unchecked lead of his scientific brilliance.

One of the surest signs that science was having its way is seen in the shifts taking place in this period in European social theory. Social science, as we know it today, was very slow to develop in Europe, where the tradition of classical learning and the effects of elitism on cultural life combined with the effects of the wars to slow progress toward modern social science. Between 1945 and 1963, European social scientists were still learning from the Americans, still necessarily borrowing to pay off the deficit in cultural capital created by the wars. But in the human sciences, it was a very different story. In France, in particular, this was another *age d'or*—this one in the study of human culture. It was what one commentator has called the Age of Structuralism.

Claude Lévi-Strauss, the French anthropologist, is generally considered the founder of structuralism. Borrowing from linguistics, including the ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson, Lévi-Strauss proposed the methods he thought would establish a science of the mind. The Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896–1980) was doing something similar based on laboratory observations of small children. Piaget was one of the founders of modern developmental psychology; but Lévi-Strauss would become, as Susan Sontag put it, the intellectual hero of his day. He argued that cultural life had many of the same structural features as language. It was well known at the time that all languages were con-

stituted as infinitely complex reservoirs of grammatical rules and semantic contents on which the speaker or writer draws while producing competent communications. Lévi-Strauss used this model of language to explain human culture. Culture was equally a vast, enduring social contract. The philosophical implication of his turn to linguistics was, in part, directed against the postwar philosophy of his day—existentialism in general, Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980) in particular.

Structuralism, as a political theory, rejected the notion that the meaningful life was entirely dependent on real life choices made by responsible individuals. This was equivalent to suggesting that linguistic meaning was solely derived from the existential utterances of the individual speaker. Here, the linguistic model brought home the dependence of the individual on the social group. The speaker cannot say whatever he wants because communication works both ways. He or she who must listen can understand what is said only by sharing a competent grasp of the whole of the language spoken. Therefore, structuralism in its simplest terms returned the study of culture to the issues outlined by Durkheim before World War I. The important difference was that Lévi-Strauss was able to be much more precise than Durkheim about the relation between the individual event and the total structure. His advance over Durkheim was due, in large part, to the use of a linguistics model. It may have also derived from his own look at

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the war years. Sartre took one turn from the Nazi occupation of France, Lévi-Strauss another. Both had their reasons. Their two philosophies vied with each other in France. But clearly the day was won, for a while, by structuralism and its variants. It was more a time for rebuilding the structure of culture. There was less evident cause to resist an occupying enemy.

Some might pause on seeing the names of Roland Barthes and Robert K. Merton in the same group. This because Merton has remained the structuralist sociologist, while Barthes changed many times over until his death in 1980. But between 1945 and 1960, when sociology came into its own in the United States and structuralism into its own in France, Merton and Barthes were not far from each other. Though in different ways, each was proposing a structural science, and each proposed to use science to uncover the latent dimensions of meaning. Merton's famous distinction between manifest and latent functions in social life is particularly interesting because it derives much more from Durkheim, even Marx, than from Freud. Barthes's outline of the structural science of human sign systems (*Elements of Semiology*, from which the selection is taken) belies his own debt to the Durkheimian tradition through Lévi-Strauss and Saussure. Later, Barthes would evolve into one of the first public proponents of a social theory based on sexual desire. But in the early 1960s, when Barthes's essay on semiology first appeared, he, like Merton and Lévi-Strauss,

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was proposing a structural study of cultural systems. They all relied on variants of the principle that the latent meanings in culture could best be derived by a rigorous analysis not of their surface appearances but of their deep structural elements.

In a way, Louis Althusser was doing something similar in his structuralist attempt to revise historical materialism as a science by reconstructing the intellectual biography of Marx. Althusser took from his teacher, Gaston Bachelard, his famous idea of an epistemological break in Marx's writings. This was not so much a narrow scholarly argument as a general theoretical claim with political implications. If one could show the break in Marx between the younger philosophical Hegelian in the 1840s and the mature scientist of *Capital* in the 1860s, then it was possible to justify a post-Stalinist Marxism. Why theory? The answer for many Western European Marxists in the 1960s depended on finding some key to unraveling the various strands in the history of Marxism. The idea of a structural break in a cultural or theoretical tradition permitted the leap to a Marxism that could be pure theoretical practice. Today, this seems an entirely circuitous route to a rather straightforward position. But in the days of Althusser's prominence, it was a tricky path to tread between a Left social theory and the threat of being tainted by Stalinism. In his way, Althusser was using science to clear a legitimate place for Marxism in the Cold War era. American social theorists had no such struggle.

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Before McCarthyism, the revelations of Stalin's terrors early in the Soviet regime all but cleared the way of any manifest left-wing social theory. By the time Althusser developed his famous theory in "Ideology and the State Ideological Apparatuses" (1969), his structuralism was, at once, at the pinnacle of the scientific analysis of classic concepts in Marx's writings and just ready to break open the scientific structuralism that soon dissolved into post-structural social theory.

Still, all the structuralists of the time—Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, Merton, and Althusser—were, in different ways, seeking to accomplish much the same goal. They sought a new, deeper method for defining the science of social and cultural life. They had learned well the lessons of the inter-war years. The individual, left alone, could not account for social action. They each pressed social theory beyond the merely visible. Surprisingly, they each were still positive in their outlook, and their method. They believed in the reasonable discovery and explanation of social facts. Others were less optimistic.

One of few positive consequences of the Nazi curse in Europe was that so many European intellectuals fled Hitler's terror to settle in the United Kingdom and the United States. Today's New School for Social Research (now regrettably named New School University) in New York City became one of the havens for European intellectuals at risk. Lévi-Strauss spent time there, where he encountered Roman Jakobson, and both of them were associated with its *École libre*

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des hautes études. Then too, of course, there were the German critical theorists in exile at and around the New School in New York City. Among the many enduring effects of writers like Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm and many others was a chastening effect on American social theory. Though the post-war home of the critical theorists would again be in Germany, they left behind in the United States important theoretical ideas. Their critique of mass culture, their method of borrowing widely and reworking traditional social theories, and perhaps most important of all their deep critique of the traditional structures of science and knowledge never after were far from left social thinking in the United States. Much later, nearer the end of the twentieth century, critical social theory would be a staple of American social criticism as, in turn, the German thinkers would borrow from traditions like pragmatism that were more indigenously American. After the brief American Century had run its course, social theory would increasingly become a North Atlantic practice as the confident American empiricism would yield, slowly but surely, to the more native European theoretical approaches.

Reservations and Objections

In America, remarkably soon after the post–World War II vision of an American century of unparalleled brilliance, there arose another, more traditional social scientific trend that was, perhaps, less severe but just as concerned as

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the German school. One of the first and most enduring leaders of this trend was David Riesman. His *Lonely Crowd* appeared in 1950. Already, Riesman was rethinking received wisdom about modernization. He took for granted the link between individual and social character, just as he accepted the premise that the world was moving steadily along the path of economic development. Where he differed was in his judgment about what turned out to be Rostow's fifth stage of mass consumption. Although Rostow had reservations, nothing he said ten years after *Lonely Crowd* was as deeply critical of modern America as was Reisman. Riesman believed America had lost its original character. In place of the inner-directed entrepreneur, the ideal type of modern man, instead, Riesman saw an Other-directed conformist dominating America in the postwar years. He was one of the first to force discussion of a topic well understood today. But then, in the Golden Age, it was yet another shock to have to consider, on top of everything else, that Americans had lost the very moral character that had set them apart.

About the same time, Erik Erikson's *Childhood and Society* (1950) outlined a theory of social character based on studies of the psychological development of youth. His argument that an identity crisis was developmentally necessary seemed to some to lend further support to Riesman's claims. Ten years later, when parents were repulsed by the politics and culture (to say nothing of the attire) of their children, identity crisis

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took on an even more explicit social importance. Edwin M. Lemert's 1951 book, *Social Pathology*, set forth the radical theory that social deviance was a consequence of the deviant's reaction to how others viewed and treated him. Lemert's social theory of identity formation was, thereby, clearly in tune with the ideas of Erving Goffman. Goffman's first writings contributed to the growing suspicion that older beliefs in the moral integrity of individuals were no longer entirely satisfactory. His first book, *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), gave popular culture the expression "impression-management." Goffman held the view that individuals in social interactions were engaged in the artful management of what others thought of them. In contrast to Erikson and Riesman, however, Goffman said little about the personal and social politics of his times. He wrote as though suspended in some transcendent observational space. But he introduced the radical idea that, far from being inner-directed, human beings in society were by nature oriented more to social others than to pursuing the dictates of some inner moral self. With Goffman, in the 1950s, William James's ideas—that the individual has as many selves as there are individuals who recognize him—took on a different, more historically acute meaning. In the 1890s, this was an interesting idea. In the 1950s, it was a social critique.

At about the same time, in Paris, a little-known psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, was already rewriting traditional Freudian theories in

order to establish a similar notion. The unconscious life could only be the interplay of natural desires in the discourse of the Other in the other. As with his structuralist contemporaries, Lacan saw the powerful mystery of language as the field of human action. Not an easily decoded idea, but obviously one not entirely at odds with Goffman's social theory of the self as the management of the expressive order lying between social individuals. Later, Lacan became a celebrity in the cultural Left, which had no definite shape in the 1950s.

But in 1949, the notion that seems so hard to translate from Lacan was made perfectly clear by Simone de Beauvoir. In *The Second Sex* (1949), the classic text of modern feminism, she left no doubt about the ways in which woman was Other to man, nor how the whole of Western culture had been built on and around this principle. Here, for the first time, was a feminist social theory that explained the situation of women with reference to Western civilization itself. Others, like Anna Julia Cooper and Charlotte Gilman, had begun this effort. But Simone de Beauvoir was the first to complete such a critique in the language of the culture she attacked. Not much later, Césaire and Fanon, who were among the first postcolonial writers to be read seriously in the West, did much the same with respect to the colonizing instincts of European cultures. It would be easy to overlook the fact that Martin Luther King's philosophy of nonviolence was itself borrowed from the first great

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social critic of Western culture in the twentieth century. Gandhi's ideal of Satyagraha, nonviolent force, was defined by his first-hand understanding of the violent impulses of the European colonialist. King's use of that theory is therefore an implicit social theory of the colonializing instincts of the white man in the United States.

By the end of the period, Fanon was already read in the United States and Europe. In 1963, the year JFK died, Betty Friedan had given words to those millions of women trapped in little suburban houses in the 1950s. She gave the problem a name. *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) immediately became the *locus classicus* of American feminism. The year before, 1962, leaders of SDS began to circulate copies of a social theory of democratic society. *The Port Huron Statement* was, in its day, the manifesto of a new political generation. Its ideal was a participatory democracy in which the social structures of political life would be consistent with, and supportive of, the deepest aspirations of the human individual. In this, the *Port Huron Statement* reflected the political and social philosophy of C. Wright Mills, who was a source of inspiration and ideas for many of those who had written the statement. In 1966 *The Black Panther Party Platform* represented a still more radical version of a new social order of freedom: "We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace." Though the Black Panther's terrified white liberals, they in fact wanted much the same.

In 1959, Mills's *Sociological Imagination* was

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the embodiment of the tensions of the age. On the one hand, he caustically denounced the pretenses of social science—mindless empiricism and abstract theorizing. To this day, his parody of Parsons remains the standard for sociological sarcasm. Yet his actual idea of the sociological imagination inspired student radicals from a place well within the culture of liberalism. Mills saw the sociologist as the new model of human liberation in that time—the individual whose sociological knowledge of the historical structures of society enhanced individual life with responsible awareness of the links between personal life and public action. Though his earlier books, particularly *Power Elite*, were sharp critical theories of American society, his ideal of the sociological imagination still held out hope that if knowledge were wrenched away from the pretenses of apolitical social science, it might find its way back as power in the lives of ordinary people.

In 1962–1963, just before the Golden Age ended, the most radical young people in the United States, in the former colonial world, and in Europe still believed in the power of knowledge. This faith would have a troubled time in the years to come.

C. L.

Notes

Page 218: The Jeffers poem, "Shine, Perishing Republic," is used by Walter Russell Mead as the theme and source of the title for his *Mortal Splendor* (Houghton Mifflin, 1987).

Page 220: The idea of linking women's experience in the suburbs to McCarthyism is from Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward*

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Bound (Basic Books, 1988).

Page 221: George Kennan, "Long Telegram," *National Security Archive*. Part 2 at http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/coldwar/documents/episode-1/kennan.htm

Other quoted material is from the selections following.

The Golden Age

Winston Churchill (1874–1965) was born at Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire—thus, and obviously, to an aristocratic family. His younger years were given over to military service as an officer in the British army. He served in India, Sudan, and South Africa. But his true career was in politics. From 1940 to 1945, he was the Conservative Party Prime Minister of Great Britain. Churchill was, thus, with Franklin D. Roosevelt, leader of the North Atlantic forces in the Second World War against Nazi Germany. After the war, he became Leader of the Opposition upon the defeat of his Conservative Party. As he had warned of the dangers of Hitler's Germany before the war, and after he warned the West of the dangers of Stalin's Soviet Union —most famously in his Iron Curtain Speech on March 5, 1946 at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. The selection here is from that speech, which warned of and defined the enduring Cold War breach between the Atlantic powers and their wartime ally on the Eastern Front, the Soviet Union. Churchill continued to serve in public life, again becoming Prime Minister from 1951 to 1955. Though a stroke in 1953 slowed him, he remained a force to be reckoned with,

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especially as the author of a six-volume memoir and the four-volume *The History of the English-Speaking People*, which cover the long story from the Roman invasion of Britain in 55 BCE through the beginning of the First World War in 1914. In 1953 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for his writings and public oratory.

The Cold War*

Winston Churchill (1946)

A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lighted by the Allied victory. Nobody knows what Soviet Russia and its Communist international organisation intends to do in the immediate future, or what are the limits, if any, to their expansive and proselytising tendencies. I have a strong admiration and regard for the valiant Russian people and for my wartime comrade, Marshal Stalin. There is deep sympathy and goodwill in Britain—and I doubt not here also—towards the peoples of all the Russias and a resolve to persevere through many differences and rebuffs in establishing lasting friendships. We understand the Russian need to be secure on her western frontiers by the removal of all possibility of German aggression. We welcome Russia to her rightful place among the leading nations of the world. We welcome her flag upon the seas. Above all, we welcome constant, frequent and growing contacts between the Russian people and our own people on both sides of the Atlantic. It is my duty however, for I am sure you would

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wish me to state the facts as I see them to you, to place before you certain facts about the present position in Europe.

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow. Athens alone—Greece with its immortal glories—is free to decide its future at an election under British, American and French observation. The Russian-dominated Polish Government has been encouraged to make enormous and wrongful inroads upon Germany, and mass expulsions of millions of Germans on a scale grievous and undreamed-of are now taking place. The Communist parties, which were very small in all these Eastern States of Europe, have been raised to preeminence and power far beyond their numbers and are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control. Police governments are prevailing in nearly every case, and so far, except in Czechoslovakia, there is no true democracy.

Turkey and Persia are both profoundly alarmed and disturbed at the claims which are being made upon them and at the pressure being exerted by the Moscow Government. An attempt

is being made by the Russians in Berlin to build up a quasi-Communist party in their zone of Occupied Germany by showing special favours to groups of left-wing German leaders. At the end of the fighting last June, the American and British Armies withdrew westwards, in accordance with an earlier agreement, to a depth at some points of 150 miles upon a front of nearly four hundred miles, in order to allow our Russian allies to occupy this vast expanse of territory which the Western Democracies had conquered.

If now the Soviet Government tries, by separate action, to build up a pro-Communist Germany in their areas, this will cause new serious difficulties in the British and American zones, and will give the defeated Germans the power of putting themselves up to auction between the Soviets and the Western Democracies. Whatever conclusions may be drawn from these facts—and facts they are—this is certainly not the Liberated Europe we fought to build up. Nor is it one which contains the essentials of permanent peace.

The safety of the world requires a new unity in Europe, from which no nation should be permanently outcast. It is from the quarrels of the strong parent races in Europe that the world wars we have witnessed, or which occurred in former times, have sprung. Twice in our own lifetime we have seen the United States, against their wishes and their traditions, against arguments, the force of which it is impossible not to comprehend, drawn by irresistible forces, into

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these wars in time to secure the victory of the good cause, but only after frightful slaughter and devastation had occurred. Twice the United States has had to send several millions of its young men across the Atlantic to find the war; but now war can find any nation, wherever it may dwell between dusk and dawn. Surely we should work with conscious purpose for a grand pacification of Europe, within the structure of the United Nations and in accordance with its Charter. That I feel is an open cause of policy of very great importance.

In front of the iron curtain which lies across Europe are other causes for anxiety. In Italy the Communist Party is seriously hampered by having to Support the Communist-trained Marshal Tito's claims to former Italian territory at the head of the Adriatic. Nevertheless the future of Italy hangs in the balance. Again one cannot imagine a regenerated Europe without a strong France. All my public life I have worked for a Strong France and I never lost faith in her destiny, even in the darkest hours. I will not lose faith now. However, in a great number of countries, far from the Russian frontiers and throughout the world, Communist fifth columns are established and work in complete unity and absolute obedience to the directions they receive from the Communist centre. Except in the British Commonwealth and in the United States where Communism is in its infancy, the Communist parties or fifth columns constitute a growing challenge and peril to Christian civilisa-

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tion. These are sombre facts for anyone to have to recite on the morrow of a victory gained by so much splendid comradeship in arms and in the cause of freedom and democracy; but we should be most unwise not to face them squarely while time remains.

Daniel Bell (1919–2011), grew up on New York City's Lower East Side, the son of working people. He finished high school at age sixteen and entered City College, where, like many young New York intellectuals, he was part of the anti-Communist Left. After graduating from college in 1938, he studied for his Ph.D. at Columbia University, then taught briefly at the University of Chicago. From 1948 to 1958, he wrote for *Fortune* magazine while maintaining ties with the academy. In 1959, Bell joined the faculty of Harvard University, where he has remained until the present. Bell has written numerous books and articles, including *The End of Ideology* (1960), from which the selection is taken, and *The Coming Post-Industrial Society* (1973). Though Bell defends the scholar against the intellectual in "The End of Ideology in the West," many would consider him every bit the intellectual by another definition—a serious, informed, and intelligent general social theorist of modern society. Obviously, by the time he began to write for *Fortune* in 1948, Bell had already relinquished the leftism of his youth. Yet as one can see from this text, the more centrist, even conservative instincts of his adult years were still informed

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by, and directed against, Marxist social theory. Bell's writings are taken seriously, for good reason, by social theorists from many points in the political spectrum.

The End of Ideology in the West*

Daniel Bell (1960)

This age, too, can add appropriate citations—made all the more wry and bitter by the long period of bright hope that preceded it—for the two decades between 1930 and 1950 have an intensity peculiar in written history: world-wide economic depression and sharp class struggles; the rise of fascism and racial imperialism in a country that had stood at an advanced stage of human culture; the tragic self-immolation of a revolutionary generation that had proclaimed the finer ideals of man; destructive war of a breadth and scale hitherto unknown; the bureaucratized murder of millions in concentration camps and death chambers.

For the radical intellectual who had articulated the revolutionary impulses of the past century and a half, all this has meant an end to chiliastic hopes, to millenarianism, to apocalyptic thinking—and to ideology. For ideology, which once was a road to action, has come to be a dead end.

Whatever its origins among the French *philosophes*, ideology as a way of translating ideas into action was given its sharpest phrasing by the left Hegelians, by Feuerbach and by Marx. For them, the function of philosophy was

to be critical, to rid the present of the past. ("The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living," wrote Marx.) Feuerbach, the most radical of all the left Hegelians, called himself Luther II. Man would be free, he said, if we could demythologize religion. The history of all thought was a history of progressive disenchantment, and if finally, in Christianity, God had been transformed from a parochial deity to a universal abstraction, the function of criticism—using the radical tool of alienation, or self-estrangement—was to replace theology by anthropology, to substitute Man for God. Philosophy was to be directed at life, man was to be liberated from the "specter of abstractions" and extricated from the bind of the supernatural. Religion was capable only of creating "false consciousness." Philosophy would reveal "true consciousness." And by placing Man, rather than God, at the center of consciousness, Feuerbach sought to bring the "infinite into the finite."

If Feuerbach "descended into the world," Marx sought to transform it. And where Feuerbach proclaimed anthropology, Marx, reclaiming a root insight of Hegel, emphasized History and historical contexts. The world was not generic Man, but men; and of men, classes of men. Men differed because of their class position. And truths were class truths. All truths, thus, were masks, or partial truths, but the real truth was the revolutionary truth. And this real truth was rational.

Thus a dynamic was introduced into the anal-

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ysis of ideology, and into the creation of a new ideology. By demythologizing religion, one recovered (from God and sin) the potential in man. By the unfolding of history, rationality was revealed. In the struggle of classes, true consciousness, rather than false consciousness, could be achieved. But if truth lay in action, one must act. The left Hegelians, said Marx, were only *litterateurs*. (For them a magazine was "practice.") For Marx, the only real action was in politics. But action, revolutionary action as Marx conceived it, was not mere social change. It was, in its way, the resumption of all the old millenarian, chiliastic ideas of the Anabaptists. It was, in its new vision, a new ideology.

Ideology is the conversion of ideas into social levers. Without irony, Max Lerner once entitled a book "Ideas Are Weapons." This is the language of ideology. It is more. It is the commitment to the consequences of ideas....

A social movement can rouse people when it can do three things: simplify ideas, establish a claim to truth, and, in the union of the two, demand a commitment to action. Thus, not only does ideology transform ideas, it transforms people as well. The nineteenth-century ideologies, by emphasizing inevitability and by infusing passion into their followers, could compete with religion. By identifying inevitability with progress, they linked up with the positive values of science. But more important, these ideologies were linked, too, with the rising class of intellectuals, which was seeking to assert a place in

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society.

The differences between the intellectual and the scholar, without being invidious, are important to understand. The scholar has a bounded field of knowledge, a tradition, and seeks to find his place in it, adding to the accumulated, tested knowledge of the past as to a mosaic. The scholar, qua scholar, is less involved with his "self." The intellectual begins with *his* experience, *his* individual perceptions of the world, *his* privileges and deprivations, and judges the world by these sensibilities. Since his own status is of high value, his judgments of the society reflect the treatment accorded him. In a business civilization, the intellectual felt that the wrong values were being honored, and rejected the society. Thus there was a "built-in" compulsion for the free-floating intellectual to become political. The ideologies, therefore, which emerged from the nineteenth century had the force of the intellectuals behind them. They embarked upon what William James called "the faith ladder," which in its vision of the future cannot distinguish possibilities from probabilities, and converts the latter into certainties.

Today, these ideologies are exhausted. The events behind this important sociological change are complex and varied. Such calamities as the Moscow Trials, the Nazi-Soviet pact, the concentration camps, the suppression of the Hungarian workers, form one chain; such social changes as the modification of capitalism, the rise of the Welfare State, another. In philosophy,

one can trace the decline of simplistic, rationalistic beliefs and the emergence of new stoic-theological images of man, e.g. Freud, Tillich, Jaspers, etc. This is not to say that such ideologies as communism in France and Italy do not have a political weight, or a driving momentum from other sources. But out of all this history, one simple fact emerges: for the radical intelligentzia, the old ideologies have lost their "truth" and their power to persuade.

Few serious minds believe any longer that one can set down "blue-prints" and through "social engineering" bring about a new utopia of social harmony. At the same time, the older "counter-beliefs" have lost their intellectual force as well. Few "classic" liberals insist that the State should play no role in the economy, and few serious conservatives, at least in England and on the Continent, believe that the Welfare State is "the road to serfdom." In the Western world, therefore, there is today a rough consensus among intellectuals on political issues: the acceptance of a Welfare State; the desirability of decentralized power; a system of mixed economy and of political pluralism. In that sense, too, the ideological age has ended.

And yet, the extraordinary fact is that while the old nineteenth-century ideologies and intellectual debates have become exhausted, the rising states of Asia and Africa are fashioning new ideologies with a different appeal for their own people. These are the ideologies of industrialization, modernization, Pan-Arabism, color,

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and nationalism. In the distinctive difference between the two kinds of ideologies lies the great political and social problems of the second half of the twentieth century. The ideologies of the nineteenth century were universalistic, humanistic, and fashioned by intellectuals. The mass ideologies of Asia and Africa are parochial, instrumental, and created by political leaders. The driving forces of the old ideologies were social equality and, in the largest sense, freedom. The impulsions of the new ideologies are economic development and national power.

And in this appeal, Russia and China have become models. The fascination these countries exert is no longer the old idea of the free society, but the new one of economic growth. And if this involves the wholesale coercion of the population and the rise of new elites to drive the people, the new repressions are justified on the ground that without such coercions economic advance cannot take place rapidly enough. And even for some of the liberals of the West, "economic development" has become a new ideology that washes away the memory of old disillusionments.

It is hard to quarrel with an appeal for rapid economic growth and modernization, and few can dispute the goal, as few could ever dispute an appeal for equality and freedom. But in this powerful surge—and its swiftness is amazing—any movement that instates such goals risks the sacrifice of the present generation for a future that may see only a new exploitation by a new

elite. For the newly-risen countries, the debate is not over the merits of Communism—the content of that doctrine has long been forgotten by friends and foes alike. The question is an older one: whether new societies can grow by building democratic institutions and allowing people to make choices—and sacrifices—voluntarily, or whether the new elites, heady with power, will impose totalitarian means to transform their countries. Certainly in these traditional and old colonial societies where the masses are apathetic and easily manipulated, the answer lies with the intellectual classes and their conceptions of the future.

Thus one finds, at the end of the fifties, a disconcerting caesura. In the West, among the intellectuals, the old passions are spent. The new generation, with no meaningful memory of these old debates, and no secure tradition to build upon, finds itself seeking new purposes within a framework of political society that has rejected, intellectually speaking, the old apocalyptic and chiliastic visions. In the search for a "cause," there is a deep, desperate, almost pathetic anger.

W. W. Rostow (1916–2003) studied at Yale, where he received his B.A. in 1936 and his Ph.D. in 1940. He was also a Rhodes Scholar before serving in the Office of Strategic Services during World War II. From 1950 to 1961, he was professor of economic history at MIT. Rostow was special assistant to President John F. Kennedy in

1961, then served on the Policy Planning Council in the Department of State for five years. From 1966 to 1969, during the worst years of the war in Vietnam, he again served as special assistant in the White House. After his service under President Lyndon Johnson, he became professor of economics and history at the University of Texas. Rostow has written many books, including *Process of Economic Growth* (1952) and the more popular *Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960), from which the selection is taken. His superior academic credentials, along with his years of service in government, lent particular weight to his theory of economic modernization. He was one of the best and brightest to join the Kennedy administration in 1960, bringing with him a philosophy of economic history that was perfectly consistent with Kennedy's goal of reinvigorating the American Golden Age.

Modernization: Stages of Growth*

W. W. Rostow (1960)

The Traditional Society

First, the traditional society. A traditional society is one whose structure is developed within limited production functions, based on pre-Newtonian science and technology, and on pre-Newtonian attitudes towards the physical world. Newton is here used as a symbol for that watershed in history when men came widely to believe that the external world was subject to a

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few knowable laws, and was systematically capable of productive manipulation.

The conception of the traditional society is, however, in no sense static; and it would not exclude increases in output. Acreage could be expanded; some ad hoc technical innovations, often highly productive innovations, could be introduced in trade, industry and agriculture; productivity could rise with, for example, the improvement of irrigation works or the discovery and diffusion of a new crop. But the central fact about the traditional society was that a ceiling existed on the level of attainable output per head. This ceiling resulted from the fact that the potentialities which flow from modern science and technology were either not available or not regularly and systematically applied.

Both in the longer past and in recent times the story of traditional societies was thus a story of endless change. The area and volume of trade within them and between them fluctuated, for example, with the degree of political and social turbulence, the efficiency of central rule, the upkeep of the roads. Population—and, within limits, the level of life—rose and fell not only with the sequence of the harvests, but with the incidence of war and of plague. Varying degrees of manufacture developed; but, as in agriculture, the level of productivity was limited by the inaccessibility of modern science, its applications, and its frame of mind.

Generally speaking, these societies, because of the limitation on productivity, had to devote

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a very high proportion of their resources to agriculture; and flowing from the agricultural system there was an hierarchical social structure, with relatively narrow scope—but some scope—for vertical mobility. Family and clan connexions played a large role in social organization. The value system of these societies was generally geared to what might be called a long-run fatalism; that is, the assumption that the range of possibilities open to one's grandchildren would be just about what it had been for one's grandparents. But this long-run fatalism by no means excluded the short-run option that, within a considerable range, it was possible and legitimate for the individual to strive to improve his lot, within his lifetime. In Chinese villages, for example, there was an endless struggle to acquire or to avoid losing land, yielding a situation where land rarely remained within the same family for a century.

Although central political rule—in one form or another—often existed in traditional societies, transcending the relatively self-sufficient regions, the centre of gravity of political power generally lay in the regions, in the hands of those who owned or controlled the land. The landowner maintained fluctuating but usually profound influence over such central political power as existed, backed by its entourage of civil servants and soldiers, imbued with attitudes and controlled by interests transcending the regions.

In terms of history then, with the phrase "traditional society" we are grouping the whole pre-

Newtonian world: the dynasties in China; the civilization of the Middle East and the Mediterranean; the world of medieval Europe. And to them we add the post-Newtonian societies which, for a time, remained untouched or unmoved by man's new capability for regularly manipulating his environment to his economic advantage.

To place these infinitely various, changing societies in a single category, on the ground that they all shared a ceiling on the productivity of their economic techniques, is to say very little indeed. But we are, after all, merely clearing the way in order to get at the subject of this book; that is, the post-traditional societies, in which each of the major characteristics of the traditional society was altered in such ways as to permit regular growth: its politics, social structure, and (to a degree) its values, as well as its economy.

The Preconditions for Take-Off

The second stage of growth embraces societies in the process of transition; that is, the period when the preconditions for take-off are developed; for it takes time to transform a traditional society in the ways necessary for it to exploit the fruits of modern science, to fend off diminishing returns, and thus to enjoy the blessings and choices opened up by the march of compound interest.

The preconditions for take-off were initially developed, in a clearly marked way, in Western Europe of the late seventeenth and early

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eighteenth centuries as the insights of modern science began to be translated into new production functions in both agriculture and industry, in a setting given dynamism by the lateral expansion of world markets and the international competition for them. But all that lies behind the break-up of the Middle Ages is relevant to the creation of the preconditions for take-off in Western Europe. Among the Western European states, Britain, favoured by geography, natural resources, trading possibilities, social and political structure, was the first to develop fully the preconditions for take-off.

The more general case in modern history, however, saw the stage of preconditions arise not endogenously but from some external intrusion by more advanced societies. These invasions—literal or figurative—shocked the traditional society and began or hastened its undoing; but they also set in motion ideas and sentiments which initiated the process by which a modern alternative to the traditional society was constructed out of the old culture.

The idea spreads not merely that economic progress is possible, but that economic progress is a necessary condition for some other purpose, judged to be good: be it national dignity, private profit, the general welfare, or a better life for the children. Education, for some at least, broadens and changes to suit the needs of modern economic activity. New types of enterprising men come forward—in the private economy, in government, or both—willing to mobilize

savings and to take risks in pursuit of profit or modernization. Banks and other institutions for mobilizing capital appear. Investment increases, notably in transport, communications, and in raw materials in which other nations may have an economic interest. The scope of commerce, internal and external, widens. And, here and there, modern manufacturing enterprise appears, using the new methods. But all this activity proceeds at a limited pace within an economy and a society still mainly characterized by traditional low-productivity methods, by the old social structure and values, and by the regionally based political institutions that developed in conjunction with them.

In many recent cases, for example, the traditional society persisted side by side with modern economic activities, conducted for limited economic purposes by a colonial or quasi-colonial power.

Although the period of transition—between the traditional society and the take-off—saw major changes in both the economy itself and in the balance of social values, a decisive feature was often political. Politically, the building of an effective centralized national state—on the basis of coalitions touched with a new nationalism, in opposition to the traditional landed regional interests, the colonial power, or both, was a decisive aspect of the preconditions period; and it was, almost universally, a necessary condition for take-off.

The Take-Off

We come now to the great watershed in the life of modern societies: the third stage in this sequence, the take-off. The take-off is the interval when the old blocks and resistances to steady growth are finally overcome. The forces making for economic progress, which yielded limited bursts and enclaves of modern activity, expand and come to dominate the society. Growth becomes its normal condition. Compound interest becomes built, as it were, into its habits and institutional structure.

In Britain and the well-endowed parts of the world populated substantially from Britain (the United States, Canada etc.) the proximate stimulus for take-off was mainly (but not wholly) technological. In the more general case, the take-off awaited not only the build-up of social overhead capital and a surge of technological development in industry and agriculture, but also the emergence to political power of a group prepared to regard the modernization of the economy as serious, high-order political business.

During the take-off, the rate of effective investment and savings may rise from, say, 5% of the national income to 10% or more; although where heavy social overhead capital investment was required to create the technical preconditions for take-off the investment rate in the preconditions period could be higher than 5%, as, for example, in Canada before the 1890's and Argentina before 1914. In such cases capi-

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tal imports usually formed a high proportion of total investment in the preconditions period and sometimes even during the take-off itself, as in Russia and Canada during their pre-1914 railway booms.

During the take-off new industries expand rapidly, yielding profits a large proportion of which are reinvested in new plants; and these new industries, in turn, stimulate, through their rapidly expanding requirement for factory workers, the services to support them, and for other manufactured goods, a further expansion in urban areas and in other modern industrial plants. The whole process of expansion in the modern sector yields an increase of income in the hands of those who not only save at high rates but place their savings at the disposal of those engaged in modern sector activities. The new class of entrepreneurs expands; and it directs the enlarging flows of investment in the private sector. The economy exploits hitherto unused natural resources and methods of production.

New techniques spread in agriculture as well as industry, as agriculture is commercialized, and increasing numbers of farmers are prepared to accept the new methods and the deep changes they bring to ways of life. The revolutionary changes in agricultural productivity are an essential condition for successful take-off; for modernization of a society increases radically its bill for agricultural products. In a decade or two both the basic structure of the economy and the

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social and political structure of the society are transformed in such a way that a steady rate of growth can be, thereafter, regularly sustained....

One can approximately allocate the take-off of Britain to the two decades after 1783; France and the United States to the several decades preceding 1860; Germany, the third quarter of the nineteenth century; Japan, the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century; Russia and Canada the quarter-century or so preceding 1914; while during the 1950's India and China have, in quite different ways, launched their respective take-offs.

The Drive to Maturity

After take-off there follows a long interval of sustained if fluctuating progress, as the now regularly growing economy drives to extend modern technology over the whole front of its economic activity. Some 10–20% of the national income is steadily invested, permitting output regularly to outstrip the increase in population. The make-up of the economy changes unceasingly as technique improves, new industries accelerate, older industries level off. The economy finds its place in the international economy: goods formerly imported are produced at home; new import requirements develop, and new export commodities to match them. The society makes such terms as it will with the requirements of modern efficient production, balancing off the new against the older values and institutions, or revising the latter in such ways as to support

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rather than to retard the growth process.

Some sixty years after take-off begins (say, forty years after the end of take-off) what may be called maturity is generally attained. The economy, focused during the take-off around a relatively narrow complex of industry and technology, has extended its range into more refined and technologically often more complex processes; for example, there may be a shift in focus from the coal, iron, and heavy engineering industries of the railway phase to machine-tools, chemicals, and electrical equipment. This, for example, was the transition through which Germany, Britain, France, and the United States had passed by the end of the nineteenth century or shortly thereafter....

Formally, we can define maturity as the stage in which an economy demonstrates the capacity to move beyond the original industries which powered its take-off and to absorb and to apply efficiently over a very wide range of its resources—if not the whole range—the most advanced fruits of (then) modern technology. This is the stage in which an economy demonstrates that it has the technological and entrepreneurial skills to produce not everything, but anything that it chooses to produce. It may lack (like contemporary Sweden and Switzerland, for example) the raw materials or other supply conditions required to produce a given type of output economically; but its dependence is a matter of economic choice or political priority rather than a technological or institutional necessity.

Historically, it would appear that something like sixty years was required to move a society from the beginning of take-off to maturity. Analytically the explanation for some such interval may lie in the powerful arithmetic of compound interest applied to the capital stock, combined with the broader consequences for a society's ability to absorb modern technology of three successive generations living under a regime where growth is the normal condition. But, clearly, no dogmatism is justified about the exact length of the interval from take-off to maturity.

The Age of High Mass-Consumption

We come now to the age of high mass-consumption, where, in time, the leading sectors shift towards durable consumers' goods and services: a phase from which Americans are beginning to emerge; whose not unequivocal joys Western Europe and Japan are beginning energetically to probe; and with which Soviet society is engaged in an uneasy flirtation.

As societies achieved maturity in the twentieth century two things happened: real income per head rose to a point where a large number of persons gained a command over consumption which transcended basic food, shelter, and clothing; and the structure of the working force changed in ways which increased not only the proportion of urban to total population, but also the proportion of the population working in offices or in skilled factory jobs—aware of and anxious to acquire the consumption fruits of a

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mature economy.

In addition to these economic changes, the society ceased to accept the further extension of modern technology as an overriding objective. It is in this post-maturity stage, for example, that, through the political process, Western societies have chosen to allocate increased resources to social welfare and security. The emergence of the welfare state is one manifestation of a society's moving beyond technical maturity; but it is also at this stage that resources tend increasingly to be directed to the production of consumers' durables and to the diffusion of services on a mass basis, if consumers' sovereignty reigns. The sewing-machine, the bicycle, and then the various electric-powered household gadgets were gradually diffused. Historically, however, the decisive element has been the cheap mass automobile with its quite revolutionary effects—social as well as economic—on the life and expectations of society.

For the United States, the turning point was, perhaps, Henry Ford's moving assembly line of 1913–14; but it was in the 1920's, and again in the postwar decade, 1946–56, that this stage of growth was pressed to, virtually, its logical conclusion. In the 1950's Western Europe and Japan appear to have fully entered this phase, accounting substantially for a momentum in their economies quite unexpected in the immediate postwar years. The Soviet Union is technically ready for this stage, and, by every sign, its citizens hunger for it; but Communist leaders face

difficult political and social problems of adjustment if this stage is launched.

Beyond Consumption

Beyond, it is impossible to predict, except perhaps to observe that Americans, at least, have behaved in the past decade as if diminishing relative marginal utility sets in, after a point, for durable consumers' goods; and they have chosen, at the margin, larger families—behaviour in the pattern of Buddenbrooks dynamics. Americans have behaved as if, having been born into a system that provided economic security and high mass-consumption, they placed a lower valuation on acquiring additional increments of real income in the conventional form as opposed to the advantages and values of an enlarged family. But even in this adventure in generalization it is a shade too soon to create—on the basis of one case—a new stage-of-growth, based on babies, in succession to the age of consumers' durables: as economists might say, the income-elasticity of demand for babies may well vary from society to society. But it is true that the implications of the baby boom along with the not wholly unrelated deficit in social overhead capital are likely to dominate the American economy over the next decade rather than the further diffusion of consumers' durables.

Here then, in an impressionistic rather than an analytic way, are the stages-of-growth which can be distinguished once a traditional society begins its modernization: the transitional period

when the preconditions for take-off are created generally in response to the intrusion of a foreign power, converging with certain domestic forces making for modernization; the take-off itself; the sweep into maturity generally taking up the life of about two further generations; and then, finally, if the rise of income has matched the spread of technological virtuosity (which, as we shall see, it need not immediately do) the diversion of the fully mature economy to the provision of durable consumers' goods and services (as well as the welfare state) for its increasingly urban—and then suburban—population. Beyond lies the question of whether or not secular spiritual stagnation will arise, and, if it does, how man might fend it off....

A Dynamic Theory of Production

These stages are not merely descriptive. They are not merely a way of generalizing certain factual observations about the sequence of development of modern societies. They have an inner logic and continuity. They have an analytic bone-structure, rooted in a dynamic theory of production.

The classical theory of production is formulated under essentially static assumptions which freeze—or permit only once-over change—in the variables most relevant to the process of economic growth. As modern economists have sought to merge classical production theory with Keynesian income analysis they have introduced the dynamic variables: population,

technology, entrepreneurship etc. But they have tended to do so in forms so rigid and general that their models cannot grip the essential phenomena of growth, as they appear to an economic historian. We require a dynamic theory of production which isolates not only the distribution of income between consumption, saving, and investment (and the balance of production between consumers and capital goods) but which focuses directly and in some detail on the composition of investment and on developments within particular sectors of the economy....

And there are other decisions as well that societies have made as the choices open to them have been altered by the unfolding process of economic growth; and these broad collective decisions, determined by many factors—deep in history, culture, and the active political process—outside the market-place, have interplayed with the dynamics of market demand, risk-taking, technology and entrepreneurship, to determine the specific content of the stages of growth for each society.

How, for example, should the traditional society react to the intrusion of a more advanced power: with cohesion, promptness, and vigour, like the Japanese; by making a virtue of fecklessness, like the oppressed Irish of the eighteenth century; by slowly and reluctantly altering the traditional society, like the Chinese?

When independent modern nationhood is achieved, how should the national energies be disposed: in external aggression, to right old