human beings. Thus, these toilers are no longer directly dependent so much upon an alien human will which gives them orders as upon the given qualities of a 'dead monster'…" (*Ibid*., 99). Humans created tools and then the creations came to dominate the creators through a perverse degradation by Gesellschaft.

Though tools do not have life outside of Gesellschaft, in Gesellschaft, they are imbued with what Tönnies labels "rational will," which is an artificial will created by thought and existing only in reference to the person (or thing) creating it, thus they have the *appearance* of life because they have the *appearance* of thought (*Ibid*., 103). For Tönnies, there is a sense of an objective reality but Gesellschaft simultaneously is and creates artificialities and fictions. The machines that dominate laborers have lives in fiction but are in "actuality" inorganic and 'dead.' They can be considered 'monsters' in many senses. They are slave drivers forcing laborers to keep pace with the unyielding, inexorable pace of the machines. I imagine a laborer in a factory at the end of the nineteenth century working on an assembly line. The large, dirty, oddly-shaped machine subverting the laborer's will while it spewed foul-smelling smoke and released a deafening, never ending roar of grinding metal and clanking gears may have seemed a nightmarish incubus. It is also possible to think of "dead monsters" in the Occidental Gesellschaft of the twenty-first century. Computers are a prime example. People commonly refer to them as having "thoughts" and "desires" as

in "I told my computer to 'save' but it didn't want to." We have to work with

computers on their schedules (how often have you had a computer 'freeze' on

you or a particular program "refused" to work?). People fear them as monsters

(not just children who must be "introduced" to computers early in their lives or

the elderly who sometimes take computer classes to alleviate their fears of

computers but also a broader group of people who express a desire to pass laws

to protect people from the "dangers" of computers) to which the presence, in our

vocabularies, of the word "technophobia" attests.

These fictions of Gesellschaft should not be read in the sense they are not

"real" *per se* but more along the lines that they are, according to Tönnies,

abstraction we have created that exist independent of the external "natural"

world. Our fictions, however, are no less real because they are "dead" nor is it

the case that they have no effect on things existing in the external "natural"

world; they are real in effect regardless of their amorphous origins. In a way,

Tönnies' analysis of Gesellschaft makes us into Dr. Frankenstein where we did

not know what we were creating nor could we control it once it was created. In

the end, we find our monster to be more powerful than us. In a way, we end up

its creation just as much as it is ours; Tönnies writes in regards to labor becoming

a commodity, "Divided up or increased or changed in character or appearance,

the commodity must never be consumed; it must, so to speak, perish that it may

be resurrected in the forms of goods." The laborer, who is separated from

products through the division of labor, pours who he/she is, the thing that defines

him/her, into the creation of an artificial commodity. The defining act of laboring destroys the labor to recreate it into a fiction made material. We become the "Modern Day Prometheus" then find ourselves having to suffer Prometheus' Olympian punishment.

Nietzsche agrees things are artificial; we live in a world of illusion but, he adds, there is something beyond this something deeper than some concept of "objective reality," a different way of being that we could never have reached if we had not learned the lessons we are just beginning to understand from the slave revolt. One point he makes in several places is that the slave revolt was positive for humanity; it gave us depth of thought and emotion we, up to that point, were lacking. There may be a long way yet to go, but Nietzsche is an optimist and argued humanity will redeem itself from the necessary resentment, enslavement and degradation that Nietzsche finds so nauseating and in which we now find ourselves. On the point of slavery and degradation, Nietzsche and Durkheim are most divergent, though both use language point to the depths of humanity, Durkheim sees the collective being that depth whereas Nietzsche argues the collective acts as a buoy, holding people back.

In the *Division of Labor* (1997), Durkheim argued organic society may appear oppressive but people must have a moral code that is both internal and external in order for mutual survival and morality requires a deprivation of freedom to a degree. For Durkheim formation of society is one of the fundamental defining points of humanity and to rail against it for some other

perceived definition is a rejection of our species for egoistic endeavors. As we

are dependent on society for our very selves we have no right to free ourselves

from the duties and moral obligations this entails—we owe society our very

selves:

> The members are linked by ties that extend well beyond the very brief moment when the act of exchange is being accomplished. Each one of the functions that the members exercise is constantly dependent upon others and constitutes with them a solidly linked system. Consequently the nature of the task selected derives from duties that are permanent. Because we fulfil this or that domestic or social function we are caught up in a network of obligations from which we have no right to disengage ourselves (*Ibid*., 173).

The interdependence of all the parts of society creates a moral requirement that

binds even the foundations of society. I agree that human relations must come

with a moral character in order to exist but there are limits; when the binds of a

relationship are too demanding or negate a sense of individual dignity, then those

binds of interdependence have dissolved from being moral to being coercive.

Whereas Tönnies and Durkheim analyze contemporary society from the

starting points of economics and social structure and then discuss the cultural

aspects, Nietzsche interprets the cultural aspects and then discusses indirectly

social structure and economics. He argues that contemporary culture is sickly,

weak and, *seemingly* paradoxically, oppressive.[9] Our present culture did not

become this way by accident or some "natural" evolution but was created by us

just as all truths, values and realities are created by us. One of the problems with

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[9] Society is weak and oppressive because the victory of the slaves or common people had good PR; everyone submits to the weakness and becomes weak him/herself—thus oppressed.

the herd is that there are so many members. Herd mentality retains its divine-like strength over individuals because individuals are so small compared to the crushing weight of the sheer magnitude of the herd. Many of these people feel as though they have a right to live merely because of the recognition of their existence; Nietzsche argues this does not follow but does not clearly (only metaphorically) say how he differentiates people along the "superfluous" and "not-superfluous" or how someone else could judge another's life as somehow less than life; he leaves that for us to decipher.[10] He does, however, tell us we are *all* superfluous under the state and simultaneously, "All-too-many are born: for the superfluous the state was invented" (Nietzsche, 1995, 11). In his valuation of "the state," which Nietzsche equates as being a "modern herd" and does not only have governments in mind, but the whole of contemporary society, "State is the name of the coldest of all cold monsters. Coldly it tells lies too; and this lie crawls out of its mouth: 'I, the state, am the people'" (*Ibid*). Nietzsche claim that the state is not the people does not necessarily stand in contradiction to my extension of Tönnies' Gesellschaft or Durkheim's collective consciousness; on the contrary, he sees the state as an independent will of the group but it is not the "people." Humans cannot be reduced to society because we are something more, something deeper; something different and other. This is not to be confused with the cult of the Wholly Other, though I am using similar language

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[10] This was interpreted along racial lines by the Nazis who took Nietzsche's writings, as altered by his sister, and applied them to "the Jewish problem," even though Nietzsche clearly states in several places that such judgments cannot be based upon race, nationality or gender. He also attacks nationalism, using German nationalism as an example, as being enslaving and an expression of a sick will to power that needed to be uprooted before humanity could "progress."

here, the cult of the Wholly Other is something on the surface of humanity; it is an expression of the state not of the people.

In a pleading, almost desperate tone, Nietzsche begs us to see what the state does to humanity, how is sacrifices us on its own alter:

> The state, I call it, where all are drink poison, the good and the wicked; state, where all lose themselves, the good and the wicked; the state, where the slow suicide of all is called "life." Behold the superfluous! They steal the works of the inventors and the treasures of the sages for themselves; "education" they call their theft- and everything turns to sickness and misfortune for them. Behold the superfluous! They are always sick; they vomit their gall and call it a newspaper. They devour each other, and cannot even digest themselves. Behold the superfluous! They gather riches and become poorer with them. They want power and first the lever of power, much money—the impotent paupers! Watch them clamber, these swift monkeys! They clamber over one another and thus drag one another into the mud and the depth. They all want to get to the throne: that is their madness—as if happiness sat on the throne. Often mud sits on the throne—and often also the throne on mud. Mad they all appear to me, clambering monkeys and overardent. Foul smells their idol, the cold monster: foul they smell to me altogether, these idolaters (Nietzsche, , 11).

Nietzsche tells us it is better to jump out a window than remain in such a situation. Nietzsche agrees with Tönnies and Durkheim that we are isolated from one another in contemporary society by our own egoistic tendencies but part of the answer to this state of anomie requires a revaluation of values where material interdependence or a stronger state is not part of the equation.

Gesellschaft is not only analyzed in terms of labor and economics; Tönnies also, though to a much smaller and more indirect degree, analyzed broader cultural ramifications of Gesellschaft. Though Tönnies discusses

cultural aspects of Gesellschaft, I extend his analysis here by making a distinction between social (by which I am referring solely to structural/economic aspects) Gesellschaft and cultural (by which I am referring to the way Tönnies uses the concept of culture—see below in present paragraph) Gesellschaft. I do not mean this distinction to imply two separate things but for theoretical clarity, two expressions of Gesellschaft that go hand-in-hand. A group's culture, for Tönnies, is the way in which the individual members interact with one another and the way the group maintains its members (*Ibid*., 59). Tönnies, in keeping with his critical tone throughout his treatise, or as Lewis Coser (1997) put it: "Tönnies's dyspeptic picture of the present and his glorification of the past" (found in: introduction to *Division of Labor in Society* xv), paints a stark picture of culture in Gesellschaft.

People stand in coercion to one another in Gesellschaft, which is corrosive to unifying human themes such as trust. There can be no "real" trust between people as each person seeks to further his or her personal interest as the primary goal of social interaction. There is, however, a "fictitious" trust that must be created for the sake of credit. Much of Gesellschaft is based upon promised actions (the merchant promises to deliver goods, the tenant farmer promises to pay for use of land, the debtor promises to repay a loan with interest) yet when people are unified mainly in their mutual need for others to satisfy varying self-interests, it becomes naïve at best to accept another's promise as could have been done in Gemeinschaft. Gesellschaft's dependence on promises

is problematic because "in contradistinction to the concept of Gesellschaft, a bond has been created, uniting not objects but persons" (*Ibid*., 74). The problem of mistrust is "solved" through formalized and codified promises, *i. e*., contracts (*Ibid*., 71). Contracts serve as a good example of a profound cultural shift. In Gemeinschaft things that are organic and internal such as trust between people must be mutated into something mechanical and external in Gesellschaft. Tönnies does not analyze this shift deeply in terms of internal/external and instead focuses more on subjective/objective shifts in mental life.

I find, however, the internal made external to be more foundational as it is material (a contract may be objective but so too can trust can also be objective; whereas you cannot physically hold someone else's trust; you cannot read it as with a contract). The very externality of a contract effectively kills anything but a fictitious semblance of trust by making something three dimensional in its internality into a two dimensional chimera of its former self. The depths of this cultural shift are that it has moved out of "business culture" into the private lives of people. Take for example pre-nuptial agreements; we have a romantic ideal in Occidental culture that marriage is no longer a business agreement but about the "joining of two hearts." Perhaps at one point, for a period of time, Western culture did make a shift from class/status reasons for marriage to reasons of love but even when marriage was about class and/or status at least it was known as such. By contrast, in advanced Gesellschaft, people operate under a construct of marriage as being about love while the prevalence of pre-nuptial contracts is

rising. The projection of internal trust onto an external contract also raises

Tönnies' point about an subjective/objective shift as it changes marital love from

a subjective, organic and personal emotion into an objective, mechanical and

legal commitment.

Furthermore, we can look to one of contemporary Gesellschaft's cultural

mediators, television, for an example of the externality of trust between friends.

In the past decade, there has been a sharp increase in the number of judicial

shows such as "People's Court" (this trend also demonstrates a process of

cultural Gesellschaft fictionalizing government). These shows often depict two

"friends" or family members who are suing one another over personal loans,

borrowed items or something else of the sort. Leaving aside how the presence of

friends on such a show is an objectification of friendship and family relations by

cultural and social Gemeinschaft (cases dealing with television blurs my

cultural/social distinction as television is both a tool for cultural representation as

well as economic profit), these shows demonstrate another area where internal

life is externalized as one of the people typically enters a contract between the

two parties into evidence. What is particularly striking to me, however, are the

cases when neither person has a contract; in these instances, the presiding judge

typically advises the those involved (this includes, by implication, those

watching the show) to "*always* get a contract" when making an agreement

because "you can't trust anyone." The judges' advice injected into a

representation of cultural Gesellschaft illustrates the values of Gesellschaft as

well as the mechanized method of reification of those values. I put emphasis on the particular example of court shows because of perceived authority: Tönnies asserts governments are representatives of Gesellschaft's authority (*Ibid*., 74) and judges are representatives of the government.

As stated above, my distinction between cultural and social Gesellschaft is merely for theoretically clarity and the issue of trust illustrates their close connection. Trust cannot exist in Gesellschaft due to the inherent competition in the division of labor (capitalists compete with other capitalists laborers compete with one another for jobs, etc.). Suspicion and mistrustful vigilance are not only valued under Gesellschaft but also necessary as "Competition has been described by many pessimists as an illustration of the war of all against all, which a famous thinker has conceived as the natural state of mankind" (*Ibid*., 77). This passing, tongue-in-cheek, reference to Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* (1994) offers a telling insight further into how Tönnies evaluates Gesellschaft. Hobbes argued that humans began in a state of nature without any constraints on freedom but because of an innate "evil," the state of nature necessarily resulted in a state of war. People then created society where they gave up some of their freedom for peace and safety. Tönnies turns Hobbes' explanation on its head by equating Gesellschaft with the state of war. Hobbes saw society as something higher and more humane than the state of nature; thus, according to Tönnies' reformulation, Gesellschaft is lowly and inhumane.

Looking at his assertion that Gesellschaft must continually expand to new land and his analysis of individuals in Gesellschaft culture as being predatory, selfish and destructive, however, I think the current academic discussions about the Occident's role in globalization lends credence to the argument that Gesellschaft is an independent will of its own. One of the defining characteristics of this social will is that it must constantly expand and exceed its geographical bounds looking for new markets and new lands to "penetrate and revolutionize" (Tönnies, 2002, 79) in order to survive. From this perspective, the Occident plays the combined roles of capitalist, merchant and creditor; then the Gesellschafts of lesser developed countries would play varying roles of laborer, debtor or coalition member depending upon the relative power of their respective social wills and the invested self-interest of the social will of the Occident. Furthermore, in my extension of Tönnies' analysis, the Occident would be expected to do precisely what it is doing: consuming instead of producing and exploiting the less powerful. Tönnies does leave a ray of hope in the dark picture he paints of Gesellschaft; he sees it as being decadent in a way and a killer of cultures but if some fragments of Gemeinschaft survive the dominance of Gesellschaft, Tönnies pointed out there may be a counter-emergence of Gemeinschaft within a dying Gesellschaft (Truzzi, 1971).

Nietzsche and Tönnies paint similar pictures of society but from different angles. Both agree the turn to Gesellschaft has left us in a state degradation and slavery. Nietzsche, however, argues this was necessary for us to learn something

about ourselves and to develop deeper felt affects that will help us develop into

the next evolution. Tönnies is not nearly as optimistic as Nietzsche and just

leaves us with a "possibly" better future in finding some communal remnant after

Gesellschaft dies (if it dies). Durkheim ended with a summary of the problem

and a suggested solution:

> It has been rightly stated that morality—and by that must include both theory and practice of ethics—is in the throes of an appalling crisis. What we have expounded can help us understand the causes and nature of this sickness. …If this be so, the remedy for the ill is not to seek to revive traditions and practices that no longer correspond to present-day social conditions, and that could only subsist in a life that would be artificial, one only of appearance. We need to put a stop to this anomie, and to find ways of harmonious co-operation between those organs that still clash discordantly together. We need to introduce into their relationships a greater justice by diminishing those external inequalities that are the source of our ills (Durkheim, 1997, 340).

I do not know about the future but I know I do not want to wait for some possible

distant future to materialize. There must be something that can be done under

Organic Gesellschaft to create a moral standard, a sense of nobility, among

people in intimate, "authentic" human connection. I agree with Durkheim that

any hearkening back to ancient traditions would fail at inception as a farce but

what if, as Nietzsche argues, we could create something new?

CHAPTER III

INDIVIDUALS

In concert with the ideas discussed in the first chapter, this second part deals with individuality under Gesellschaft. This chapter can be loosely seen as consisting of two parts. The first deals with problematic forms of individualization and individuality in contemporary society. This "problems" part deals with Tönnies, Baudrillard and Foucault and the many ways individuals are "produced" in Gesellschaft while authentic individuality remains illusory. The last section puts Durkheim and Nietzsche in conversation with one another about individuality with a mind to party discover, partly create a concept of authentic individuality. Nietzsche is relied upon heavily with his concept of higher types but it must be cautioned, these "higher types" are problematic because Nietzsche romanticizes them to the point of creating a new mythology. Though these fabled higher types can be useful as ethereal models, they must not be taken for literal people living in the "real" world of Gesellschaft. People may have a will of their own but this is tempered by a great deal of determinism by the collective consciousness they are raised under. Therefore, any conceptualization of an authentic individual must take into consideration the existing culture of our time.

Tönnies' concept of human will is dependent upon the social contexts he describes. Between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft there is a great deal of difference as to the varying degrees to which wills can express agency. Then

there is also the difference between natural and rational will as to what is expressed through agency. Rational will is connected with Gesellschaft, while natural will is connected with Gemeinschaft (discussed in more detail in chapter III). Rational will is in relation to abstract things such as wealth and as such, is a will that ties humans to fictions instead of objects or others.

According to Tönnies, the perpetuation of *Gesellschaft* is dependent upon fictions created by individuals' wills. By way of simple example let me use a man wanting to buy a beer in a bar. The bartender informs the man a beer costs four dollars to which the man agrees and pays the amount. In this instance, the will of whomever set the price of the beer (for this simplistic example I will bypass questions of economic competition, marketing and all the other macro-level considerations that go into determining pricing for goods and service as Tönnies' argument deals with the meeting of wills and the multitude of wills that determine the price of a good or service is irrelevant at this point) has set the value of the beer at four dollars which is an inflation of the worth of the beer as Tönnies argues, in *Gesellschaft*, individuals will only provide something to another if they view the thing provided as less valuable than the thing they receive in return: "all goods are conceived to be separate, as also are their owners. What somebody has and enjoys, he has and enjoys to the exclusion of all others. So, in reality, something that has a common value does not exist" (Tönnies, 2002, 65). Humans in *Gesellschaft* are trite and selfish; they are

alienated from one another in one sense by individual constructions of value around material goods.

The man who pays four dollars only does so because he has willed the four dollars to be less valuable than the beer. As Tönnies writes, "Its [a good with a common value] existence may, however, be brought about through fiction on the part of individuals, which means that they have to invent a common personality and his will, to whom this common value has to bear reference" (Tönnies, 2002, 65). So at this basic form of connection between individuals living in *Gesellschaft*, the merging of wills between two people is artificial because it creates something that does not exist (a beer = four dollars) and this fiction of equal value does not exist because both people think they are "really" receiving something of greater value for something of lesser value. The model of human relations presented here is but one of many that exist within *Gesellschaft* but it is an antagonistic one where people ironically come together in opposition to one another setting human connection as an alienation of people involved motivated by self-interest to the perceived detriment of others.

One could question Tönnies' argument based upon "actuality," or in other words, a beer cannot "actually" be both more and less valuable than four dollars simultaneously; the important point, however, is not what is "actually" happening but the construction of values that occurs between two or more individual wills in connection with one another. The common will created by the bartender and the man is an artifice in *Gesellschaft* that allows both to "pretend"

an agreement in value while both people retain a will divorced of the created commonality that perceives each individual as being advantageous in the exchange. The problem with this is not only that the connection is antagonistic and artificial but also it is fragmented as both individuals exist "together" in the artificial combined will while also existing separate from one another thus neither can be wholly with the other nor wholly him/herself. Thus human connection is made paradoxically divisive by the attributes of *Gesellschaft*.

By Tönnies perspective, human nature is coercive and exploitative but this is a reflection of the will of Gesellschaft (see Chapter I) and is not an *a priori* nature inherent to humanity but one constructed by the needs of such an alienated collective. This war of all against all where people feel themselves to be individuals seeking to further their self-interests is an illusory, or artificial, individuality because, since they are all alienated from one another and must be on guard for other trying to exploit them, they are "actually" all fellows in a perverse way. They are all in a common plight and individuality cannot be said to exist under the weight of such immense uniformity.

There are three other ways in which individuality is illusory in Gesellschaft that I wrote about in Chapter I and bears mentioning in this chapter as well: Foucault's concept of individualization, the dialectics of difference in advertisement and the cult of the individual/Wholly Other. Foucault argued that armies were once made of men with particular bodies that the body of a soldier had certain features that made him a better choice for the military than another.

Over time, however, bodies came to be seen as malleable and the military began

to think of the recruit as clay to be molded into a soldier through a process of

"correction." The focus of military discipline on the individual bodies of recruits

did two things: 1. it normalized the recruits by making them virtually

indistinguishable from one another and 2. it individualized the troops by making

each body a focus of power so that they were individualized without becoming

individuals. The military discipline then spread to other parts of highly

organized societies by many methods over many decades but has ended in the

dominance of militaristic discipline in most facets of life under Gesellschaft.

Bureaucracy is a prime example. It is highly rational, highly efficient and highly

mechanical. It is democratic; everyone is treated the same. It obsessively

maintains records on all individuals with whom it comes into contact. Aside

from the replacement of human relations where rules are bent and exceptions

made with cold, logical, inhumane control by "the" rules or "the" computer (my

sixteen year-old brother went to bed one night and woke up the next day to find

he had aged thirty-nine years as AARP informed him he was a member and they

were lobbying to protect his right to social security—somehow his information

ended up in AARP's system and it took a great deal of time and effort to change

the computer's mind that my brother was not fifty-five years old); the rule of

bureaucracy also individualizes peoples. As Foucault argued, bureaucratic

control creates artificial individuals (my fifty-five year old brother) in the files

and notes kept on people (at the registrar's office I am an individual data set—a

GPR, a social security number, a department, etc.) but these individual constructs do not reflect who people are because that is irrelevant (I would like to think I am more than just a GPR) the important thing is maintaining the rule of form, file and above all *rationality* (Foucault, 1995).

Baudrillard describes the shift in marketing from recognizing the agency of individuals to seeing them as deterministic automatons from whom must be hidden the shift to determinism from the previous assumption,

> that it is the individual who exercises power in the economic system. That emphasis on the power of the individual contributed largely to legitimating organization: all the dysfunctions, nuisances and inherent contradictions of the order of production are justified since they extend the scope of consumer sovereignty. It is clear, by contrast, that the whole economic and psycho-sociological apparatus of market research, motivational studies, etc., which, it is claimed, ensured that real demand and the deep wants of the consumer govern the market, exists solely to stimulate that demand in order to create further outlets for products while constantly masking this objective process by staging its opposite. 'Man only became an object of science for man when automobiles became harder to sell than to manufacture' (Baudrillard, 2004, 72).[11]

Thus, marketing firms have grabbed onto the cult of the individual that permeates advanced organic society and perpetuated it to further their own economic interests. The illusion of individuality is a precarious state of mind in contemporary society; the drive to be Wholly Other is a weakness that is easily exploited by those who understand it. By thinking of people in terms of collectives but appear to think of them as individuals allows the further

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[11] For all my conspiracy nut buddies out there: here is at least one example where you're not just paranoid, they really are out to get you!

exploitation and oppression of humans by cultural Gesellschaft through the perpetuation of an artificial self-concept that prevents people from authenticate connections with fellows (wait a minute—all you people are crampin' my style, I'm an individual ya know…).[12]

Baudrillard relied on David Riesman to make several of his points in *The Consumer Society* and a brief introduction to some of his concepts here will help in the upcoming analysis of Tönnies use of "politeness" in Gesellschaft. In *The Lonely Crowd*, Riesman (2001) argues there has been several fundamental shifts in culture which he characterizes with three ideal types that correspond with three different socio-cultural which existed and exist in distinct spacio-temporal periods: tradition-directed, inner-directed and other-directed. A person who was tradition-directed "tends to reflect his membership in a particular age-grade, clan or caste; he learns to understand and appreciate patterns which have endured for centuries, and are modified but slightly as the generations succeed each other. The important relationships of life may be controlled by careful and rigid etiquette…" (Riesman, 2001, 11).

Inner-directed types emerge in a culture that provides a higher level of security for those operating within it. The inner-directed types reify society by looking inwardly "in the sense that [this inward direction] is implanted early in life by the elders and directed toward generalized but nonetheless inescapably destined goals" (*ibid.*, 15). Riesman is then able to extend the analysis into the

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[12] Maybe McDonald's past advertising slogan "It's a McWorld" was not so much marketing as calling a spade a spade….

next shift, which occurred in the United States during the twentieth century. The last shift was to the narcissistic, child-like other-directed types. An other-directed type is "shallower, freer with his money, friendlier, more uncertain of himself and his values, more demanding of approval…" (*ibid*., 19). Jean Baudrillard (*America*, 1999; *The Perfect Crime*, 2002) describes present society as the time after the perfect crime or the murder of "reality." He claims we now live in an endless circulation of fictions where we cannot tell the difference between illusion and "reality;" seeing the Great Pyramid of Las Vegas is no different to us than going to Giza (excepting, of course, that Las Vegas has the Eiffel Tower as well). Since we are narcissistic while simultaneously "uncertain of ourselves" we can pick up an identity, a simulacra work identity for example, and when we tire of that fiction move on.

We Americans love friendly, shallow people circulating through one simulacra identity after another especially in a service industry outlet (is there anything in America left that still produces something material?) where people are friendly and tell us "have a nice day," just as they said to the last person and the one before that. Among all the coercion and competition among people in Gesellschaft, Tönnies, nonetheless, wrote, "Its [Gesellschaft's] supreme rule is politeness" (Tönnies, 2002, 78). This politeness while attempting to gain the advantageous position is, Tönnies argues, part of an exchange of objects and signs; a convention of Gesellschaft based on Gemeinschaft emotions in

appearance, it became an artificial symbol to be exchanged as an illusory

commodity.

Baudrillard, in *America* (1999), links the discussion over the past two

chapters of Gesellschaft with herd mentality with globalization with the cult of

the individual, etc. in one fell swoop:

> It [the American smile] is part of the general
> cryogenization of emotions. It is, indeed, the smile the dead man
> will wear in his funeral home…. The smile of immunity, the smile
> of advertising: 'This country is good. I am good. We are the
> best'. It is also Reagan's smile—the culmination of the self-
> satisfaction of the entire American nation—which is on the way to
> becoming the sole principle of government. An autoprophetic
> smile, like all signs in advertising. Smile and others will smile
> back. Smile to show how transparent, how candid you are. Smile
> if you have nothing to say. Most of all, do not hide the fact you
> have nothing to say nor your total indifference to others. Let this
> emptiness, this profound indifference shine out spontaneously in
> your smile. *Give* your emptiness and indifference to others, light
> up your face with the zero degree of joy and pleasure, smile, smile,
> smile… Americans may have no identity, but they do have
> wonderful teeth [italics in original] (34).

This lack of authenticity points to a possible explanation for Nietzsche writing

that we are all superfluous. I think of the uniquely American logic of dropping

"care packages" over poverty-stricken town in Afghanistan after destroying them

with technologically advanced (relative in consideration of the arms race we are

having with ourselves that is) missiles. But then, perhaps Ronald McDonald will

"win their hearts and minds." We reward people greatly for this lack of

authenticity and thus further reify Gesellschaft's power. In the service industry,

as just one example, people tip servers who constantly smile, who are nice. How

many times have you heard people say something negative about another person

and then add "but he/she *is* nice," as though this niceness were all that truly mattered anyway. Tönnies argued Gesellschaft was artificial and we now have been created in the image of this idol.

Nietzsche wrote a great deal about agency and determinism. Contrary to the above analyses, however, he saw reason for optimism, even gaiety and thus steers the present discussion out of such nauseating waters. He wrote of humans not as a species but as several *actions*. As actions, individuals are in a constant state of emergence or becoming, which Nietzsche constructs into three ideal types: the camel, the lion and the playful child. The camel is reverent and bears all things; it wants to be led and struggles to please all who lead it. This is the first stage of human becoming and it is the stage at which most remain. This is the stage of the herd (Nietzsche, 1995, I).

Nietzsche references simpler societies to level a charge at contemporary society; he writes that once (under Durkheim's repressive laws) the ultimate punishment was exile. Exile was worse then death because humans were defined by their herd (or as Durkheim refers to them in *The Division of Labor*: the horde[13]) so that forced solitude meant immediate death symbolically as well as eventual physical death due to individual's dependence on society. In this sense, the social nature of morality, duty, obligation, responsibility is a sublimated self-interest on the part of herd members fearful of solitude (Nietzsche, 1974).

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[13] Durkheim was careful to clarify that by "horde" he meant a kind of ideal type as "actual" hordes do not exist… I imagine Nietzsche would half-agree: nothing "actual" exists as we create everything but there is still a herd. Perhaps if Nietzsche had followed Durkheim instead of the other way around, he would have called the herd a "social fact."

The camel, however, if it is ever to become a lion, must embrace solitude: "the spirit becomes a lion who would conquer his freedom and be master in his own desert" (Nietzsche, 1995, I). Durkheim argues that social order and control are needed because humans will always want increasingly more beyond hope of satiation; in other words, humans cannot be freed from an external authority setting limits on them without becoming slaves to their own desires. Durkheim writes, "No living being can be happy, or even exist, unless his needs are adequately related to his means. In other words, if his needs require more than can be allocated to them, or even merely something of a different sort, they will be under continual friction and can only function painfully" (Giddens, 1998, 174). These needs are not material needs, as Durkheim argues, the material needs such as food are easily met. Humans "need" levels of comfort and luxury that have continual risen in level throughout history. These immaterial needs will increase unabated without society's restrictions on them. Class and status place these limits on individual humans by providing the available services in larger degree to some than others. These external restriction thus force those without the means to procure the same services and goods as others to define their happiness in other terms. This is the need for social control for, "[i]t is not human nature which can assign the variable limit necessary to our needs. These are thus unlimited so far as they depend on the individual alone. Irrespective of any external regulatory force, our capacity for feeling is in itself an insatiable and bottomless abyss" (*Ibid*., 175).

This "insatiable" quality of human "nature" is "true," according to Nietzsche, only for the camel. In solitude, the lion learns to "conquer his freedom" and thus be his own master. The lion is irreverent, destructive and wild. In order for the "metamorphoses" to be complete, however, the lion must destroy his previous master and god. Nietzsche describes this in terms of an epic battle:

> Who is the great dragon whom the spirit will no longer call lord and god? "Thou shalt" is the name of the great dragon. But the spirit of the lion says, "I will." "Thou shalt" lies in his way, sparkling like gold, an animal covered with scales; and on every scale shines a golden "thou shalt." Values, thousands of years old, shine on these scales; and thus speaks the mightiest of all dragons: "All value of all things shines on me. All value has long been created, and I am all created value. Verily, there shall be no more 'I will.'" Thus speaks the dragon (*Ibid.*).

Nietzsche did not write who will win as that is to be determined by each lion individually and cannot be written down. The dragon is the force of the collective; it is the morality of the lambs. The lion is a beast of prey and as discussed previously[14] lambs would have the beasts of prey give up their evil ways, join the flock and be good little lambs. It is this covert and ironic domination of lambs with their "good and evil" and subsequent "Thou shalt" that has convinced humanity that slavery is freedom.

Nietzsche's "blonde beast of prey" is something other but not in the sense of Baudrillard. The lion does not want to be different in order to be like everyone else; it is different and yet still has a "self." The self is not destructed

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[14] In Chapter I

by the lack of a socially constructed understood label but freed from it, the self is

allowed to become itself. For this to occur, however, the spirit of the camel is

destroyed in an act of suicide. Nietzsche wrote in *The Gay Science*: "What is

life? …continually shedding something that wants to die. …being cruel and

inexorable against everything about us that is growing old and weak…. …And

yet old Moses said: 'Thou shalt not kill'" (26). The duality between creation

and destruction break down (as do all[15] dualities from Nietzsche's perspective)

because the destruction of the camel is the simultaneous creation of the lion (in

other words: to create the Venus de Milo is to destroy a block of marble; to

destroy a building is to create a pile of rubble—our distinction between

destruction and creation can be useful but, according to Nietzsche, we must not

forget it is an error).

Durkheim, in many places in his writings, also takes up the issues

Nietzsche and Baudrillard raise about society and self-destruction. In an essay

entitled, "The Dualism of Human Nature" (1914), Durkheim argues that,

> Society has its own nature, and consequently, its
> requirements are quite different from those of our nature as
> individuals: the interests of the whole are not necessarily those of
> the part. Therefore, society cannot be formed or maintained
> without our being required to make perpetual and costly sacrifices.
> Because society surpasses us, it obliges us to surpass ourselves;
> and to surpass itself, a being must, to some degree, depart from its
> nature-a departure that does not take place without causing more or
> less painful tensions. (Found at:
> http://www.mdx.ac.uk/www/study/xdur.htm)

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[15] yes all, even the division between higher and lower types: they are constructions, illusions that
break down from the complexities their artificiality cannot "capture."

Oftentimes, sociologists level the charges against someone, "he/she cannot see the forest for the trees," sociologists tend to forget that there *are* trees too though and only see the forest or they see groups of oak or cedar in the forest and then think they see trees. We are both social animals and individuals but in order to exist we must give our social side dominant expression. As such, life requires us to kill the individual in us in order to become more than ourselves. "Thou shalt" must be reified with sacrifice for the good of the whole. According to Durkheim, we are obliged to live with that uneasy feeling that we as individuals could be "more" because to indulge that feeling would lead to physical suicide. The sacrifice is not without its rewards though, through the reification of the collective consciousness we do become more than ourselves. The very formation of society makes us, in a way, transcendent beings through a kind of *unio mystica* with all of society. A. Cuvillier, in his preface to Durkheim's *Pragmatism and Sociology* (1983), argues against the perspective that can be summed up as "Durkheim makes the collective consciousness into a kind of god" that I just invoked and contends this argument is a fallacy based on directionality (XVI). Durkheim put the universal into the collective consciousness not the collective consciousness into the universal. I argue that Cuvillier misses the point; it is not the level of influence the collective consciousness wields over the universe (which is, however, total, as I will argue below) that makes it a god but the level of influence it wields over the individual that does.

Nietzsche seems to have presupposed Durkheim's argument and throws

his lot in with the lion:

> *The super-animal*. The beast in us wants to be lied to;
> morality is a white lie, to keep it from tearing us apart. Without the
> errors inherent in the postulates of morality, man would have
> remained an animal. But as it is he has taken himself to be
> something higher and has imposed stricter laws upon himself. He
> therefore has a hatred of those stages of man that remain closer to
> the animal state, which explains why the slave used to be disdained
> as a nonhuman, a thing (Nietzsche, 1996, 40).

Nietzsche often plays with the concepts of "higher" and "lower" and "higher"

and "deeper" in interesting ways. The blonde beasts of prey are "higher" than

the "lowly" camels because they dive "deeper" into their own depths whereas the

"higher" types embodied by the ascetic priests are less than the lions because

they will themselves to soar "higher" into their *ressentiment* in order to be able to

look down upon others. Think of the difference between deeper and higher in

terms of Nietzsche's "subterranean man" and Dostoevsky's "underground man":

the subterranean man forsakes others to courageously dive into his own depths to

seek understanding to find "humanness" as well as to deconstruct and undermine

old truths; the underground man, however, is cowardly and craven, he goes

underground to hide from others and nurse his resentment that he is not

recognized for his innate "power," that he is not exalted for being "higher" than

all others.

In the above quote, Nietzsche is, tongue-in-cheek, equating the

"highness" of humanity with the same kind of "highness" of the underground

man[16] because he refers to people operating under morality and law as slaves, thus closer to the "animal state." He is saying the "true" function of morality and laws are to restrict the power and will of the individual to maintain the safety and unity of the collective. In this light, the title of the aphorism can be taken in two very different ways; on the one hand, "the super-animal" is making fun of humanity for thinking itself so much greater than all other animals; on the other it is pointing out, with much optimism, what Nietzsche sees as the human potential.

The lion is a destructive force; if it were to kill the dragon it would be unable to create any new truths or values for itself. In this sense, the blonde beast of prey is spirit of nihilism. It is also akin to many of the ideas propounded by some postmodernists such as Baudrillard: it deconstructs and leaves the pieces scattered without rebuilding anything. In the sense of the dichotomy between creation and destruction, the lion destroys merely for the sake of destruction; it has no meaning other than its own freedom and its freedom is like the rubble of a destroyed building, which is still a high goal but there are deeper depths humans can still reach. There is one more stage in Nietzsche's metamorphoses of spirit I have yet to cover: the playful child. Lions prepare the way for the playful child. As Nietzsche writes of this preparation, which is worth quoting at length:

> I welcome all signs that a more virile, warlike age is about
> to begin, which will restore honor to courage above all. For this
> age shall prepare the way for one yet higher, and it shall gather
> strength that this higher age will require some day—the age that

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[16] Nietzsche referred to Dostoevsky as the greatest psychologist.

> will carry heroism into the search for knowledge and that will
> *wage wars* for the sake of ideas and their consequences. To this
> end we now need many preparatory courageous human beings who
> cannot very well leap out of nothing, any more than out of the sand
> and slime of present-day civilization and metropolitanism—human
> beings who know how to be silent, lonely, resolute, and content
> and constant in invisible activities; human beings who are bent on
> seeking in all things for what in them must be *overcome*; human
> beings distinguished as much by cheerfulness, patience,
> unpretentiousness, and contempt for all great vanities as by
> magnanimity in victory and forbearance regarding the small
> vanities of the vanquished… (Nietzsche, 1974, 283).

The "immoralist" Nietzsche has a moral code only by another name; the higher

type of lion brings honor, dignity, nobility and, the thing we desperately need,

authenticity not to society but to life. Durkheim's essential for humanity was

society while Nietzsche's was authentic life.

Once the way is cleared, the playful child will place the last nail in the

coffin of society. Once humanity has learned to control their own freedom they

will have no need for society as it is known today. Durkheim's formulations are

necessary now because humanity is still a herd; it is still made up of camels

waiting to be led with no ability to formulate an "I will."

> But say, my brothers, what can the child do that even the
> lion could not do? Why must the preying lion still become a child?
> The child is innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a
> self-propelled wheel, a first movement, a sacred "Yes." For the
> game of creation, my brothers, a sacred "Yes" is needed: the spirit
> now wills his own will, and he who had been lost to the world now
> conquers his own world (Nietzsche, 1995, 11).

The playful child is the "Overman;" those of this type will be playful conquerors

of a sort not in the sense of military conquest but of perspectival conquest. They

will be able to play with ideas and say yes to all perspectives and through them

create something new. Humanity, when it is ready, will become truly the

creators of their own world. Now we play and create in digital realms but these

are merely distractions from the world we could create in Nietzsche's view.

The Overman is a romantic concept by which it is easy to be trapped; we

cannot try to turn from the slavery of Gesellschaft to be enslaved by pretty

projections of the future. These categories are valuations and as Nietzsche

deconstructs valuations he does not save his own ideas from his noose. He

argued people become what they are (Nietzsche, 1989, EH, II: 9). People are

social construction they cannot "spring out of nowhere" and as such there is a

strong element of determinism to who you are (Nietzsche wrote in the *Gay

Science* it was a fundamental mistake to think that will is free (110)); however,

determinism and agency are not mutually exclusive and embracing who you are

and then moving on from there. Having the courage to see yourself, to dive into

your depths, is the most difficult exercise in agency. Once humanity is

recovered, possibilities of freedom open. As Durkheim wrote of Nietzsche:

> In his [Nietzsche's] view, logical or moral norms are a
> lesser concern. His aim is to free completely both conduct and
> thought. Speculative truth cannot be either impersonal or
> universal. We can only know things by means of processes which
> distort them and, to a greater or lesser degree, transform them into
> our own thoughts. We build them in our own likeness: we give
> them a location in space, we assign them to genera and species,
> and so forth. But none of this exists, not even the link of cause and
> effect. We replace reality with a whole system of symbols and
> fictions, in a word, of illusions… (Durkheim, 1983, 3).

If some individuals in Gesellschaft could learn to be playful and creative and

then remain resilient in those qualities, some of us may be able to operate around

the authority of Gesellschaft to create a niche, not of Overmen—that word is too

big, but of people striving to figure out what it means to be authentically alive.

CHAPTER IV

COMMUNITIES

In the previous two chapters, I have discussed many of the problems of organic society and I have also expressed hope that there could be a way to authenticate individual life. This cannot be done in an anomic fashion and reject the collective wholesale for as Durkheim wrote in *Suicide* (1979):

> If... as has often been said, man is double, that is because social man superimposes himself upon physical man. Social man necessarily presupposes a society which he expresses and serves. If this dissolves, if we no longer feel it in existence and action about and above us, whatever is social in us is deprived of all objective foundation. All that remains is an artificial combination of illusory images, a phantasmagoria vanishing at the least reflection; that is, nothing which can be a goal for our action. Yet this social is the essence of civilized man... Thus we are bereft of reasons for existence; for the only life to which we could cling no longer corresponds to anything actual; the only existence still based upon reality no longer meets our needs (213).

I argue there are other possibilities. We are capable of creating something new from which to act. I propose a new kind of community within organic society. Not one attempting to hearken back to some nostalgic fiction of the past but a playful new possibility. With this in mind, I discuss Tönnies, Durkheim and Nietzsche's concepts of communities before the shift to Gesellschaft. I then look at three models of communities existing already within contemporary society and discuss why these models are insufficient for creating authentic, which includes a sense of endurance, human bonds. Finally I propose, from the ideas of Tönnies and Nietzsche, a possible model for communities that might provide lasting communal solidarity as well as individual freedom.

Tönnies idealizes Gemeinschaft as the best option for humans living together. Whereas Gesellschaft is characterized by rational will, Gemeinschaft is characterized by natural will. Natural will is a holistic thing in which humans are united fully with themselves as well as those around them:

> The sphere of natural will is, in my definition, the essence of all forces that a human being or a group of human beings embody and encompass, in so far as these forces represent a unity the ego of which brings all their outer and inner conditions and changes into relation with itself through its memory and conscience (Tönnies, 2002, 178).

Natural will locates humans in a sphere of possessions. All possessions are produced in common with one another and held in common. The community also has a sense of belongingness where each member feels connected to and a part of every other member. Gemeinschaft has a form of authority, Tönnies contends, but it is one where the ones who rule are severely limited by the bonds with the ruled. They not only will not but cannot overstep their strictly defined bounds of power as there is no model for such "power-grabbing." So, for Tönnies, Gemeinschaft is a social situation where people live in an inclusive, accepting environment with "natural" and intimate bonds of love for one another (Tönnies, 2002).

Another aspect of Gemeinschaft that is important to this discussion is the element of freedom Gemeinschaft creates while still allowing expression of the social nature of humans. Tönnies see there being a common will in Gemeinschaft but, unlike Gesellschaft, that will is not authoritative or oppressive; it has no need to be for Gemeinschaft is not made up of others but

fellows. This difference in social context allows a great deal of agency to emerge: "besides the inherited forces and instincts, the influence of a community as an educating and guiding will is the most important factor determining the condition and formation of every individual habit and disposition. Especially is the family spirit important, but so also is every spirit which is similar to it and has the same effects" (*ibid.*, 47). This is an important distinction; the community is a collective will but one that does not dominate the individual's. The will of Gemeinschaft is a benevolent teacher and guide. As has been stated in previous chapters, Tönnies concept of Gemeinschaft is a rosy ideal but it could not exist in this form under the rubric of such a dominant force as Gesellschaft. As a model, however, Gemeinschaft offers many aspects that would be important to forming a community under Gesellschaft of individuals living in a non-alienated and non-anomic fashion (at least in regards to the community members).

Durkheim has a different perspective of traditional societies in which people remain together out of strong similarities and a powerful collective conscious. These mechanical societies are homogenous and maintain cohesion through religion and strictly repressive laws. Durkheim's view does not paint the rosy picture of community life Tönnies' does. Mechanical societies are not a "natural" form of humanity just as chimpanzees are not humans; they are a step in the evolutionary path we took. In this way, mechanical societies fit Tönnies' reference to Hobbes better than Gesellschaft does—that life in this "state of nature" is "cruel, brutish and short" (Durkheim, 1997; Giddens, 1998).

Mechanical solidarity is more a solidarity by necessity and force rather than by interdependence and restitution. Durkheim adds that those who idealize these traditional societies because they think they are without the division of labor make a presumptuous error. The division of labor is still present in mechanical societies and in many ways it is stricter than in organic society because it is based upon something perceived to be biological: gender. In organic societies, people are at least allowed some modicum of freedom in the decision of where to specialize; for members of mechanical societies, their lives were fairly much determined at birth by the collective consciousness (*ibid*.). As the kind of homogenization Durkheim argued existed in mechanical societies could not exist in organic societies that does not directly further my goal of community construction in Gesellschaft; however, he does point out the importance of strong cohesion in such small groups. Also the need for a collective consciousness that is recognized and respected by the individual members is important is the community is to have any enduring quality.

Nietzsche also romanticizes the past but in a very different way than Tönnies. For him, the time before the slave revolt was one of nobility and freedom for higher types but it was also the time before humanity developed any depth. Nietzsche argues that there were things before the slave revolt that are missing now such as communal life based upon nobility of spirit and the power of individuals:

> The man who has the power to requite goodness with
> goodness, evil with evil, and really does practice requital by being

grateful and vengeful, is called "good." The man who is unpowerful and cannot requite is taken for bad. As a good man, one belongs to the "good," a community that has a communal feeling, because all the individuals are entwined together by their feeling for requital. As a bad man, one belongs to the "bad," to a mass of abject, powerless men who have no communal feeling. The good men are a caste; the bad men are a multitude, like particles of dust. Good and bad are for a time equivalent to noble and base, master and slave. Conversely, one does not regard the enemy as evil: he can requite. In Homer, both the Trojan and the Greek are good. Not the man who inflicts harm on us, but the man who is contemptible, is bad. In the community of the good, goodness is hereditary; it is impossible for a bad man to grow out of such good soil. Should one of the good men nevertheless do something unworthy of good men, one resorts to excuses; one blames God, for example, saying that he struck the good man with blindness and madness (Nietzsche, 1996, 45).

Nietzsche agrees there was strong communal cohesion before the slave revolt with a strict moral code. He argues, however, that this moral code is more human than that of the "contemptible" person whose morality now dominates. There is an implication in the above quote that it is not possible for a community to exist among people who hold to such a morality as the contemptible ones do because communal existence takes a force of will on the part of each member that cannot be expressed by "bad" people.

The slave revolt, however, added depth to humanity. In *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1989), Nietzsche argued that people once had no sense of symbols. A person who was said to be "pure" was one who bathed and that was all. Depth of symbols developed gradually, but with the slave revolt, the depths grew tremendously. Now people can have a visceral reaction to a piece of music

or a painting because the symbols and meanings run so deep within us. Nietzsche wrote that, above all, the slave revolt made humans more interesting.

If Nietzsche's view of humanity is taken "seriously" then the above discussion adds to possible communities in Gesellschaft the factor of who the members are. They must have a sense of dignity that is without resentment. The implication here is that communities under Gesellschaft cannot be formed as a reaction to Gesellschaft; they must be emergent from the individuals for the sake of the community itself. If a community is formed as a reaction to society, then it is formed out of a sick will to power eaten with resentment toward Gesellschaft. Moreover, members must *believe* one another. Sincerity and trust must be taken for granted in such a community because otherwise there would exist a political element that would quickly decay into warring wills to power within the community. So the inauthenticity Baudrillard and Tönnies see in contemporary society must, at the very least, be overcome within the context of the community in order for it to exist.

Again, Tönnies and Durkheim are evaluating communities as organic and mechanical in different ways according to their focus. I argue traditional communities were both organic and mechanical. They may have had strong intimate ties with one another and felt an emotional familial bond with one another based on trust and acceptance (Durkheim does not disallow this in his analysis of Australian tribes in *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*) and in that respects had a more "open" collective consciousness while also maintaining

solidarity through the external force of repressive laws (Tönnies does not disallow this in his analysis of authority in Gemeinschaft). Nietzsche sees communities before the slave revolt in such a way that combines aspects of Tönnies and Durkheim. Communities are based on trust and acceptance while simultaneously having strict moral codes that help provide social cohesion (the code being a sense of honor and dignity). Each sees a different aspect of community as being more important than the others focus though and, as such, both help to perceive a more rounded view of communities. From this description of traditional societies, I move more directly into my focus: the possibility of communities existing in organic society and what those communities entail.

According to Tönnies and Durkheim, communities are being destroyed by or assimilated into contemporary society. For Tönnies, Gemeinschaft is quickly disappearing as Gesellschaft expands looking for new markets and new land. Gemeinschaft has no way of protecting itself against the power of Gesellschaft thus where conflict has occurred, Gemeinschaft is always destroyed eventually. For Durkheim, mechanical societies represent segments of society and are assimilated into the larger organism as it evolves in a "natural" progression.

Both theorists allow that some form of communities survives this assimilation but neither goes into depth on the topic as it seems a side note to their overall discussions. Tönnies points out that such remnants may provide the

basis for a return to a more humane communal life if Gesellschaft were to recede whereas Durkheim sees them as being leftovers with no reason to be excised or assimilated if they are not harming the overall organism (like wisdom teeth). But Durkheim also states that to hope for a return to communal life at some later point in time is naïve at best since the communal models that do still exist are mere renditions of their former selves and a resurgence of such structures would be artificial. Durkheim asserts in a footnote that it is worth noting such communities within organic society do have collective consciousnesses intact: "In order to simplify our exposition we assume that the individual belongs to only one society. In fact we form a part of several groups and there exists in us several collective consciousnesses; but this complication does not in any way change the relationship we are establishing" (Durkheim, 1997, 67 fn 44). I argue that this point does complicate the relationship, however, as the existence of multiple collective consciousnesses in organic society allows for alternatives to an anomic individualizing over-consciousness where people may be able to find communal freedom in connection with one another.

Tönnies also argues many groups under Gesellschaft have their own consciousnesses. Tönnies discusses "artificial individuals" (75; 78); for him, these are mainly businesses that coalesce so as to have a competitive advantage over others. He describes them as being Gemeinschaft-like but simultaneously not-Gemeinschaft as they have their own internal competition and they reason for creating such a "community" is to exploit others. Communities cannot exist as a

means to an end but must be created as ends in and of themselves. Nietzsche offers a view of a fledgling community within larger society in the final part of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1995). Zarathustra brings together many "higher men" for a Dionysian festival. These people were said to have celebrated their mutual "convalescence" from the sickness of the herd. As I wrote, though, it was a fledgling community and one cannot be certain that first night was meant to represent the celebration as such or as the start of a new model of social living other than the herd. Nietzsche's description of the celebration, however, highlights the importance of the pedagogical aspect in such a community as Zarathustra instructed the higher types in how to embrace their freedom.

I argue there are many examples of communities in contemporary society but these tend to express a high degree of artificiality and anomie. I will discuss three such communities and the reasons I think they do not work as models for "authentic" communities from Tönnies and Nietzsche's perspectives. As stated above, Tönnies argues corporations are artificial connections between people and he does not call them communities but the argument can be made as he does call corporations "artificial" individuals and wrote they are "Gemeinschaft-like" (75); he also discusses the existence of labor unions and how these are ineffectual and artificial; lastly I propose a smokers' community as another example of an artificial connection of people under Gesellschaft.

Take as an example, workers in bars. Bar workers have their own niche in the economic structure that separates them from other service industry workers

and thus creates a kind of in-group/out-group dynamic that one could argue is indicative of a community. Moreover, bars tend to be locally owned and thus the large bureaucratic infrastructure of franchised businesses if missing. However, the collective consciousnesses of these bars is an artificial one in the sense that collective consciousness is something that is emergent from a group of people through their everyday interactions and acts as a kind of group identity that is different than the individual identities making it up but if people are selected for their homogenized identities by a master designer (hiring manager or bar owner) in an attempt to "create a certain atmosphere," the collective consciousness is no different from each of its individual parts. It is a simulacra collective identity because it is a copy but the originals cannot be said to be each individuals within the group. For example, if a man has a genetic clone of himself created and he and his partner call the child "son," the child would be a simulacra son. Furthermore, the separate bars' identities are engaged in an artificial role-playing that patrons "go along with" much as an actor is engaged in artificial roles that audiences suspend disbelief in order to enjoy. The difference between the actor and the collective identity of the bar is that patrons do not "suspend disbelief" in order to enjoy a bar. I have often heard patrons refer to a sense of belonging when they go into a preferred bar. This feeling of belongingness is that of the patron's sense of "true self" being embedded into what the patron perceives to be the larger "true self" of the bar. The bar's perceived "self," however, is perceived as authentic by deception and thus forces patrons' selves into a

manipulative, inauthentic embeddedness—to force the patron to enter their

perceived "true self" into a circulation of fictions (which then negates any sense

of "trueness" about patrons' selves) against their knowledge.

The second example is that of labor unions. These communities have had

a great deal of victories aimed at lessening the alienation in the division of labor;

however, as Tönnies wrote:

> In the labor market, workers can unite as sellers of labor
> and by excluding competition compel a higher price. But as
> proprietor of all agencies in which labor is incorporated as a
> subordinate part, the manufacturing person remains, in a natural
> and logically determined way, creator and thus owner of all human
> work produced by outside human labor and sold on the market in
> order to retain this value (Tönnies, 2002, 99).

Now if labors unions dissolve because they prove to be an ineffectual way to deal

with corporations, then these communities existed only as a tool or artificial

individual created to deal with another artificial individual. Over the past few

decades, labor unions have declined and have proven ineffectual over the

dominant will of Gesellschaft. Now it could be argued that this is not a good

example because laws, violence and coercion within the communities were what

led to their downfall; I deny none of this but labor unions still can be said to have

been a teleological community, a means to an end, and not an end in and of itself.

Therefore they do not provide a good communal example under organic society.

There is another problematic model for communities under Gesellschaft:

smokers. Smoking is illustrative of Durkheim's perceived dualism in humanity;

it is, on the one hand, an individual addiction and self-expression and on the

other, it is a social behavior. Smoking breaks down barriers such as class and

status between people to an extent. Take for example a teacher and student, if

both happen to smoke and come upon one another outside there is a high chance

that they will begin a conversation with one another that otherwise (without the

smoking) would not have happened. In an ironic way, smoking makes it

probable that people will stop and "smell the roses" (assuming their olfactory

sense still functions), look around them and take in things. Smoking provides an

excuse to slow down at different times throughout the day. In part due to this

aspect of the habit, smokers tend to congregate together and have discussions

where, it seems, there is a positive correlation with the number of cigarettes

smoked in a row and the depth of the conversation (could be the amount of time

spent in discussion, could be the nicotine…). Smoking allows strangers to meet

based merely on the shared characteristic of being smokers. Often if two

smokers who do not know each other walk out a building at the same time to

have a cigarette, they will talk with one another and open up a human connection

that was not there before. Empathy is also an aspect of smokers' community.

As a smoker, there is a moral obligation to give cigarettes to fellow

smokers who are out of supplies. This is provided that in so doing, you do not

end up going without cigarettes yourself (thus the empathy is not selfless

altruism as the individual with supplies still comes first). Though there are

positive aspects to such a community, there is no strong sense of solidarity.

Smokers do not organize or have a collective consciousness (if they did they

would be able to act against the onslaught of laws banning smoking in some

many public places). The connections made between smokers who share

cigarettes are not usually intimate and strong boundaries remain in place between

individual smokers. These aspects make the smokers' community an example of

community in organic societies but their example does not provide a model for a

community based upon authentic human connection.

In Foucault's essay, "Useless to Revolt," he discusses the reasons people

take the risk of losing their lives for ideas. Foucault wrote, "The impulse by

which a single individual, a group, a minority, or an entire people says, 'I will no

longer obey,' and throws the risk of their life in the face of an authority they

consider unjust seems to me to be something irreducible (Foucault, 1994, 449).

The form of communities I propose here would be a kind of revolt against the

dehumanizing aspects of Gesellschaft discussed in chapter I. But it is important

that the existence of these communities not be understood as rebellions; more it

is that to seek deep bonds with fellows in concert with those fellows as well as a

sense of authenticity in life is to attempt to throw off the authority of an advanced

organic collective consciousness. The revolt I am discussing is not a *physically*

violent one but a spiritually violent attempt to reclaim the ability to define

humanity according to different standards. As I asserted above, these

communities cannot exist if they are for the sake of rebellion; they must exist as

ends. Otherwise they are merely a group expression of resentment and thus no

different from an impotent slave revolt.

There are aspects of mechanical society and Gemeinschaft that remain as artifacts, much like museum pieces, in contemporary society. These aspects can provide a partial template, a fragmented set of perspectives, from which we may be able to playfully create a new model for living in connection with fellows. Some things we cannot recreate, such as the homogeneity of mechanical societies but we cannot "re" create anyway if what we are attempting to make is to be entirely new.

If a community within Gesellschaft is to survive past its inception it must have a strong collective consciousness. The collective consciousness can be created, however, by the other things such a community would need—a strong sense of friendship and a familial-like passage of knowledge and experiences through the generations of members. These aspects could provide solidarity within a community as well as allow for the expression of an authentic individuality and freedom even under the rule of Gesellschaft.

Nietzsche provided an hierarchy of moral sentiments in *Human, All Too Human* (1996) that leads into a discussion of friendship as a mutual exploration of depths. He argues the first step is looking to the future (providing for future needs in the present); the next step is a principle of honor that would tie people to one another in a rigid (one might say mechanical) manner, then there is a personal morality that can emerge where individuals are capable of "hanging their own laws above their heads" and provides solidarity on the basis of mutual respect. Nietzsche then concludes that such a person, "lives and acts as a

collective-individual" (94). This is an important step towards creating a community under Gesellschaft where people can be closely tied with one another while simultaneously embracing their own freedom as individuals.

Another aspect of this collective-individual is self-knowledge. Friendships that are to be based on deep intimate bonds can only work if the friends can dive into their own depths first. As Nietzsche wrote in *Daybreak* (2001), "They were friends but have ceased to be, and they both severed their friendship at the same time: the one because he thought himself too much misunderstood, the other because he thought himself understood too well—and both were deceiving themselves!—for neither understood himself well enough" (287). So to attempt such a community as I am proposing without a strong self-understanding would be a futile venture—the community may begin but it would eventually dissolve. Nietzsche claims that, for the Greeks, the word for relative was also the word for the concept of "best friend" (Nietzsche, 1996, 354). This is important to keep in mind because in this sense of community, the relationships formed would necessarily transcend such concepts as "friend" and even "family." But "family" is probably closer to what I am trying to convey.

The last point I am going to make about friendship is the importance of respecting fellow collective-individuals as ends themselves and not possessions. Nietzsche again, in *The Gay Science* (1974), helps make this point, "Here and there on earth we may encounter a kind of continuation of love in which this possessive craving of two people for each other gives way to a new desire and

lust for possession—a *shared* higher thirst for an ideal above them. But who knows such love? Who has experienced it? Its right name is *friendship* [italics in original]" (14). Fellows in this sense of community cannot view others with this sense of possession for the simple reason that the concept of personal possession ends in anger, jealousy and dissolution. One important point of contention that bears mention here is Nietzsche's split with his teacher Arthur Schopenhauer on the issue of compassion.

The model of community I propose here is heavily dependent upon a Nietzschean analysis of social relations. These relations do not depend upon compassion as Nietzsche saw compassion as fostering weakness in the receiver as well as turning the giver into a kind of master over the receiver. Schopenhauer (1882) saw compassion is love and the wellspring of all morality; thus compassion is the very basis of human cohesion. Once again, the division is one of value. Nietzsche did not want cohesion based on compassion as he saw it morally degrading to the power of the individual. This, however, does not mean cohesion cannot exist but that it must exist upon a different foundation. Friendship offers such a foundation. For Nietzsche, friend and enemy were not opposite but are oftentimes so similar as to deny distinction. Friend and enemy alike, in this sense, push individuals to be stronger and more powerful, refusing to coddle the expression of weakness that would demand compassion between friends. According to Nietzsche, friendship cannot exist on a basis of compassion as it would merely be (assuming compassion is given and taken on

both sides) a constant flipping of the roles master/slave where one is always dominant over another, never an equal.

Aspects of this idea of communal friendship exist even in the simulacra communities that exist in organic society. Service industry jobs such as bar work and restaurant workers allow for a more open human connection than other examples for inauthentic communities in the sense that there is not a preponderance of rational will. A more natural will can be said to permeate these service industry workers as they will not force one another to remain attached to the codified collective consciousness of the business' rules. Minors who are in this industry are allowed to consume alcoholic beverages and food intended for customers' uses is consumed and shared by fellow workers. In this sense, there are noticeable remnants of Gemeinschaft that operate under Gesellschaft; they are, however, becoming fewer and fewer as the dominance of rational will becomes more pervasive (such as the ubiquity of cameras).

Tönnies and Nietzsche place a strong importance on pedagogical pursuits among people and for the construction of a community of individuals within organic society, such a focus on passing on knowledge and learned experience through members would be critical for maintaining strong communal cohesion. The pedagogy of the kind of community I am proposing is based upon that of Gemeinschaft and is intimately tied to the concept of friendship:

> In so far as enjoyment and labor are differentiated according to the very nature and capabilities of individuals— especially in such a manner that one part is entitled to guidance, the other bound to obedience—the constitutes a natural law as an

> order of group life, which assigns a sphere and function,
> incorporating duties and privileges, to every will. Understanding
> is based upon intimate knowledge of each other in so far as this is
> conditioned and advanced by direct interest of one being in the life
> of the other, and readiness to take part in his joy and sorrow
> (Tönnies, 2002, 47).

So in order for such a community to exist and maintain itself, the individuals of the group would need to will it. It would be easy to fall back to the safety net of Gesellschaft and creating a non-alienated, non-anomic community within Gesellschaft would not be an easy task. Members would have to learn to have emotions again in order to care for one another. There is a strong need not for knowledge of fellow for the sake of that knowledge but that members have that knowledge of each other because they are deeply invested and interested in the lives of each other. This aspect of the pedagogy is much more important than the methods by which knowledge is transmitted. Many different methods, as long as they are not alienating, would suffice so long as the importance of the intimacy is remembered and maintained.

A *possible* example of the kind of community I have discussed here is the survivalists who gather together periodically and trust one another with their lives in the face of extreme environmental hazards. I am not a member of one of these communities and only know of them through readings so I offer them as an example only tentatively. The members of these can be said to at least be striving for authenticity as they momentarily reject the materiality and pretension of Gesellschaft momentarily to live a dangerous and challenging life. These groups are self-selective as people will not join without a desire to shed the

shallow aspects of advanced social life for such a dangerous endeavor. Much

survivalist literature discusses the importance of believing in the people who

accompany one another into these minimalist situations. Thus there is a hardness

to the inclusivity of the group where people will not be allowed to join if they are

thought to be going on trips out of some romantic notion or simply to be able to

say, "I did it!" To allow such people to join these survivalist expeditions would

be to invite danger to the community.

There is also a pedagogical aspect to these groups. People must learn

how to survive outside the safety net of organic society from somewhere as much

of the required knowledge is lost through societal living. People must submit

and follow the collective consciousness of the community in order to be able to

later realize their freedom through the community. Furthermore, one would be

hard pressed to rely on someone else for survival and then not form close

intimate bonds with fellows. This is part of the reasoning of radical groups who

send new recruits to survivalist camps to foster group cohesion (as well as to

indoctrinate members with the groups religious-political propaganda). The

groups I am discussing are not of this type. These radical groups are teleological;

they exist as means to ends. The groups I am discussing need no justification

because they exist as ends themselves. Pedagogy and intimate friendship go

hand in hand as Nietzsche and Tönnies imagined in such groups thus allowing

for the possible creation of individuality within a community and then the

realization of freedom through the embracing of the community.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

I am writing this section because the Thesis Office, in their thesis handbook, requires the last chapter of a thesis to be titled "conclusion." I, however, had every intention of ending my thesis with my analysis on communities but I did not want to label that chapter "conclusion;" I thought it better to label it "communities." The more I read the thesis handbook and the mountains of "handouts," which are online and thus have nothing to do with being "handed" or "out" but more like eternally existing in the hyperereal, the more I realized that the thesis office provided me an excellent current example of my analysis in chapter I. Therefore, my compromise with the Thesis Office is a short chapter titled "conclusion" in which I will briefly analyze the normalizing oppressive power "embodied" in the digitized "guide"lines of the Thesis Office Consciousness (TOC) as my conclusion.

There are several ways in which TOC embodies the same principles as Gesellschaft; its rule is final and absolute (graduate students are informed their theses can be rejected based on failure to comply with formatting rules) demonstrating their power over the powerless; its method of rule is precision of form to the exclusion of content (a degree is deferred based upon the precision with which a student sets margins to 1.25 or 1.4 inches not upon what is actually written); and it maintains this rule by injecting fear into its relatively powerless

subjects (I may not get my degree if my margins are not set "correctly" as its website makes abundantly clear).

TOC is an expression of a formal rational will that normalizes each individual students regardless of the student him/herself. Regardless of the subject matter of the thesis, a student must declare his/her area of study in concordance with the records on file at TAMU and each must format his/her thesis in precisely the same way. Now there may be a number of rational, logical reasons for this but my point is that this will of TOC is ultimately an expression of power to which any rational, logical reasons for this "arbitrary" level of precision are subordinate. In demonstration, one need only look at the number of formatting rules, *ad absurdum ad nasseum*, present at its website (http://thesis.tamu.edu/). Students are artificially individualized in many ways; a vita must be added, it must be called "vita," it must contain "the" student's name (as it appears on every other page of the thesis), address and educational background, the student's committee members must be listed on the second page (which must match the required coverpage with the only exception being the listed committee members), etc. Yet all of these things must be done by all students thus creating merely a chimera of individuality. Complacency is guaranteed by an internalized fear on the part of students who may be denied a degree until all formatting conforms with all TOC's rules. In this way, graduate students are normalized through the panoptic gaze of TOC formatting.

One could go much further with this analysis but for me to do so would run the risk of repeating what has already been stated in chapter I of this thesis. TOC simply offers a present example of the pervasiveness of Gesellschaft values in our day-to-day lived experiences (I also cut this short because I have not yet finished all formatting and the internalized presence of the rational will of the clock is weighing heavily at this point in time).

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