THREE FACES OF CRUELTY: TOWARDS A COMPARATIVE SOCIOLOGY OF VIOLENCE

RANDALL COLLINS

To the comparative sociologist, history shows itself on two levels. For the most part it is the site of puzzles and arabesque causalities fascinating to the mind of a theorist. Yet there is another level that occasionally jolts the scholar out of his thoughts—the sense of historical lives as they were actually lived, day by day, moment by moment. Our theories and concepts compress and abstract; to speak of the transformation of the state or the rise of a religion is to look down the decades, if not the centuries, and necessarily to pass over most of the moments and feelings of most of the people involved. To conceive past societies from their great relics of art and literature draws one ever farther from the brutal reality. For to empathize with the human reality of history is to receive a shock, as in the following glimpse of ancient China which brought to an end for me several months of fascinated unraveling of the patterns of Chinese history:

Once a man of Ch'u named Mr. Ho, having found a piece of jade matrix in the Ch'u Mountains, took it to court and presented it to King Li. King Li instructed the jeweler to examine it, and the jeweler reported, "It is only a stone." The king, supposing that Ho was trying to deceive him, ordered that his left foot be cut off in punishment. In time King Li passed away and King Wu came to the throne, and Ho once more took his matrix and presented it to King Wu. King Wu ordered his jeweler to examine it, and again the jeweler reported, "It is only a stone." The King, supposing that Ho was trying to deceive him as well, ordered that his right foot be cut off. Ho, clasping the matrix to his breast, went to the foot of the Ch'u Mountains, where he wept for three days and nights, and when all his tears were cried out, he wept blood in their place. The King, hearing of this, sent someone to question him. "Many people in the world have had their feet amputated — why do you weep so piteously over it?" the man asked. He replied, "I do not grieve because my feet have been cut off. I grieve
because a precious jewel is dubbed a mere stone, and a man of integrity is called a deceiver. This is why I weep.” The King then ordered the jeweler to cut and polish the matrix, and when he had done so a precious jewel emerged.¹

The existence of punishment by mutilation is no surprise to the reader in Chinese history. What shocked, was the blasé question: “Many people in the world have had their feet amputated — why do you weep so piteously over it?” This smug conclusion, redolent with Confucian meritocracy, only underlines the viciousness of the prevailing attitude.² Shang bronzes and 800-year cycles lost their charm, and I closed for the time my books on China.

The prevailing reality of world history is violence. “History is a slaughter-bench. . . .” cried Hegel; and James Joyce declared, “History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.” And it is not merely the violence of a machine out of control; the disturbing thing is the viciousness, the vindictiveness, the deliberate torture in so much of it. Beneath the sociologist’s patterns lies the personal dimension of evil; the patterns of history are the work of demons.

This is an attempt at exorcising those demons. It is not a theodicy; the problem is not to justify evil, but to explain it. Is there a pattern, a meaning to the cruelty itself? For it is only in isolating a causal theory that we are able to deal with cruelty; the point is not to learn to live with the demons, but to take away their power.

**Violence and Group Structure**

A sociology of violence, in fact, already exists. Above all, we find it in the sociological tradition of France with its emphasis on the logic of emotions. Tocqueville, for instance, was struck by the degree of public benevolence in the America of the 1830’s, the extent of personal sympathy and aid to strangers. He attributed this to the condition of political equality, which made it possible for individuals to empathize with one another; to prove his point, he presents a comparison with the moral atmosphere of France in the 17th century:

*Aux Rochers, October 30, 1675*

> Your letter from Aix, my daughter, is droll enough. At least, read your letters over again before sending them; allow yourself to be surprised by the pretty things that you have put into them and console yourself by this pleasure for the trouble you have had in writing so
many. Then you have kissed all of Provence, have you? There would be no satisfaction in kissing all of Brittany, unless one likes to smell of wine... Do you wish to hear the news from Rennes? A tax of a hundred thousand crowns has been imposed upon the citizens; and if this sum is not produced within four-and-twenty hours, it is to be doubled and collected by the soldiers. They have cleared the houses and sent away the occupants of the great streets and forbidden anybody to receive them on pain of death; so that the poor wretches (old men, women near their confinement, and children included) may be seen wandering around and crying on their departure from this city, without knowing where to go, and without food or a place to lie in. Day before yesterday a fiddler was broken on the wheel for getting up a dance and stealing some stamped paper. He was quartered after death, and his limbs exposed at the four corners of the city. Sixty citizens have been thrown in prison, and the business of punishing them is to begin tomorrow. This province sets a fine example to the others, teaching them above all that of respecting the governors and their wives, and of never throwing stones into their gardens.

Yesterday, a delightful day, Madame de Tarenté visited these wilds: there is no question about preparing a chamber or a collation; she comes by the gate, and returns the same way...

It would be a mistake to suppose that Madame de Sévigné, who wrote these lines, was a selfish or cruel person, she was passionately attached to her children and very ready to sympathize in the sorrows of her friends; nay, her letters show that she treated her vassals and servants with kindness and indulgence. But Madam de Sévigné had no clear notion of suffering in anyone who was not a person of quality. It is the group boundaries that determine the extent of human sympathy; within those boundaries, humanity prevails; outside them, torture is inflicted without a qualm.

The same approach to morality is taken by Durkheim. In his work, Tocqueville’s observation becomes a systematic theory. Moral ideas reflect social boundaries; ceremonial observances test group membership and moral worth; God represents society, and changes as society changes shape. Thus, in the world of mutually isolated tribal societies, injunctions on killing, stealing, lying and other offenses extend only up to the boundary of each group; with the extension of the mutual links of an elaborate division of labor, the moral sense expands, becomes more abstract and universal, less concrete and particular. This insight was expanded by Weber, who understood that the abstract, philosophical world religions signified a shift in the social structure, from the mutual moral isolation of kin and ethnic groups, to a cosmopolitan society with universal political and economic possibilities.
Reading this convergence, some theorists such as Talcott Parsons have interpreted history as moral progress, a gradual extension of the collective conscience and an upgrading of moral obligations. From the particularisms and ceremonial concerns of membership in primitive tribal societies, there is an extension of the scope of humanity, emerging into a potential universal brotherhood by the rise of Christianity and the other great world religions, and culminating in the superior mildness and pan-empathy of an advanced division of labor.

An evolutionary interpretation of Durkheim and Tocqueville's insights, however, does not seem warranted. Some of the greatest displays of cruelty in history were carried out by the universal religions, especially Christianity and Islam; one has reason to doubt that the group boundaries focused on in this version are at the center of the matter. It is true that a decline in institutionalized ferociousness can be discerned in the past two hundred years, but this only reminds us that cruelty comes in more than one form. The concern with alienation in the modern era points to a peculiarly modern form of brutality. Still a third dimension is suggested by the line of thought opened up by Nietzsche and Freud (and echoed in Weber): the migration of cruelty to the interior of the individual mind in the form of psychic repression.

The Durkheimian mechanism takes us in the right direction; we can find a key to cruelty in the connection between morality and the boundaries of group inclusion and exclusion. A moral evolutionism, however, is not a reliable guide. Moreover, additional dimensions must be added to the Durkheimian group mechanism, above all, those of stratification within and among groups. Georges Sorel, yet another of the French analysts of the logic of violent emotions, proposes that not all violence is of the same sort: there is "force" used by dominant classes in a vindictive (and secretly terrified) up-holding of their power; and there is "violence" of the rebellious under-class, with its clean moral purity, without viciousness but with the clarity of practical work. It will not do to regard all violence as immoral, in the manner of contemporary pacifists or over-domesticated liberals, for morality not only determines violence in a negative way—in the sense that the boundaries of the group mark the limit outside of which violence is allowed—but also in a positive way. Durkheim saw this clearly enough in his theory of the way in which punishment of transgressors against the group's standards reunifies the group in its righteous indignation. Sorel saw this in the external context as well: the height of morality is in the willingness to endanger oneself in combat for the group against its enemies, and hence violent confrontation is the basis of all the moral virtues.
The key to an understanding of violence, then, is above all the structure of solidary groups and the moralities that reflect their emotional ties. The moral boundaries may set some persons beyond the pale of moral obligation, but they may also organize confrontations that make violence not just morally indifferent but morally motivated. Add to this the internal boundaries of stratification, and we find that moral claims and corresponding forms of violence exist also in the internal struggle for domination or liberation. When we pursue these structures into more complex forms, we find routinized and internalized forms of these moralities and cruelties.

In what follows, an explanation of human cruelty will be sought along three principal dimensions. First ferociousness: *homo lupus homini*. This is the dimension of overt brutality; its explanation leads us along the lines of Tocqueville, Durkheim and Sorel, into a consideration of group boundaries, external and internal. Second, callousness: brutality routinized and bureaucratized, cruelty without passion. Our theoretical leads here extend the Durkheimian model into the themes of Marx and Weber. Third, asceticism: the turning of cruelty against oneself and against others with whom one has solidarity. Here, the leads are provided by Nietzsche and Freud, which we may assimilate into the preceding sociological theory.

I. Ferociousness: the Violence of Man and Animal

Consider the extremes of overt brutality:

**Mutilation**: punishment not by death, but by life at its lowest level. The amputation of feet or hands, or ears—so common in ancient Rome, China, Mesopotamia, Palestine and in the Arab societies; the gouging out of eyes. The intent is not merely punishment, but prolonged misery and humiliation. This is especially evident in sexual mutilation, prominent in extremely male-oriented societies: the great Han historian, Ssu-ma Ch’ien, castrated for an honest but unfavorable memorandum to the Emperor; the Turkish sultan of Egypt punishing a rebellion in the Sudan by castrating the men and amputating the breasts of the women. Mutilation might be combined with execution, always in a public form (as in the 17th century European case described by Tocqueville); clearly, public humiliation is at the essence of the phenomenon.

**Torture**: the deliberate prolongation and refinement of pain, usually dramatized and timed to maximize psychological dread. Torture has been routinely used in many judicial systems as part of the examination of prisoners before trial. Yet as a system for collecting evidence (as has been pointed
out by rationalist humanists since Roman times), it is inefficient, precisely because it usually produces whatever reports or fabrications the victims think their torturers wish to hear. Clearly, the purpose of torture is not on this level; it is not to gather evidence, but to enforce submission. The cruelty is not incidental; it is the main purpose.

**Peremptory executions:** the awesomeness of the powerful lord was usually demonstrated in his death-dealing powers: Attila the Hun with his piles of skulls, King David with the heads of his enemies displayed on a spike. This was the extreme dramatization of arbitrary authority.

**Human sacrifices:** ritual killing as part of a religious ceremony, with a victim offered to the sacred powers of the other world. These are of two types: sacrifices related to periodic fertility celebrations, especially in advanced horticultural societies (e.g., the Aztecs, the Benin of West Africa, the Dionysian sacrifices that entered Greece from Asia Minor); and funerals of aristocrats (e.g., Shang China or the Hindu suttee) in which slaves and wives follow the dead lord to his grave.

**Ritual warhunts:** warfare as a ritual frenzy, built up by dancing, drinking or drugs, and culminating in killing patterned after the hunt. The victim is sometimes ritually consumed; in its extreme—cannibalism—he is actually eaten, just like an animal. Not only are the victims treated as animals; the hunters themselves emulate the pack frenzy of carnivorous mammals that hunt their prey in groups.

The explanation of these forms of overt cruelty fits the Durkheim/Tocqueville model. In each case, the violence is practiced by one group against another to dramatize the fact that the human community and its ties extend only to a certain limit, and that persons outside are alien and subordinate. The kinds of group boundaries are not the same in each instance. Ritual warhunts are found almost exclusively in simple horticultural, hunting, or pastoral tribes, where moral ties are very localistic indeed. Human sacrifices, especially in the form of fertility cults, are found primarily in advanced horticultural societies, in which the religion is a divine kingship or a theocracy of priests. The sacrifice supports the gulf between the divine rulers and their subjects; but in fact, the latter are divided into two groups for moral purposes, corresponding to those under the protection of the local gods and those who are not, and hence, it is almost always captives or slaves from other societies who are the victims of human sacrifices.

This is also true to a degree of funeral sacrifices; the Shang rulers, the
pre-iron age (advanced horticultural) dynasty of China, raided other groups for slaves precisely in order to sacrifice them (and like the slave-owning Greeks made a very strong distinction between civilized, i.e., literate human beings, and barbarians fit for slavery and sacrifice). Slavery, in general, it should be noted, is based on these same ritual barriers between groups, especially bolstered by religious communities; slavery in Northern Europe died out with the conversion of the Slavs to Christianity, and it is clearly the extension of Christian missionary activity and the decline of African religion among black slaves that generated the moral sentiments of the anti-slavery movements in America and Britain.

The Hindu suttee—the burning of widows on their husbands' funeral pyres—is in a slightly different category, since Indian society in general has been relatively free from overt violence, for reasons to be considered below. The sacrifice is of women only; and women are in the category of a subordinate but omnipresent group within Hindu society. As such, they are appropriate candidates for human sacrifice.

Peremptory executions, torture, and mutilation are all characteristic of iron-age (agrarian) societies which are highly stratified around a patrimonial form of government. These, indeed, are the most highly stratified societies in world history, and the stratification largely takes the form of external relations of dominance. These are conquest states, often over ethnically diverse areas; administration is tributary rather than intensive, with the local social structure left intact. Hence the moral boundaries along ethnic/religious lines become translated into boundaries along levels of stratification; extreme punishment of the lower by the higher is not only morally neutral, but often is exacerbated into a Sorelian frenzy of defense of the integrity of the dominant group. Hence the public dramatic nature of patrimonial mutilations, tortures, executions: the public is to be impressed that the status community of the aristocracy is not to be infringed in any way, without the most heinous punishment. These cruelties are not only deliberate, they are ceremonially recurrent defenses of the structure of group domination.

In comparing human beings and their activities with those of animals, it appears that the above five types of cruelty constitute a scale. Ritual warhunts are the most animal-like; tortures and mutilations are the most human. That is to say, violence among animals involves a building up of frenzy through an interchange of instinctual gestures. The pack of wolves or rats work each other up into shared ferociousness, which enables them to kill as a team. In this, animals show the same in-group solidarity through arousal against an enemy that Sorel proposed for humans; and indeed their
post-kill "celebration" in the form of eating their victim together has its human parallels as well.\(^1\)\(^3\)

The tribal ceremonies designed to stir up the war-frenzy seem to be modeled on those of hunting animals; the fact that these are characteristic of societies with little or no permanent stratification of their own (because of the lack of surplus and permanent wealth) suggests that this democracy of the pack is the only form of group aggression compatible with their usual social organization. It also fits well with the rigid boundaries between tribes often found in this situation; alien tribes may appear as distinct species to each other as do the animals which they often take for their totems.

Compare this relatively direct emotional arousal of the cannibals with the psychology of mutilation or torture. The animal is aroused (the human animal invents ways to do this deliberately), he attacks, he eats. Except for some sense of the fear displayed by his retreating victim, there is no empathy.

The torturer or the mutilator, however, could not even attempt his arts without a capacity for taking the role of the other. The torturer does not kill and eat; he concentrates instead on inflicting pain, and above all, in conveying to his victim his intentions and powers for inflicting this pain. For the animal, terror is only an incident in the combat; for the torturer, it is the prime target. Torture and mutilation, then, are distinctively human acts; they are indeed advanced human acts. The boundaries between groups are involved, making possible the detachment that allows (and motivates) a free use of cruelty; but there is a skill at empathizing across the boundary, enough to be able to gauge the effects of cruelty on its victim. This distinctively human violence becomes symbolic; torture and mutilation are above all forms of communication usable as threats and supports for claims of complete domination.\(^1\)\(^4\) "I can get inside your mind," the torturer boasts: "don't even think of resistance." Mutilation and other public punishments are above all violence to one's social image, and hence are pre-eminently usable for upholding inter-group stratification.

In this perspective, cruelty bears a relation to technological and social evolution. The refined reflexivity of mutilation and torture reflects a more subtle development of human cognitive faculties than the direct emotional arousal of the war-hunt; the human sacrifice is in the middle, organized in a self-consciously religious form but with little attention to refining the pains of the victim. This is borne out by the types of societies in which each of these is commonly found. War-hunts are found primarily in unstratified primitive horticultural, hunting, or pastoral societies; here, external boundaries among
groups are very strong, but the external relations are so episodic as to con-
stitute (when they are violent relations) only brief fights, animal-like in their
intensity and directness. Human sacrifice is found primarily in advanced
horticultural societies, especially around the institution of the divine king or
reigning priests, and reflects the gulf between dominant and dominated
groups. But such stratification is nevertheless very local in scope; the ruler's
power is still very circumscribed by surrounding councils and by the weakness
of military technology and administrative organization. Cruelty is now used
to uphold the awesomeness of the ruler, but only on limited, highly
ceremonial occasions, and without any personal element: a victim is offered
to the gods in the name of the society. The extremes of refined cruelty are
found in advanced iron age societies, with their great military powers and
their high degree of warfare. Patrimonial administration maintains moral
boundaries among groups, but the great territorial extension of such states
and the prevailing tone of military conflict brings a great many warrior-
contenders into the contest. Domination, unstable as it is under such circum-
stances, is sought with the refinements that come with a literate mentality; a
sharp (if unstable) order of internal stratification appears—indeed, the
sharpest in all of history—and ferocious and humiliating extremes of violence
are used to maintain it.

If we stop at this point and this level of abstraction, it appears that cruelty
actually increases with evolutionary advance. The trend is even stronger if the
negative instances are brought in, the examples of societies which show rela-
tively little cruelty and violence. Hunting-and-gathering societies (as far as we
can tell) and simple horticultural societies often are relatively peaceful; only a
minority are cannibalistic or otherwise warlike, and their violence is very
sporadic, external, and unrefined with respect to deliberate cruelty. Com-
pared to this, the height of ferociousness in world history is found among
iron-age, agrarian societies, and indeed, among the highly advanced civiliza-
tions of this type: ancient Rome, European Christianity, Islam.

The explanation offered here, however, is not an evolutionary one, or even an
inverse (or, as we will see, bell-shaped) evolutionary pattern. The variations in
group structure that make up the principal explanatory factors are not
distributed in a simple way across technological levels. Hence, it is possible to
explore this hypothesis into more refined, horizontal comparisons.

**The Altruism of the World Religions**

One might suppose that the monotheistic or philosophical world religions,
with their universal brotherhood and their explicit ethical concerns, would
indicate an historical break away from explicit cruelty and towards altruism. Some of them, such as Christianity, have even been formulated as primarily religions of “love.” But in historical fact, this is not the case. The world religions arose with the development of cosmopolitan states, “world empires” transcending the previously localized and self-contained kingdoms and their legitimating local gods. Moreover, the world religions have everywhere played a predominantly political role, especially in their early phases, providing the legitimation as well as the administrative apparatus for the large-scale state. In the case of Islam, religion provided the organizing vehicle for a military coalition. Thus, the world religions, far from indicating a break with violence, represent a new form in its organization. Moreover, that form is the most inegalitarian and efficiently stratified form in world history; the iron-age, agrarian societies in which the universalist churches arose supported some of the cruelest forms of stratification ever seen. The moralities of the world religions, generally speaking, contributed more to the extension of violent cruelty than to its mitigation.

In Islam, the church was identical with political organization. Perhaps this is the reason why Islam contains little in the way of personal standards of morality, apart from those laws and ritual obligations defining the status of the respectable and active member of the political community. Islam enjoins charity to widows and orphans, the giving of alms to the poor; but, as we shall see in the case of Christianity, this should not be construed as altruism in any general, empathic sense. The requirement is part of the emphasis on mutual insurance in the community of warriors; moreover, the alms are generally collected by the religious leaders, and hence provide part of their organizational resources. Aside from this alms-giving, Islam emphasized primarily ritual and political obligations, above all whole-hearted commitment to the military expansion of Islam.

It should be noted that Christian propaganda has colored our image of the ferociousness of Islam. In fact, forcible conversion was never very widespread, above all, after the Moslem conquerors discovered the disadvantage of admitting all subjects into the tax-exempt fold of the faithful. There remains a pervasive level of ferocious violence within the Islamic world itself, directed towards upholding the existing deference relationships. As we shall see, none of this is beyond the ferociousness of ancient and medieval Christianity itself. The example of Islam does serve to dramatize the way in which a universalist religion provides little or no mitigation of ferocious violence. The most extreme cases of such violence—the tortures, mutilations, and peremptory punishments of the Ottomans and the Bedouins—may perhaps be explained by an additional element. That is, the core groups of the
original Islamic expansion, and its most powerful later converts (in terms of military prowess) came from pastoral cultures; and these are the most male-dominated, violent, and warlike of any societies. The practice of cliteridectomy among the Bedouin, for example, is a ceremonial form of cruelty designed to enhance male control over female sexual property. The pre-universalist religions of such pastoralists are also centered around killing: the act of the sacrifice, which is actually a ceremonial preparation for a group feast. Indeed, it appears that the habitual life of herding, prodding, and killing animals fosters a similar attitude towards people. The introduction of a literate, philosophical, universalist religion only expands the scope of the possible State that can be built around such a culture; internally and externally, it is sharply stratified and violent.

Christianity, at least in the eyes of its modern interpreters, prides itself as being the religion of love. There is the Sermon on the Mount, the parable of the good Samaritan, the admonition to “turn the other cheek,” the tradition of the nonviolent martyrs tortured and fed to the lions. Yet the historical record shows very little altruism outside of the sermons of Jesus, and a great deal of ferocious cruelty practiced by Christians, from the very earliest period up through the 18th century.

If one examines the social organization of the earliest band of Christians, it is apparent that universal benevolence played a very small part in its activities. The occasional admonitions of Jesus in favor of non-retribution and passive suffering are contradicted by other admonitions and acts of militancy. The advocacy of nonviolence appears purely tactical, a temporary expedient of the weak and outnumbered. When the force of the crowd favored it, the mood shifted to a violent expulsion of the money-changers from the temple, and later, to the destruction of idols and temples as well as to the enemies of Christ.

In addition to this negative altruism of non-violence, there is a positive altruism in the form of charity. Some of this, however, was due to the organizational demands of the community upon the individual found in any movement: tithes to the church (or in more extreme form, giving up all material property to it) are only a way of controlling such goods in centralized form. The only radical injunction of Christianity is that of charity towards strangers, including ethnic outsiders, illustrated by the good Samaritan story. But this didactic anecdote, apart from what effect it may have had in practice, bears a more sociological interpretation in terms of the lesson about group boundaries: it emphasized, in a fashion that was to be the primary organizational innovation of Christianity, that the moral community
(and hence the church organization) could extend beyond the ethnic group. This form of altruism represents the effort to expand Church membership to a potentially universal basis.

Moreover, the particular form of altruism expressed in this story—caring for the sick—has a special significance in the organizing activities of early Christianity. The main proselytizing actions of Jesus and the apostles stressed, not philosophical or moral doctrine, but the sense of miraculous powers immediately manifested. Their paramount reality was the invocation of the Holy Spirit, especially as manifested in medical miracles—the curing of the sick, reviving the dead, casting out of demons; in addition, there were a number of miraculous escapes from prisons and tombs. Such activities might be interpreted in terms of a doctrine of ‘love,’ insofar as the medical miracles alleviate suffering, and insofar as the intense emotional solidarity involved in generating the proper mood for faith-healing can be so characterized. But this ‘love’ is a bond within the community extending to those who are about to be admitted into it; the faith healing must be understood as proselytizing, since the cured (and the amazed onlookers) were expected to join the community of the faithful. Within this community, and as long as no disputes arose over internal control of it, altruism might hold; to its enemies, however, there remained no barrier to the utmost ferocity.

The persecution of the Christians at the hands of the Roman state illustrates the underlying violence of the situation. For Christianity was persecuted only (with a minor and local exception under Nero) when it had become a major political faction; the persecutions of Diocletian were part of a final struggle for dominance within the empire, and preceded by only 10 years the final ascension of the pro-Christian faction with Constantine in 313. The Christians in power acted exactly like their former persecutors. Indeed, existing forms of torture, slavery, and mutilation (e.g., eunuchry) were not abolished, but widely used by the Christian emperors. Nor did Christian ferocity come only from the political officials among its sympathizers. From the beginning, there were violent conflicts within the Church over questions of heresy and leadership. The election of the Bishop of Rome in 366 was settled by the murder of several hundreds of one Christian faction by another; struggles over the Bishoprics of Constantinople and Alexandria were fought out by mobs hurling stones. When the Church felt its strength, its pagan opponents were subject to ferocious violence, as in the case of the philosopher Hypatia:

. . .in the holy season of Lent, Hypatia was torn from her chariot, stripped naked, dragged to the church, and inhumanly butchered by the hands of Peter the reader and a troop of savage and merciless fanatics; her flesh was
scraped from her bones with sharp oystershells, and her quivering limbs were delivered to the flames.\textsuperscript{24}

The ferocity of this attack, it should be noted, is ceremonial, combining elements of the tribal war-hunt with the refined torture and mutilation of the iron-age aristocracy defending its status.

Indeed, this is the main consequence of Christianity for social organization: it provided a basis for a universal state, with internal stratification based on a solidary elite. It provided for the first time in the Western world the mass mobilization of groups within the urban, cosmopolitan society of the Mediterranean; such groups were then brought directly into the struggle for political and social domination. If this universalism also contained some philosophical bases for altruism, in practice, this simply meant the potentially universal membership of the church-state; its main effects on the phenomenon of cruelty were not altruistic. It provided a means for mobilizing people for violence in a highly emotional form. Its universalism served only to allow the degree of empathy necessary to understand the depths of torture and humiliation that might be inflicted on one's opponents. Universal religion here extends human empathy in a form that heightens the psychological aspects of the struggle for dominance; ferociousness is heightened, not limited, by the availability of social categories of infidelism and heresy.

Medieval Christianity, with its judicial tortures, crusades, inquisitions, and witch-burnings, is not an aberration from the main pattern, but the pattern itself. Altruism, in its Christian form, is usually characteristic of the medieval church. But this altruism stayed within the mold already set. The papacy's occasional claims to benevolent rule over European society were simply the ideological side of its political claim for dominion;\textsuperscript{25} even its prohibition on internal warfare (which itself was not so much observed as used as an occasion for the scale of indulgences), only saved military forces for the external enemies of an ambitious ruler. The positive acts of medieval Christian charity—visiting the sick, visiting prisons, burying the dead, caring for widows and orphans—continue to be both a form of mutual insurance for those safely within the orthodox community, and an organizing device (not the least, financial) for the church. One might add that this kind of charity is hardly the essence of humanitarian altruism. It does not represent a universal sympathy and a striving towards the spreading of individual happiness; it is rather a negative, organization-oriented altruism. It aims in part to alleviate extreme suffering, but not to remove it; indeed, here we find yet another version of the inner alliance first pointed out by Nietzsche: Christianity battening on suffering. The aim is to support the organization of
the benevolent community: the sick, the poor, the lepers, are necessary sufferers in the scheme of things, wretched and blessed at the same time. 26 Above all, alms are for the deserving poor, the repenting, obedient, subservient; acts of charity are ceremonial reaffirmations of domination and subordination, in which the extremes of suffering are preserved and affirmed as emblems of the social order that is being upheld.

In his comparative analysis of the world religions, Weber points out that the Western religions, growing out of the literate civilizations of the Near East, have an especially military tone. 27 The Near East is an area of many heartlands, and hence fosters a number of relatively unstable military states. Their early state gods are strong personalities, above all, gods of arbitrary power, war and domination. Monotheism appears there when the expansion of a few states calls into question the power of particularistic gods. But the monotheisms—Zoroastrianism of the Persians, Jahwehism of the Palestine kingdom, later Christianity, Mithraism, Islam—retain the militaristic, violent tone of their predecessors. By contrast, the religions of the orient, in regions which either supported only a single heartland-state without external rivals (China) or where geographical conditions made a prolonged state power difficult (India), were philosophical transformations of more primitive nature-cults. The ferocity of the West, in a world perspective, is rooted in its especially militaristic history, where the unstable resources for total military domination have enhanced a continual struggle, and supported a particularly ferocious use of violence.

The example of India lends weight to this analysis, and also amplifies the Durkheimian theme with which we began. For Indian society, although never approaching the ideal of non-violence preached in the highest form of Brahminism and in many of the salvation cults, has nevertheless shown much less ferocious violence than the West. 28 Orthodox Hinduism, in fact, makes a special place for the warrior, the (Kshatriya) caste; the famous Bhagavadgita’s central concern is to justify a battle, even against kinsmen, as part of the ordained karma of that particular station. But this same device also encapsulated and limited the use of violence, above all since the caste system maintained privilege through the mechanism of group inclusion and exclusion, establishing pervasive ritual barriers in every activity of life. The Kshatriya caste, although fighting within itself for political domination (over rather small kingdoms, at that) was not itself the bulwark of the caste system. Ferociousness is most institutionalized where ritual boundaries are structured within an autonomous state; India had the former without the latter. Hence, the relative lack of mutilation and exemplary punishment in India (at least of the classical period, before the Moslem conquest, and after the rise of the caste
Indian Society has its own form of cruelty. The caste system can be described as a special form of the cruelty of callousness. The inferior position of women, also supported by the reincarnation doctrine, involved other forms of callousness, including the extreme form of the immolation of widows. Yet all of this is far from the ferocious violence characteristic of other iron-age societies. India, the negative case, supports both the Weberian and the Durkheimian theories. India, the land of the limited, weak state, had a religion emphasizing ritual barriers, not forcible subjugation, passivity and inner experience, not external domination. In terms of group boundaries, one may say that the caste system makes for psychologically impenetrable barriers; the degree of empathy necessary to motivate torture, mutilation, terrorist punishments does not exist; nor does stratification within a ceremonial community, which is the structure upheld by symbolic and ferocious uses of violence.

The position of Buddhism is more ambiguous. As a religion of mystical contemplation and freedom from the illusoriness of the material world, it promotes pacifism; as a religion of universal salvation, it promotes a certain form of altruism. But it is the altruism of mutual escape from misery, not mutual sympathy for individual happiness. Moreover, Buddhism has made the political alliances characteristic of all great world religions, and thus has involved itself in particular forms of violence. In central Asia, above all Tibet (but also the nomadic coalitions such as those of the Mongols), Buddhism provided the literate civilization that made possible military organization on a large scale; in these areas, it amalgamated with shamanistic religions (and especially the ferocious, death-oriented cults of pastoralists), to produce a rather ferocious military Buddhism. In South-East Asia, on the other hand, Buddhism adapted itself to relatively pacifist, weak kinships of the advanced horticultural variety. In China, where Confucianism provided (after the end of the warring states period, from which our early quotation from Han Fei Tzu derives) a set of universalist principles for the educated civil servant class, Buddhism entered as an organizing device for rival political factions. Amalgamating with Taoism, its results included quietism, but also at particular times rebellious political movements legitimated by apocalyptic versions of Buddhism (especially Amitabha, the future Buddha). Accordingly, Chinese Buddhism underwent some of the same cycles of favor and official persecution experienced by Christianity in the Roman Empire. With these military ramifications, it is not surprising that Chinese Buddhism developed a more activist form (Ch'an Buddhism, whose emphasis on sudden illumination
was compatible with manual work), and even created its distinctive martial art (Kempo, the predecessor of karate and kung fu, originating in the Shaolin-su monastery of the lower Yangtze around 500 A.D.). Literate civilization spread to Korea and Japan through the vehicle of Buddhism; in medieval Japan, Buddhism had become militarized to the extent that armed monasteries held the balance of power for several centuries. After the defeat of this extreme form of militarism, the influence of Buddhism on the military culture of Japan continued through the training of warriors in Zen Buddhist techniques of fighting.  

In the degree of ferocity, the history of violence in Japan bears some resemblance to India. The samurai ethic, based on an extreme form of military courage, was hedged round with an elaborate system of courtesies that reduced its ferociousness; to engage in violence was itself a mark of privileged status, never of humiliation. This extended even to the practice of permitting suicide rather than execution. The power of the aristocracy over other ranks of society, supported by constant ritual deference and built into the very structure in the terms of verbal address, seems to have provided the equivalent of the mutual caste isolation of India. Japanese society has been more violent than Indian; but the violence has been largely confined to a gentlemanly game within the aristocracy itself.

Chinese society after the Han dynasty lacked this military aristocratic emphasis; its cultural ideal, instead, has been the rule of an internally pacified empire by literate, cultivated administrators. The macho ethic was lacking here; the military forces were concentrated on the borders, and the heartland of the civilization adhered to another ethic. That ethic, expressed most strongly in Confucianism, emphasized traditional loyalties and subordinations within the family and within the structures of government. The power of emperor, mandarin, family head, were indeed upheld by force—above all by beating (even to the point of death), with bamboo sticks. The mutilations and public ferocity of the warring states period seem to have been reduced; torture in judicial proceedings and punishments appear to have had less of the public ceremonial significance of more militarized and conflictful societies, and the Mandarins were given special exemption. Here again one may invoke the Durkheimian dimension: the stratification of Chinese society, built around the centralized state, encompassed and reinforced traditional psychological barriers among groups—in this case, especially kinship groups—that institutionalized ferocity even in the milder Confucian ethos.
The Decline of Ferocious Violence

Modern society has seen an abrupt decline in ferocity. Torture, mutilation, exemplary punishment have disappeared as ideals; while these practices still occur they do so privately and secretly—in the hidden interrogation rooms of police stations, in the personal interaction between guard and prisoner—rather than as the explicit, ceremonial enactments fundamental to the social order. Executions are now to be humane and relatively painless, and are carried out in private; their justification is generally held to be of a rational, educative, warning nature, not passionate vengeance. Ferocity in war becomes atrocity, to be hidden, or even expiated, not gloried in. The heads of male-factors are no longer displayed on spikes, but buried from view.

At what point does the transition come about? We have seen that it does not depend on the universal religions per se, least of all historical Christianity. The movement against ferocity, rather, is a secularizing movement, originating perhaps with Erasmus and the tolerant rationalists who opposed the fanaticisms of the Reformation period; it gained ground with the anti-religious philosophes of the French Enlightenment and their British utilitarian counterparts; and began to have a practical effect with the judicial reforms, the anti-slavery campaigns, and other benevolent movements of the 19th century. It is true that a number of liberal (non-ritualist, non-traditionalist) Christian reformers were involved in these movements; but in general, it indicates a break with the ritual boundaries of stratification upheld by traditional religion. This is clearest in the case of the most vehement enemies of religion, the socialists and the communist radicals, who perhaps for the first time extended altruism into a positive concern for universal human happiness, rather than merely a token concern for suffering as an ongoing part of an order of privilege and deference.

In terms of our theoretical principles, the explanation seems to be structural shift. Modern industrial society, for the first time, makes for a shift in patterns of interpersonal interaction that destroy the traditional ceremonial barriers among groups. Above all, the fortified household, with its support for the moral absolutism of the family community and its internal authority structure, gives way to the community of small private households, urbanism, mass transportation, large-scale work and business organizations, mass education, all contribute towards the replacement of older ritual barriers with a new form of ritual co-membership. The social conditions for the human community, in general, emerge for the first time. Along with this, differential resources remain in existence, and the struggle for power, wealth and prestige goes on. But a crucial earlier resource—freely available private
violence—is no longer permissible because of the monopolization of violence by the modern state and the ritual barriers that both allowed its use and motivated the retention of a specific deference structure have largely disappeared. With the passing of these conditions, the ceremonial ideal of ferocity has disappeared.

In its place, we have two conflicting tendencies. On the one hand, conditions favor universal movements, including those proclaiming extreme forms of altruism. At the same time, the large-scale and remote organizational forms of modern society do not eliminate the tools of violence and manipulation, but only depersonalize them. Turning from the evil of ferocity, modern social structure delivers us into the hands of another evil: callousness. And in the very mobilization of modern groups there emerges still another side of altruism: demands upon the individual in the form of asceticism.

II. Callousness and Bureaucratization

Callousness is cruelty without passion: the kind of hardship or violence people may inflict on others without a special intent to hurt. The subject of the violence is simply an instrument or an obstacle, and his suffering is merely an incidental (usually ignored) feature of some other intention. In this sense, the structural conditions for callousness must be very different from those that produce ferocious violence. Torture, mutilation, and exemplary punishment all involve a certain type of empathy between perpetrator and victim; the victim's subjective life is the target, and his total personality is to be deformed. By comparison, callous violence represents a very restricted contact with the victim, and arises from structures that cut off the possibility of personal empathy.

Callousness is found in all societies throughout history, but it is especially characteristic of certain types. In a sense, the extreme mutual isolation of primitive tribes results in a form of callousness towards each other; but the amount of cruelty done is likely to be severely limited by the very sporadic nature of such external contacts. Where social relationships are organized on a regular basis along impersonal lines, however, callous cruelty is maximal. This of course is the theme of Marx, especially in terms of the callousness of the wage system in an impersonal market economy.

More generally, callous cruelty is especially characteristic of large-scale, bureaucratic organization, the violence of the modern army and state. Indeed, the structural organization of bureaucracy seems uniquely suited to the perpetration of callous violence. Bureaucracy is typically hierarchic, and
hence, routinely enforces relationships of domination and submission. But both the means and the ends of bureaucratic action deal not with the individual person and his subjective feelings, but with segmented elements of individual lives. The fundamental principle of bureaucracy, indeed, is the separation of the individual from the position; instead of the charisma of the individual, there is the charisma of office; instead of personal power and personal domination, there is domination by reference to formalities and specialized functions.

Thus, even the application of violence is carried out segmentally; the bureaucrat does not invest his personality and his subjective status in the dominance relationship that results, and the identity and feelings of the victim are not a concern. Bureaucratic violence is the psychological opposite of the ceremonial ferocity of patrimonial society; however painful and terrifying the consequences, they are epiphenomenal to the more general policy being carried out.

The major atrocities of the 20th century are of this sort. The Nazi extermination camps were the epitome of bureaucratic organization. What we find so horrifying about them, above all, is their dramatization of the ultimate Kafka-esque possibilities we have always feared lurked in this organizational form. The very methodical, impersonal, and ritually unthreatening character of most stages of the Nazi extermination procedures, are features which no doubt were most responsible for the relative lack of resistance and even the degree of active compliance among the Jewish victims. The secrecy of the camps and gas chambers, the night-time round-ups—all of these stand in sharp contrast to the public, ritual nature of violence in patrimonial societies. For the Nazi participants, the well-known "Eichmann syndrome," the routinized following of orders, eliminated any personal sense of moral responsibility. And it is this, the turning up of the dark side of the bureaucracy that surrounds us, which makes the Nazis an emblem of the specifically modern horror, a horror that dwarfs the personalized cruelties of the Middle Ages.

One prophetic element of the Nazi extermination camps was their use of technology, not only to enhance the bureaucratic efficiency of their callous violence, but to depersonalize and distance it from human contact. The development of high-altitude bombing in the Second World War represents the same sort of atrocity, perhaps extended to even more de-personalized limits. The atomic bombings of Japan are only the most dramatic (because both technically novel and highly publicized) of the atrocities of the fire-bombings of major cities in Japan, Germany, and Britain, with their heavy
concentration of civilian casualties. The atrocities of the Vietnam War, again, stem above all from a long-distance bombing policy.\textsuperscript{39} Not only were the more publicized incidents — the My Lai massacre and a few others — minor by comparison to the several million casualties of the indiscriminate bombing campaigns throughout South Vietnam, but they are uncharacteristic of the fundamental nature of the atrocities.

Janowitz has argued that modern military organizations have become internally more civilian-like, above all in the air force, because of the emphasis on technological expertise rather than traditional regimentation.\textsuperscript{40} But on the external side, the capacity for callous destruction multiplies correspondingly. The traditional deference procedures between officers and men in the military lessen with the modern bureaucratization of their organization, and along with them goes some of the sadism that characterized internal rankings, and perhaps even the personal attitudes characteristic of soldiers towards the outside world. In its place, though, we find an increase in callousness when the men use instruments of unsurpassed destructiveness. In guerrilla warfare, as in Vietnam, where guerrillas are not only mingled with the civilian population, but very often are the civilians, including the women and children, it is not surprising that the use of long-distance, bureaucratically administered weapons should produce appalling atrocities. The long chain of information reporting and the very impersonality of communications categories served to keep much of the human consequences from the awareness of not only the American public, but of the soldiers themselves; but enough leaked through to create the most extreme sense of schizophrenia between the low-key personal relationships within the modern military and their vicious consequences for its victims.

III. Asceticism and Enforced Community Membership

Asceticism, at its extreme, is a turning inwards of cruelty, directing it towards oneself. In its origins, asceticism was purely personal, a form of self-denial valued for its supposed key mystical experience. Insofar as asceticism became a part of social organization in religions like Buddhism, it was the social organization of voluntary drop-outs from ordinary social experience; hence, violence towards outsiders was shunned as simply one more ordinary social tie to be cut in the interest of entering the Void.

Asceticism becomes organized social cruelty when an ascetic religion becomes part of the on-going, secular social structure. In this, Christianity is the prime example.\textsuperscript{41} The ascetic ideal, the mark of holiness for the religious specialist, takes on wider significance when a church is organized, and its leaders
become the exemplars of ordinary life. What Weber called "inner-worldly asceticism" (i.e., asceticism in the world) may be viewed not only as a motivating force for economic activities, but also as the transformation of self-denial, even positive self-cruelty, into a dominant social ideal. Such a status hierarchy in itself generally constitutes an increase in social cruelty by its effect on others through emulation. Moreover, when religion becomes an important administrative and ceremonial adjunct to the state, as well as the basis for community organization, then the influence of ascetic cruelty becomes coercive. Not only is the ascetic individual rewarded with high status (and certain opportunities for power and wealth), but asceticism becomes a mark of membership in the community, and is enforced upon everyone by external authority.

The first level of cruelty in asceticism is the cruelty of deprivation, especially of those forms of happiness that are most private and individual. These include, above all, sexuality (especially in forms that have not been ceremonially justified by the group); the focusing of attention on one's own body and on the private moods of one individual or two (or perhaps a small group), is the attitude most to be combatted by an ascetic mode of social organization. Hence the ban on vanity and display in clothes and decor—precisely because they are individualizing, and because they celebrate the particularism of the body. Lighthearted, trivial, individualized games are banned for the same reason; games are acceptable only if they are made serious, contestlike, above all requiring the mobilization of the individual into the collective cause. Alcohol and drugs, one the subject of battles for control by advocates of traditional community structures in the early 20th century, the other the focus of a similar battle today, are above all privatizing agents, hence anathema to the ascetic representative of group controls and duties.

Asceticism may be extended to more symbolic manifestations of individualism. The labor camps and insane asylums of the Soviet Union are used to enforce political conformity, even along lines which do not involve real substantive disagreements with the program of socialism but only with the principle of individual discussion of policy matters. These punishments (although perhaps a more extreme example) are representative of the form that ascetic controls take everywhere. The punishment is regarded as a form of purgatory; the offender is not simply the inadvertent victim of callous violence, nor a low-status creature to be humiliated or mutilated. His identity as a deviant is not conceived of as permanent; the punishment, rather, is to change his soul, to strip him of individualist tendencies and to reintegrate him into the ascetic standards of the group.
We can now see the distinctive social organization underlying ascetic violence. It implies a ceremonially united community, and one which places the strongest possible emphasis on individual membership and commitment. It is, moreover, a community which ceremonially emphasizes the equality and equal participation of all members within it. Such an organization is characteristic of universal religions and universal moral reform movements. It should be especially intense during those times when the group makes the greatest demands on its individual members, above all, in times of war or conflict with outside forces. It should reach a maximum during periods of struggle over the very nature of the group's boundaries, which are defined ideologically as periods of struggle against heresies. Thus, we find the height of ascetic atrocities—purgatorial actions—during the Reformation and Counter-reformation in medieval Christianity; comparable outbreaks of ascetic violence were characteristic of the Sunni-Shi'ite battles in Islam. There is also the milder, less violent upsurges of asceticism found when groups within a society fight to maintain or raise their social status, putting pressure on all individual members to maintain a united front. An example of this defensive sort of asceticism is found at the height of the anti-alcohol crusade in the U.S.; of the offensive sort, the "Victorian revolution" in sexual mores that accompanied the mobilization of modern women in their first effort to raise their social status.

Ascetic cruelty remains important in the modern secular world because the issues of community membership and individual obligation to the group continue in the struggles of status groups, and political mobilization of any conflict groups in society—including both intellectual factions and larger social classes—is a continual phenomenon. We cannot escape the fact that most of the major humanitarian reform movements of the modern era, above all Marxism, but also to a lesser degree piece-meal reformisms, are especially prone to ascetic cruelty. Their very universalism and their intense mobilization makes it easy; wherever their gaze is turned outwards towards their enemies, and not inwards towards their own dangers, it becomes all the more likely.

Conclusion

In our contemporary society, ferocious cruelty is no longer structurally induced; it is no longer part of the dominant ceremonial order, although we still find individual cases. In this sense, modern society appears more humane. But at the same time, the dangers of callousness increase; and the technological efficiency of modern instruments of destruction makes its consequences all the more appalling while it hides them from view. Between these opposing
trends, ascetic cruelty has had its ups and downs, cresting during periods of mobilized conflict.

There is no evolutionary trend towards kindness and happiness. Ferociousness once increased, then declined; callousness and asceticism now oppose each other as defenders and challengers of the status quo. And the institutionalized asceticism of a victorious revolutionary movement easily amalgamates with the callousness of an established bureaucratic regime.

The demons can be exorcised, but only by seeing them for what they are. Those who claim that the demons can be exorcised only by action in the world, not by theorizing about them, seem to be possessed by demons of their own, especially the demon of asceticism; one senses here the communal hostility of the ascetic to the individual luxury of intellectual contemplation. And here is the danger. Those who deny everything for the self deny it as well for others; our altruism, taken too exclusively, is an infinite regress, passing a bucket from hand to hand that never reaches the fire. When we act, we call out the demons to meet us. Be careful: they are ourselves.

Notes

2 Han Fei Tzu, of course, is the arch-Legalist and anti-Confucian of his day. This passage nevertheless illustrates both the borrowing of the Legalists from the Confucians, and foreshadows the synthesis of a bureaucratic ideology in the unified state after 221 B.C.
7 1 Samuel 17: 51–54; 2 Samuel 4: 7–12.
The five main categories of social organization presented here are based on the predominant technology: hunting-and-gathering (stone implements), simple horticultural (primitive agriculture, digging sticks), advanced horticultural (soft metal tools, possibly irrigation agriculture), agrarian (iron tools, plows, and weapons, animal power), industrial (inanimate energy technology).

There is another element of emotional contagion: not only between hunter and hunter, but between hunter and hunted. The dog is set in motion by the frightened running of the rabbit. This kind of aggressor-victim interaction seems to go on in human animals in all of the more refined forms of human cruelty; human symbolic capacities only add to the ways in which these phenomena may become consciously sought after.

Animals do not torture or mutilate one another; they either fight, or quickly arrive at a situation of token deference.

There is another element of emotional contagion: not only between hunter and hunter, but between hunter and hunted. The dog is set in motion by the frightened running of the rabbit. This kind of aggressor-victim interaction seems to go on in human animals in all of the more refined forms of human cruelty; human symbolic capacities only add to the ways in which these phenomena may become consciously sought after.

Animals do not torture or mutilate one another; they either fight, or quickly arrive at a situation of token deference.
molten tin. These were the laws of the early period of expanding military states, struck down in the Buddhist regime of the Maurya dynasty, and later replaced by a primarily exclusionary structure of the later caste system. I am indebted to Gail Omvedt for pointing out these sources, and for discussion on these points; the interpretation however is my own.

29 The very word for "caste" is "jati," which also denotes distinctive animal species.


31 Japanese Buddhism is noted for other extreme versions of secularization, including the practice of priestly marriage—in a religion in which celibacy was the *sine qua non*—and a distinctively nationalistic doctrine of salvation, Nichiren Buddhism.


33 There are other aspects of violence in Chinese society that strike one today as unjust, especially the punishment of family members for the transgressions of a kinsman. But this is a general aspect of patrimonial social structure, and should not be confused with ferocity *per se*.

34 A great deal of popular support for the death penalty, however, seems to come from advocates of a traditionalist group structure (and probably members of such pockets of traditional groups as exist in modern society); although they may argue in the language of deterrence, the tone bespeaks ritual revenge of a strictly Durkheimian sort. The rationalist opponents of the death penalty have failed to grasp this.

35 The classic advocate of cruelty, the Marquis de Sade, emerges in the transitional period, and his writings capture all the major structural elements of the system then passing out of existence: the hermetically sealed status-group of the aristocracy, the awesome terror of traditional Christianity, and the deliberate use of violence for psychological effect. De Sade shared enough of the Enlightenment's clarity to express, far better than the *philosophes*, the nature of the society that was passing away.


37 Of course the individual face-to-face relationships between guards and prisoners provided scope for personal sadism as well. Political and military torture do not disappear entirely in the modern world; the transition to bureaucratic organization is hardly uniform at all places and all levels. In this sense, we may use the instances in which it occurs as further variations against which to test the model of ferocity proposed above. For modern ferocity seems to occur in precisely those instances where strong ritual barriers may still be found among stratified groups: above all, sadistic torture seems to occur across ethnic lines, both in prisons and in warfare, as in the pervasive atrocities of the French-Algerian war.


41 The manifestations of such asceticism have varied during the history of Christianity, especially as the more patrimonial structure of medieval European society came to the fore. It was above all during periods when the purer Christian ideal has been emphasized (and along with it, the power of the church and its leaders) that asceticism has been most clearly enforced.
42 Compare the practice of head-shaving in monasteries, and the emphasis on short hair-cuts (e.g., crew-cuts in America during the 1950s) in the military and in admiring civilian groups during periods of ascetic group mobilization; long hair and beards thus serve as emblems of individualist revolt. (cf. Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1971), for an analysis of this point, and of the properties of group boundaries, generally consonant with the theory of violence advanced here.

43 Cf. the fanatic intensity of interest in school *team* sports in the more traditional Christian communities in America.

