

Chapter 4 Real Societies and Their Falls

§ 1. The Metaphysical Question of the Fall of Societies

My guess is that you are likely to agree that the fall of a civilization is a bad thing when it is your civilization that falls, and that the fall of a Society is a bad thing when it is your Society that has fallen. However, before any more pronouncements are made on this topic, Critical metaphysics warns us to ask the following question: *What does "the fall of a civilization" or "the fall of a Society" mean?* Toynbee claimed history proves that civilizations fall from within. Some scholars dispute this and say history either does not prove this or proves it is not always true. I have said that Societies fall from within. Is this true, only true sometimes, or never true? We must have an objective context for the objects being called "the fall of a civilization" and "the fall of a Society" before the question can be asked or the proposition made with objective validity. To put this another way, the object must first be made scientifically meaningful and the question must be asked in a scientifically meaningful way. Doing so is the task at hand for this chapter.

Some questions are scientifically meaningless. The foremost example is a familiar one: "Does God really exist?" If you ask this question with the intent of having science take a position on the *Existenz* of God as a supreme supernatural entity who created the physical universe, science can only answer, "The question has no scientific meaning." This is because science is the study of nature and natural phenomena. A supernatural being, by the very definition of "supernatural," is an object forever beyond the horizon of objective validity in science. It is even beyond the horizon of scientifically objective metaphysics. God is not a possible object for either one. Ask me *as a scientist*, "Does God really exist?" and I must answer you, "I cannot say." Ask me *as a person of faith*, "Does God exist?" and I will answer you, "I think so because otherwise too many things just don't make sense to me." But that is not a scientific answer; it is a theological answer. Ask me, "Is there any scientific context in which God exists?" and I will answer, "Of course. Who or what else do you think is the principal subject of the Bible, the Koran, or the Torah?" That doesn't answer the question in terms of a real natural entity. Rather, it answers it in terms of naming a logical subject-matter – God as an Object of mathematical facet B in Critical epistemology. This is God-as-Object-of-religious-literature and a statement concerning the *Existenz* of that Object in that context. Every thing is real in some contexts, non-real in others, and unreal in yet others. In the context of science God is neither real nor unreal; God is non-real.

All scientifically meaningful questions are questions of *Existenz* – how an object exists – and not questions of *Dasein*. Does God have real *Dasein*? Well, one cannot answer "no" because that answer and the question are in mutual contradiction; you couldn't ask the question in the first place if you didn't have *some* concept of *some* object that you're calling "God." The very fact you have such a concept – no matter how undefined your object might be – *ipso facto* implicates *Dasein* for your God-Object. It just doesn't implicate *anything else* about your Object's *Existenz*. *Dasein* ("there be") sets a topical subject for a proposition *and nothing more*. In *Exodus* 3:14 (as translated in the Revised Standard Version of the Bible), when God answers Moses by saying, "I am who I am," we encounter as scientifically meaningless a tautology as a tautology can get.

What, then, does "the fall of a Society" mean? To get an answer, we must begin with how we understand the *real Existenz* of a Society. This means we seek to understand the idea of Society in the context of it being some sort of entity we understand by characteristic conceptual marks that provide grounds for recognition of a specific phenomenon in actual experience. A Society as this word is epistemologically defined is a mathematical Object. It belongs to facet B, the rational facet of the phenomenon of mind. Such an object cannot be an object-in-nature unless it is given a real explanation (a *Realerklärung*) that can be applied to phenomena in Nature. To obtain such an explanation we must begin with some terminology from Critical metaphysics and mental physics.

A Society is an Object that is understood as a higher concept of divers individual concepts of society in which is retained what is contained in common among these divers concepts. This is a mathematical definition but it is contextually incomplete in regard to our application of it to the world of phenomenal experience (facet A). Which individuals are those who contribute concepts of society to it? Who judges these concepts to determine what they contain in common? How is this judge to know what those individual, peculiar and private concepts might be? These are all pragmatic and pertinent issues for our problem-at-hand. Their resolutions cannot be left to the wayward accidents of judgments of taste nor can they be dictated by fiat if we are to obtain an Object suitable for objectively valid social-natural treatment by science.

Because our interest in understanding this Object began with an aim to clarify the Toynbean idea of "the fall of civilizations," it is this context that sets the starting point for the deduction of Society-as-a-social-natural-entity. An *entity* regarded in social-natural contexts is *any nominally designated aggregate of people in regular effective interaction with each other*. This, at least, provides a context for the "which individuals?" issue raised above. The individuals whose divers ideas of society are pertinent are those who are the members of some aggregate of interacting people. But this immediately brings up the question of which aggregate of people is to provide the model basis. Any specific selection we might make here would be suitable for an Object definition of *this* or *that* Society-as-a-social-natural-entity but would not be suitable for a *general* explanation of Society-as-a-social-natural-entity. A social-natural science should always seek for the latter explanation in order that its systematic study can have the widest possible objectively valid scope of application. We are still missing some key context-determining clarifying idea.

Every empirical science proceeds by constructing models for representing divers phenomena in the abstract yet in such a way that these phenomena are united by some common basis. This is as much as to say that the Object of an empirical science is a rational Object but is also, at the same time, an Object which by its idea understands empirical Objects of experience. It is the connection of the Object with these latter objects that defines the principal quantity of Critical mathematics that serves science as its point of connection with empirical nature. At the same time, the science-Object is still a *made* Object (because it is mathematical), and so if its idea is to serve as a principal quantity of Critical mathematics – i.e., be suitable for a valid Critical system of ontology – all determining factors in *making* its definition must be *practical* factors for subsequent *applications* of the idea. This is no more and no less than a Critical requirement of *architectonic in scientific methodology*. Today few people, even considering just those who work in the community of scientists, remember that our modern distinction between natural science and natural philosophy was first set out by Kant. Kant teaches us,

Under an *architectonic* I understand the art of systems. Since systematic unity is that which first makes ordinary knowledge into science, i.e., makes a system out of a mere aggregate of it, architectonic is the doctrine of that which is scientific in our knowledge in general, and therefore necessarily belongs to our doctrine of method. . . . I understand by a system, however, the unity of manifold knowledge under one Idea. This is the rational knowledge of the form of the whole insofar as through this the scope of the manifold, as well as the place of the parts with respect to each other, is determined *a priori*. . . . For its execution the Idea needs a *schema*, i.e. an essential manifoldness and order of the parts determined *a priori* from the principle of the purpose. A schema that is not presented in accordance with an Idea, i.e. from the chief purpose of reason, but empirically in accordance with aims occurring contingently . . . yields *technical* unity, but that which arises only as a result of an Idea (where reason provides the purposes *a priori* and does not await on them empirically) grounds *architectonic* unity. What we call science . . . arises architectonically, for the sake of its affinity and its derivation from a single supreme and inner purpose which first makes possible the whole [Kant (1787) B: 860-862].

Toynbee wrote,

What then is the right way of describing the relation between human societies and individuals? The truth seems to be that a human society is, in itself, a system of relationships between human beings who are not only individuals but are also social animals in the sense that they could not exist at all without being in this relationship to one another. A society, we may say, is a product of the relations between individuals, and these relations of theirs arise from the coincidence of their individual fields of action. This coincidence combines the individual fields into a common ground, and this common ground is what we call a society. [Toynbee (1946), pg. 211]

This is correct so far as it goes, but Toynbee's description is also incomplete. Two armies on a battlefield engaged in combat are certainly composed of individuals whose fields of action are in coincidence and interaction. Yet this is not what we generally mean when we refer to a Society. Furthermore, it is obvious that the individuals in each army stand a better chance of "existing" (staying alive and unwounded) if their respective armies were *not* in this hostile state of mutual relationship. In addition, *H. sapiens* possesses no social instinct and to say "man is a social animal" is about as scientifically meaningless a phrase as can be uttered. Would you call a serial murderer at large in our midst a "social animal" or would you be more likely to call him an "antisocial animal"?

§ 2. Society as Organized Being

In Critical metaphysics an organized being is an Object in which its parts, in terms of their *Dasein* and form, are possible only through their interrelation in the whole, and in which each part must be regarded as being combined in the unity of the Object in reciprocal determination as an effect of the other parts and, at the same time, as a cause of the other parts. This *Realerklärung* captures Toynbee's notion about a system of relationships between individual human beings. However, it is incorrect to regard those human beings *per se* as being the *parts* of a Society. It is not the people themselves but, rather, their mutual interactions with each other that supply the real composition of a Society. There is a rather subtle yet Critical fine distinction between the idea of being a "member" of a Society and the idea of being a "part" of a Society. If we regard the city of New York as an instantiation of a Society, any one particular individual in it can die without the Society called New York ceasing to exist as a Society. An entity that loses one of its parts ceases to be that entity and becomes some other entity.

The *real* distinction between the idea of a "part" and the idea of a "member" is not very well captured by language in the dictionary definitions of these words either in English or in Latin-English dictionary translations. The root of the English word "part" is the Latin word *pars*, the root meaning of which is "one of the portions into which a thing (material or otherwise) may be divided." *Pars* denotes an idea of *analysis*. The English word "member" is derived from the Latin word *membrum*, the root meaning of which is "an *organum* of the body." *Organum* is a word the Romans acquired from the Greeks, i.e., *ὄργανον*: an instrument, implement, or tool for making or doing a thing. *Membrum* carries the connotation of a *synthesis*. It follows from these root connotations in the origins of these words that: (1) the root connotation of the word "part" is fundamentally that of the outcome of an act of division, a mere ontological identification by analysis; (2) the root connotation of "member" is fundamentally referenced to the notion of *agency* in a body. Thus the root connotation implied by "member" is more than just an analytic ontological identification and extends to an identification of an *agent* of practical action. The root notion of a "part" does not imply agency and is merely a theoretical notion; that of a "member" does imply agency and therefore its root notion is a practical notion. In Critical metaphysics when we go after fundamental *real* explanations these real explanations are always pursued back to

practical notions. Strictly, people can be regarded as *members* of a Society but not as *parts* of a Society. Their mutually interacting agencies *make* the Society and make it *as* an organized being.

This mutually co-determining agency metaphorically makes real Society a kind of "living" entity. But "living" in what sense? Obviously it is not a living entity in any biological sense of the word life because a Society is a non-corporeal organized being. Biologists define "life" as:

life Complex physico-chemical systems whose two main peculiarities are (1) storage and replication of molecular information in the form of nucleic acid, and (2) the presence of (or in viruses perhaps merely the potential for) enzyme catalyts. Without enzyme catalyts a system is inert, not alive . . . Other familiar properties of living systems such as nutrition, respiration, reproduction, excretion, sensitivity, locomotion, etc., are all dependent in some way upon their exhibiting the two above-mentioned properties. [Thain and Hickman (2004)]

This is, of course, a merely mathematical definition of "life" and not a real explanation of the phenomenon of life. The latter is something biology finds impossible to explain; hence, whether or not a virus is a living system is an on-going debate among biologists.

Metaphysically, it is very important to understand that all a person's judgments about whether or not any particular thing possesses a property called "life" are based upon inferences of analogy in which the person uses *himself* as the absolute standard by which "life" is judged. Whatever "life" might or might not be, I *know* I am "alive," and I use myself as the measure of other things to pronounce whether or not they too are "alive" according to whether or not they exhibit things I associate with my own personal *vis vivo*. You also do the same thing in judging "life." This is a universally exhibited character of human judgmentation vividly and empirically demonstrated by the developmental psychology of young children:

The results obtained have again clearly shown the four stages previously defined in connection with the attributing of consciousness to things. During the first stage everything is regarded [by children] as living which has activity or a function or a use of any sort. During the second stage, life is defined by movement, all movement being regarded as in a certain degree spontaneous. During the third stage, the child distinguishes spontaneous movement from movement imposed by an outside agent and life is identified with the former. Finally, in the fourth stage, life is restricted either to animals or to animals and plants. . . .

From the point of view of our research, the fact that the child's notion of life is more systematized than its notion of consciousness carries also certain disadvantages. The child will add to its spontaneous ideas various adventitious definitions (to live is to speak, or to be warm, or to have blood, etc.). But all the children who gave these secondary definitions were also able to give the usual answers, all being simply juxtaposed together, so that it was possible to neglect these various secondary notions, whose completely individual character clearly showed them to be the result of chance conversations overheard, etc. . . .

It is evident what meaning [children in the first stage] give to the word "alive." It means "to do something," or for choice "to be able to move" . . . but it also means to act without changing position: the oven, the candle, etc. are alive. Even such an idea as that of the nature of an animal is defined in terms of utility . . . At other times to be alive means simply to have force; thus poison, rain, etc. are alive.

Some of these children give life the same significance as consciousness . . . Others, however, give life a much wider meaning. . . . Despite these differences, however, the answers of this first stage have all a common basis which lies in asserting the idea of a fundamental final force in nature and a *continuum* of forces destined to bring about these ends. This idea is certainly not peculiar to the answers obtained by means of the present technique, but appears to be one of the most fundamental ideas in child thought. This first stage lasts in

fact up to the ages of 6 or 7, and it is well known that at this age the nature of children's definitions bears out in a striking manner what we have just found. . . . Final cause implies an efficient cause in the form of a force immanent in the object and directing it towards its destined end. To the child's mind the idea of "life" fulfils this function. . . .

Is such an idea primitive or derived? In other words is it already present in children of 3 or 4, that is to say in children too young to be able to answer our questions since not yet knowing the word "life"? It seems that it is. At least this is what a study of the language and behavior of children of this age seems to suggest. At all events, everything appears to suggest that as soon as the appearance of the word "life" gives rise to a systematization of the corresponding concept, the form of this concept is from the first that which is found in the stage studied above. [Piaget (1929), pp. 194-199]

The way we think with and use the concept of "life" is, from the theoretical Standpoint of Critical epistemology, a developed habit-of-thinking in a form of ontological judgmentation. But there is no objectively valid *ontological Realerklärung* of what "life" is. Only an epistemological and ultimately practical Critical *Realerklärung* can have objective validity for the idea of "life." From the practical Standpoint of Critical epistemology, *life* is *the capacity of a being to take action in accordance with the laws of appetitive power*. This is the Critical *Realerklärung* made from the practical Standpoint and has practical objective validity as a functional rule that grounds judgments attributing theoretical life to individual things. These individual judgments themselves, however, are *mathematical* (made) judgments.

Understanding that the idea of "life" applied to natural objects is made by inference of analogy in thinking, the idea of this human character of judgmentation can be extended to make, also by inference of analogy, a mathematical concept of something appropriately called *social life*. A Society can be regarded as a corporate person and, as such, regarded as possessing corporate *Personfähigkeit*. We can look for behavioral attributes and characteristics in mutually co-determined behaviors in a human population that exhibit the *Dasein* of corporate *Personfähigkeit*. As I discussed in chapter 2, the animating principles of Quantity and Quality in the power of the corporate person pertain to conditions for the formation and maintenance of a mini-Community. A corporate person is a "happening" (in the terminology of mental physics, an *Unsache*-thing) and these animating principles pertain to how independently determined human actions can come into coherence with each other to produce a mini-Community. A Society can, by continuation, be regarded as a Community of mini-Communities such that this Community also exhibits a corporate *Personfähigkeit* and corporate personhood.

I discussed the metaphysics of corporate personhood previously in *The Idea of the Social Contract* [Wells (2012), chap. 13 §3]. As an abstract mathematical entity, a corporate person (and therefore a Society) does not possess an appetitive power and, therefore, Critical life cannot be applied directly to or asserted of a corporate person. However, there are phenomenal behaviors exhibited by an interacting population that present us with an empirical basis for regarding that population as an incorporeal organized being. An *organized being* is *an Object in which its parts, in terms of their Dasein and form, are possible only through their interrelation in the whole, and in which each part must be regarded as being combined in the unity of the Object in reciprocal determination as an effect of the other parts and, at the same time, as a cause of the other parts*. For a corporate person we regard as these parts the activities that are presented in an embedding field network depicting the social chemistry of the population.

To obtain an embodied *parástase* of a Society in a principal quantity of Critical mathematics, such that this *parástase* has ontological import from the theoretical Standpoint of Critical metaphysics, we must examine the structural form of such an embodiment using the general ideas of representation in Critical metaphysics. Figure 4.1 illustrates the 2LAR structure of these general ideas [Wells (2006), chap. 3 §1-3].

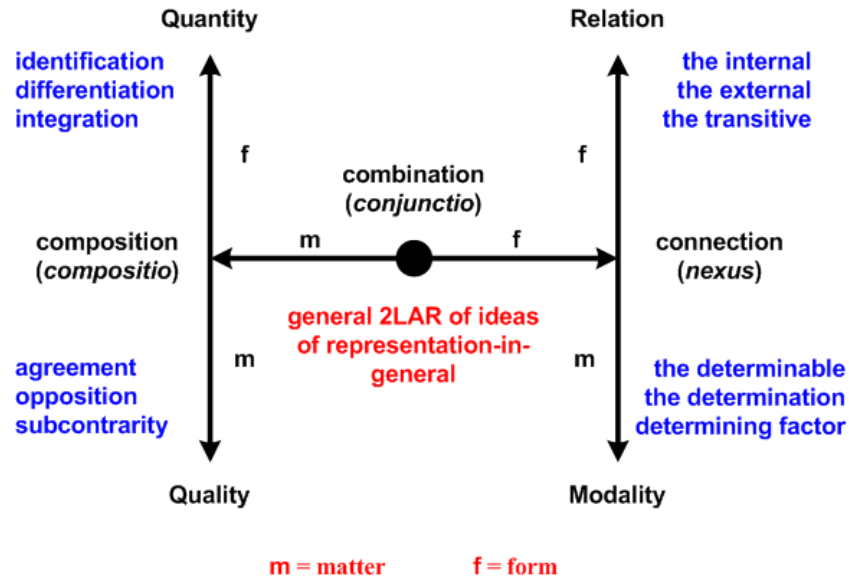


Figure 4.1: 2LAR structure of the general ideas of representation in Critical metaphysics. Refer to the glossary for technical explanations of the twelve functional *momenta* in this 2LAR.

To make a 2LAR *parástase* of Society we must represent the idea using one functional from each of the four heads of Quantity, Quality, etc. in the general 2LAR. In deducing the proper selections there are two principles of formal expedience in Nature by which we must be guided. First, the *parástase* cannot lack connection with the conceptual contexts in which we *use* our common conventional (dictionary) understandings of the word "society" because these contexts provide our conceptual meaning implications for that word. If the *parástase* of Society failed to make connection with these usages, then, whatever the theorist might mean by empirical Society, that meaning would be something else than what other people conventionally mean by "society." In that case, the theorist would be guilty of making the sort of transcendent error that Bloom accused the current social sciences of making, namely, that the theoretical construct "is nothing more than an abstraction, a construct, or a figment of the imagination" [Bloom (1987), pg. 390]. This principle is a subordinated corollary standing under two acroamatic principles of continuity in reflective judgment: (1) *in mundo non datur saltus* ("a leap is not given in the sensible world"); and (2) *in mundo non datur hiatus* ("a gap is not given in the sensible world"). The first pertains to *objectivity* in Nature, the second to the creative synthesis of ideas under a regulative functional of mental physics called the Aesthetic Idea [Wells (2009), chap. 7 §3].

Second, the form of the *parástase* must establish an objectively valid Rational Cosmology for the idea of Society. The principal quantity of mathematical Society must establish a bridge between the rationalism of theoretical science and the behaviorism of empirical science. This principle is a subordinated corollary standing under two other acroamatic principles of continuity in reflective judgment: (3) *in mundo non datur casus* ("chance is not given in the sensible world"); and (4) *in mundo non datur fatum* ("fate is not given in the sensible world"). These are the acroamatic principles of continuity in Nature and continuity in Reality. The establishment of a valid Rational Cosmology is a fundamental requirement of the doctrine of method in making any *applied* metaphysic connecting a special science with Critical metaphysics proper [Wells (2011)].

The correct functional ideas to use from figure 4.1 follow directly from these principles. The Quantity functional is the idea of integration. To borrow a phrase from Eastern philosophy, a Society is "the oneness of the many." In the more formal terminology of mental physics, **integration** is *the form of the composition of many given parts into an entire whole in which the*

object is known as a totality of composing aggregates. By "Society" we do not understand any of the individual activities *per se* that are its collective parts but, rather, the entirety of the behavioral structure these activities taken as a whole produce.

The Quality functional is the idea of subcontrarity. In mental physics **subcontrarity** is *the Quality of synthesizing a union of two contraries, specifically the synthesis of opposition (Widerstreit) regarded as agreement (Einstimmung).* Its logical function is to transform two (or more) contradictory propositions into merely contrary propositions so that these propositions can be united in an understanding of their relationships. As an example expressed in the traditional form of classical logic, the propositions ⟨human beings are men⟩ and ⟨human beings are women⟩ are contradictory propositions when we merely juxtapose them. The subcontrary proposition that unites them is, again in classical form, {⟨some human beings are men⟩ and ⟨some human beings are women⟩}. The mental physics in building this concept starts from two judgment propositions – for example, ⟨John is not-a-woman⟩ and ⟨Jane is not-a-man⟩ – and proceeds from these to the construction of higher concepts of classifications ("human-beings-who-are-men" and "human-beings-who-are-women") that are eventually united by the subcontrary determinant judgment. When we use the word "mankind" in a gender-neutral context, the concept "mankind" is a concept of subcontrarity that understands both men and women. For the *parástase* of Society, the subcontrary idea of Quality is **practical cooperation**, i.e., *collective behaviors of a group of interacting people within a leadership dynamic in which each individual acts from a basis of Duties according to his personal and private moral code but in such a way that he interacts congruently with the Duty-determined behaviors of the other people.* To congruently interact in this context means that satisfaction of Duty by one person does not thwart satisfaction of Duty by another person. Acts of cooperation can be either civic or uncivic. Thus practical cooperation is an idea standing under subcontrarity.

The functional idea of Relation for Society is the transitive Relation. In mental physics terminology, the transitive Relation is the form of connection in which the concept of the connection is simultaneously the concept of an internal Relation and an external Relation. Internal Relation is the form of connection in a representation in which the connections have no reference to anything other than the object which is being represented in the connection. External Relation is the form of connection among objects in which is represented something not contained in the representation of any of these objects by themselves. In the theoretical Standpoint of Critical metaphysics proper the fundamental notion of understanding for making the connection of Relation for this concept in the manifold of concepts is the category of community, regarded from the hypothetical perspective of Rational Cosmology as the notion of the World as the formal context of all objects. In the practical Standpoint, and applied to the idea of Society, this notion transcendently grounds a notion of mutually co-determining actions that collectively and simultaneously satisfy the peculiar practical purposes of all the individuals comprising the membership of the Society *as these satisfactions are personally judged by each actor.* This is **judicial cooperation**, i.e. *the exhibition in action and behavior of mutually co-determined Self-regulations of the action expressions of individuals during civic and civil social interactions.* This is an idea of *nexus* for what can appropriately be called a **cooperative world** from the theoretical Standpoint of epistemology. The acting individual is then an object-among-other-objects (other people) *in* this cooperative world. But from the *practical* Standpoint **the idea of the cooperative world** is *the representation of a form of nexus-in-a-Society as this form is exhibited by actions of judicial cooperation.* That which I am calling "a" cooperative world is the object of this idea. The unity of the idea-of-the-cooperative-world and the transcendental cooperative-world-object is an Object I call a **cooperative World**.

Finally, the general idea of Modality for Society is the general idea of the determinable, i.e., that which can be used in a synthesis of a determination but which prior to this has no context.

This is the logically problematic idea in the general 2LAR of figure 4.1. Its use here is dictated by the general form of an applied metaphysic [Wells (2011)] – specifically, that part of a metaphysic that joins the phenomenal knowledge of a special science (which is always empirical and therefore contingent) to rational principles (mathematical doctrine) used to unify the phenomena studied by that science. In the context of Society, the general idea of the determinable is regarded in the context of that which can be used in the synthesis of a determined *parástase* of an appearance of a Society.

These four functional ideas taken together and in these specific contexts are the representation of real Society at the second level of analytic representation. A *real Society* is the principal quantity of Critical mathematics representing the real Existenz of a Society. Its 2LAR structure is

- **Quantity** – the general idea of integration regarded in the context of the entirety of the behavioral structure of individual activities in an embedding field network of the social chemistry of a Society taken as one whole;
- **Quality** – the general idea of subcontrarity regarded in the context of practical cooperation;
- **Relation** – the general idea of transitive Relation regarded in the context of an Object representing knowledge of a cooperative World; and
- **Modality** – the general idea of the determinable regarded in the context of that which can be used in the synthesis of a determined *parástase* of an appearance of a Society.

This structural representation provides a Critical ontology through an applied metaphysic for the idea of Society-regarded-as-an-organized-being. This is real Society from the theoretical Standpoint of Critical metaphysics.

Although Kant was lecturing on the organization of scientific metaphysics in the early 1780s, it was not until the mid-1790s when he realized that his Critical system was not complete until it had a doctrine for constructing systems of applied metaphysics serving the role of transition or "bridge" between empirical principles discovered by empirical science and rational principles of Critical metaphysics proper. Figure 4.2 illustrates this Idea of an applied metaphysic as a transitional bridge. In social-natural sociology and social-natural education Society-as-organized-being serves as such a bridgework. The idea of Society-as-organized-being is the idea of a principal quantity of Critical mathematics at the point where empirical phenomenon and rational *noumenon* are joined to one another in a Critical doctrine of natural science.

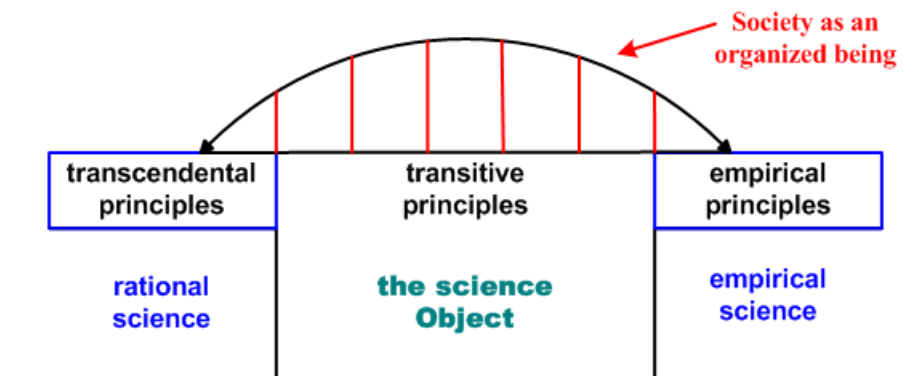


Figure 4.2: Bridge model of an applied metaphysic. The science Object is a real entirety that constitutes the topical subject of an empirical science. For social-natural sociology and social-natural education Society regarded as an organized being stands as the bridge span between empirical principles of the special science and transcendental principles of Critical metaphysics proper.

Kant worked on this problem from the late 1790s until the infirmities of old age incapacitated him in 1801. When he died in 1804 he left behind an extensive collection of notes that were not finally gathered together and published, under the title of Kant's *Opus Postumum*, for more than a century. Around 1799 Kant wrote,

Objects¹ must collectively fit into the topic of the principles, without which they could not be objects of experience . . . Thus we find in our own body and in nature properties on account of which we must consider [these objects] organized – that is, as formed for purposes – because we would not otherwise understand them as such. These ideas always come before we can substantiate their Objects² by experience; they are principles *a priori* by which experiences are made. . . .

The *transition* from the metaphysical rudiments of natural science to physics according to its subjective *a priori* principles of form is or contains a principle of the possibility of physics as a system of empirical ideas and laws and is the digest of the elementary system of the moving powers of matter as a special science of nature, which is always at work in progression, observation and aggregation but is never completed. It is, thus, a scientific investigation of nature, whose *a priori* principles in kinetics are partly mathematical, partly dynamical. [Kant (c. 1799), 22: 291-292]

To properly understand Kant's doctrine here we must properly understand the scope he gives to the terms "physics" and "kinetics." By "physics" Kant means nothing less than the doctrine of *any* natural science, not just the one we today call "physics." He uses this word very nearly, but not exactly, in the ancient Greek connotation of *φυσικής*. This word is probably best translated as "principles of natural philosophy." Wicksteed and Cornford noted,

The title 'Physics' is misleading, and the reader must expect to find little or nothing that it suggests in this treatise [Aristotle's *Φυσικής*]. 'Lectures on Nature,' the alternative title found in editions of the Greek text, is more enlightening. But 'Principles of Natural Philosophy' (as the term would have been understood in the eighteenth and earlier nineteenth centuries) would be better still.

The realm of Nature, for Aristotle, includes all things that move or change, or that come and go, either in the sense of passing from 'here' to 'there,' or in the more extended sense of passing from 'this' to 'that,' which latter phrase is equivalent to 'becoming something that it was not' – a solid becoming a liquid, or a hot thing becoming cold, for instance. [Wicksteed & Cornford (1929), pg. xv]

Kant differs from this in that he drew the first clear distinction between "natural philosophy" and "science" and identified "science" as any systematic doctrine of empirical nature. For Aristotle, on the other hand, rational and empirical principles are in a syncretism he called *episteme* without Kant's hairsplitting distinctions between metaphysics and physics. Similarly, what Kant means by "kinetics" is a scientific doctrine of *kinesis* where *kinesis* is understood in the Greek connotation of "change of any kind." A banana that was fresh on Saturday and rotted by Thursday has undergone *kinesis* and a mathematical theory describing the nature of this change would be a doctrine of kinetics.

Society-as-an-organized-being is an ontological Object (and therefore is given through Critical applied metaphysics) that is *used by* empirical science as an objective foundation for theory. This by no means is to be taken as implying this Object is primitive. It is not. Society-as-an-organized-being is itself composed by "social atoms" – individual human beings. In social-natural sociology these social atoms are themselves Objects of an applied metaphysic, specifically that to which I

¹ *Gegenstände*: objects; that which mental representation is representing.

² *Objecte*: Objects; the union of an object and its representing mental depiction (*parástase*).

gave the name "anthropological person" in *The Idea of the Social Contract*.

§ 3. Real Society in the Judicial Standpoint

This *Realerklärung* of real Society is a real explanation as Society is to be viewed from the theoretical Standpoint of Critical metaphysics. When viewed from the judicial Standpoint, i.e. in terms of judgments of the *Existenz* of a social-entity, a real Society is regarded as an object of organized being constituted as an integrated population of cooperating individuals whose Self-determined actions interact to produce a social environment of civic and civil action expressions (a cooperative World). *Practical cooperation* means collective behaviors of a group of interacting people within a leadership dynamic in which each individual acts from a basis of Duties according to his personal and private moral code but in such a way that he interacts congruently with the Duty-determined behaviors of the other people. To congruently interact in this context means that satisfaction of Duty by one person in the group does not thwart satisfaction of Duty by another person in the group. Cooperation can be either civic or uncivic.

Now, a real Society always has a Community but it is not necessarily a *civil* Community even if the action expressions of each member are civic and the conduct of all social interactions is civil. *Civic* merely means applying or pertaining to the conduct or behavior of an individual in his social interactions. *Civil* means applying to the collective conduct or behavior of a Community as this conduct or behavior affects one or more individual persons in the Community.

But a *civic action* is an action operationalized by an individual that is congruent with his Duties under the terms of a social contract. A person's *conduct* can be civic (not-hostile to the interests of another person in the same Community) without his *actions* being civic actions if the Community has no social contract common to all the members of its body politic. Such a Community has no civil convention because a *civil convention* is *a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate and by which each associate, while uniting himself with all the other associates, may still obey himself alone and remain as free as he was before joining the association*. A civil Community is an association of people sharing a civil convention having common civil rights and civil liberties with a common system of governance. If the members of a real Society do not all possess a common set of civil liberties under the protection of a common set of civil rights, then that Society lacks a civil convention and has an *uncivil* Community of members.

We have here a subtle but important distinction between the technical terms "real Society" and "Community." A real Society is *judicially* characterized by

1. the composition of a unified whole of aggregate individual activities such that
2. these activities are co-determined as practical cooperations with
3. these cooperations expressing civic and civil self-regulations of behavior and in which
4. individual action expressions comprise the determinable *materia ex qua*³ for determinant judgments of the *Existenz* of the social entity.

The parts of a real Society subsist in expressed human actions, not in the human beings who comprise the membership of that Society. The parts of a real Community subsist in its social atoms, i.e., *the parts of a Community subsist in its members*.

Critical Relation in real Society does not mean the real Society has a civil Community. This is because civil liberties and civil rights common to *all* members are established and enforced by

³ "matter from which"

means of a social contract. If castes exist for which the civil liberties allowed and the civil rights guaranteed differ from one caste to another, the real Society has an *uncivil* Community. Real Society in an uncivil Community is held together by interlocking local social compacts promoting cooperations among mini-Communities while each mini-Community serves only its local Duties to itself. Any communal self-regulation of behaviors with regard to other mini-Communities is merely based on tenets of prudence so as to be non-provocative. Such tenets are self-defensive rather than cooperative and characterize a state-of-nature social Molecule in which a peaceful *co-Existenz* is attained by compacts better regarded as treaties of truce or armistice rather than as contracts of alliance. Put another way, the mini-Communities merely *tolerate* each other, each for the sake of its own self-preservation but without concern for the preservation of the others. The social-chemical bond between mini-Communities can be likened to an ionic chemical bond.

For example, the Roman Empire *at the time of its founding* was an uncivil Community. The civil Community of the early days of the Roman Republic had already long been dissolved by faction and civil war. Prudent cities within the Empire acted merely to appease whichever faction was currently posing the greatest or most immediate threat to the city members in whatever ways seemed wisest in each particular social situation. Too much overt cooperation with one powerful faction against the interests of another powerful faction was very dangerous for the inhabitants of a city, as what happened to the 286-year-old Roman city of Cremona in 69 A.D. demonstrated. In that year a Roman general named Titus Flavius Vespasianus (Vespasian) sent his army out of the East to invade Italy. Vespasian was seeking to overthrow Emperor Aulus Vitellius – who had himself only recently overthrown the inept Emperor Ortho (ruler of Rome for a total of ninety-five days). The people of Cremona had had the bad judgment to open their gates to Vitellius' army and submit to Vitellius' rule. This appeased Vitellius but then Vespasian's army arrived:

As the light faded, the Flavian army arrived in full strength. Once they began to march over the heaps of dead, the fresh traces of bloodshed, they thought that the fighting was over and clamored to press on towards Cremona to receive, or enforce, the surrender of the beaten army. This at any rate was what was said openly, and it sounded well. But what each man thought in his heart was something different. A city on flat ground could be rushed, and an army which forced an entry during the hours of darkness would . . . enjoy greater license to plunder. But if they waited for dawn, it would be too late; there would be peace-terms and appeals for mercy. . . . When a city was stormed, its booty fell to the troops, when surrendered, to the commanders. [Tacitus (c. 100 A.D.), III. 19]

Cremona did in fact surrender to Vespasian's forces after Vitellius' army was annihilated and the city was undefended. By then it was too late:

Forty thousand armed men burst into Cremona. . . . Neither age nor rank were any protection from indiscriminate slaughter and violation. Aged men and women past their prime, worthless as booty, were dragged about in wanton insult. Did a grown up maiden or a youth of marked beauty fall in their way, they were torn in pieces by the violent hands of their ravishers. . . . Men, as they carried off for themselves coin or temple-offerings of massive gold, were cut down by others of superior strength. Some, scorning what met the eye, searched for hidden wealth, and dug up buried treasures, applying the scourge and torture to the owners. In their hands were flaming torches, which, as soon as their carried out the spoil, they wantonly hurled into the gutted houses and plundered temples. In an army which included such varieties of language and character, an army comprising Roman citizens, allies, and foreigners, there was every kind of lust, each man had a law of his own, and nothing was forbidden. For four days Cremona satisfied the plunderers. [*ibid.*, III. 33]

The sacking of Cremona, a defenseless Roman city, by a Roman army shocked all of Italy. It was the worst violation of Roman *mos maiorum* imaginable, a total breakdown of bedrock

Roman concepts of social Order. The event was an enormity comparable to how Americans would see it if a division of the U.S. Army sacked Omaha, Nebraska.

Vitellius himself was not present at Cremona when it was stormed. He was in Rome protected by what remained of his forces when the Flavian army came for him. Unlike Cremona, the people of Rome did not take sides. The actions of its civilians during the ensuing battle in the streets of Rome shocked Tacitus:

The populace [of Rome] stood by and watched the combatants; and, as though it had been a mimic combat, encouraged first one party and then the other by their shouts and plaudits. Whenever either side gave way, they cried out that those who had concealed themselves in the shops, or took refuge in any private house, should be dragged out and butchered, and they secured the larger share of the booty; for while the soldiers were busy with bloodshed and massacre, the spoils fell to the crowd. It was a terrible and hideous sight that presented itself throughout the city. Here raged battle and death; there the bath and the tavern were crowded. In one spot were pools of blood and heaps of corpses, and close by prostitutes and men of character as infamous; there were all the debaucheries of luxurious peace, all the horrors of a city most cruelly sacked, till one was ready to believe the Country to be mad at once with rage and lust. It was not indeed the first time that armed troops had fought within the city; they had done so twice when Sulla, once when Cinna triumphed. The bloodshed then had not been less, but now there was unnatural recklessness, and men's pleasures were not interrupted even for a moment. As if it were a new delight added to their holidays, they exulted in and enjoyed the scene, indifferent to parties, and rejoicing over the suffering of the Commonwealth. [*ibid.*, III. 83]

By a merely nominal tradition, historians are fond of telling us Rome – meaning the Western Roman Empire – fell at the end of the fifth century A.D. Durant wrote,

The final years were a kaleidoscope of imperial mediocrities. . . . At this juncture a new conglomeration of barbarians swept down into Italy . . . At the same time a Pannonian general, Orestes, deposed Nepos, and established his son Romulus (nicknamed Augustulus) on the throne (475). The new invaders demanded from Orestes a third of Italy; when he refused they slew him, and replaced Romulus with their general Odoacer (476). This son of Attila's minister Edecon was not without ability; he convened the cowed Senate, and through it he offered to Zeno, the new Emperor of the East, sovereignty over all the empire, provided that Odoacer might as his *patricius* govern Italy. Zeno consented, and the line of Western emperors came to an end.

No one appears to have seen in this event the "fall of Rome"; on the contrary, it seemed to be a blessed reunification of the Empire, as formerly under Constantine. The Roman Senate saw the matter so, and raised a statue to Zeno in Rome. The Germanization of the Italian army, government, and peasantry, and the natural multiplication of the Germans in Italy, had proceeded so long that the political consequences seemed to be negligible shifts on the surface of the national scene. Actually, however, Odoacer ruled Italy as a king, with small regard for Zeno. In effect the Germans had conquered Italy as Gaiseric had conquered Africa, as the Visigoths had conquered Spain, as the Angles and the Saxons were conquering Britain, and as the Franks were conquering Gaul. In the West the great Empire was no more. [Durant (1950), pp. 42-43]

In point of fact "the" so-called great Empire was gone long before these events ever occurred, and they occurred in the power vacuum left by the deunification and social disintegration of the body politic once called the Romans. "The" Roman Empire as a social unit was gone when Vespasian's troops sacked Cremona and stormed the city of Rome. Arguably it was already gone on the day Caligula was assassinated. Its predecessor, the old Roman Republic, was already dead the day Caesar crossed the Rubicon. One must not mistake the Society of a king and his *hirdmen* for unity

in a body politic of rulers-and-ruled. The corporate *Personfähigkeit* of a ruling caste and that of a Community-of-the-ruled are entirely separate; their juxtaposition does not make one whole-of-Society. It makes nothing more than a social Molecule weakly bonded, if it is bonded at all, in a state-of-nature. Social-chemical bonds between mini-Communities are established by tenets of prudence without a unifying social contract. The only thing special about the fifth century A.D. was that events made it impossible for historians to *ignore* that the Western Roman Empire had fallen. Personally, I hesitate to speculate there ever *was* any real identity of "an" imperial-Roman Society after the time of Caesar Augustus, and I find it impossible to designate even that entity as "the" Rome of Livy. Still, something that was *called* "Rome" existed.

But it was only a *Toynbee society*, i.e., a community of mini-Communities interacting with one another in which common cultural features are found such that we nominally *classify* them in a cultural unit – in this case one *named* "the Western Roman Empire." We might equally well call such an *ad hoc* classification based on similar cultural features a civilization-in-the-Toynbee-sense. When the description becomes too strained this marks the historian's usual and traditional point of designating "the fall of a civilization." This, however, is nothing else than a mathematical classification by fiat and as such does not explain either a real Society or its fall.

Regarded epistemologically, civilization is not a corporate entity but, rather, a process. More specifically, *civilization* is *the process of perfecting Volks-society* and its Object is an *Unsache-thing* (a "happening"). *Volks-society* is *an Ideal of pure Reason subsisting as an Unsache-thing of reasoning in the progression from natural society to free society to ideal society* [Wells (2012), chap. 12]. The latter three terms were coined by Santayana as broad and non-crisp qualitative classifications of how "advanced" a civilization is. Specifically, he described them as:

- natural society – a Society in which socialization is grounded in personal affective judgments reciprocated among a group of people;
- free society – a Society in which socialization is self-governed by unanimities of shared meanings; and
- ideal society – a Society in which socialization is grounded in symbolic thinking and judgmentation insofar as the meanings of symbols are shared by people who collectively comprise a civil Community.

What Toynbee called a civilization was merely a Society that had reached a stage of development risen to either an advanced degree of Santayana's free society or to the degree of an ideal society.

From this we are in a position to grasp a real explanation for Toynbee's claim that civilizations fall from within. Each civil mini-Community within a real Society is a real mini-Society with a local social contract, regardless of whether or not the larger aggregate Society has civil or uncivil Community. For there to be a real unity in the plurality of differentiated mini-Communities there must minimally be a shared unanimity of social meanings understood and shared by the whole of its body politic. The Roman idea of *mos maiorum* is a representative example of this inasmuch as veneration for traditions and moral customs was broadly uniform during the high summer of the Roman Republic. Indeed, at its peak the Roman Republic achieved the level of ideal society inasmuch as the shared concepts of *mos maiorum* were symbolically venerated in Rome's gods, in its institutions, and in its heroic historical figures, e.g. Cincinnatus.

Growth of a real Society implies the establishment of unanimities in shared meanings. Break-down implies a loss of these unanimities. Disintegration implies that the Society's mini-Communities come to hold non-congruent or incongruent meanings. *Breakdown* is *the process of disintegration*. *Disintegration* of a Society means *the division of a Society into an uncivil aggregate of mini-Communities through differentiations of meanings into independent and non-homogeneous social meanings*. Toynbee's "fall of a civilization" has for its real meaning

implication nothing else than the disintegration of a real Society.

This can occur no otherwise than from within a real Society. There is an important distinction between the *fall* of a real Society and the *conquest* of a real Society. The latter refers to nothing more than a change in the overall social Molecule within which the corporate person of the real Society exists. For example, the real Societies comprised of the divers Native American tribes were conquered by the Society known as the United States, but it would be foolish and epistemologically quite incorrect to say these Native American free societies "fell" *because they still exist today* (with the exception of some tribes, such as the Manhattans⁴, who disaffiliated). Disaffiliated tribes, who no longer form an identifiable social group and whose descendents assimilated themselves into some other Society, can properly be said to have "fallen," but it is not correct to say the Nez Perce, the Cherokee, the Lakota Sioux, the Cheyenne, or any of the other still-affiliated tribes of America "fell."

Nor is it epistemologically correct to confound the idea of the *fall of a Society* with the idea of the *extermination of the members of its Community*. Remember that the people of a Society are the social atoms of its *Community* but a Society *per se* is defined by its *parts* – which are the expressions of human actions and interactions. A Community can be exterminated; a Society can not. In the former case, the living people are made dead; in the latter, the social structure would have to be made dead. These are not the same things even though the notion of social structure is empty without members of a Community to make a structure actual in *Existenz*. An empty Object is not the same thing as a dead Object because the former is a mathematical concept – what Kant called a *nihilum negativum* – without ontological significance, whereas the latter does have ontological signification. The concept of an exterminated Society is the empty concept (*conceptus inanis*) of a *nihilum privatum* – a privative nothing [Kant (1794-95), 29: 960-963].

Even so, there are still good usages for *mathematical* concepts of "social life" and "social death" provided these concepts are correctly defined. That is what I next address.

§ 4. Social Life and Social Death

With the idea of Society-as-an-organized-being we can proceed to deduce, again on the basis of inferences of analogy, an idea of an Object that corresponds to its "life." This Object I call a Society's *social life*. For human beings *life* is the capacity of the person to take action in accordance with the laws of appetitive power. *Death* is the transcendental negation of the proposition that life is a property of an Object. *Dead matter* is an object regarded as a thing to which the Critical definitions of life and organized being cannot be applied with objective validity regardless of whether or not the object satisfies the biological features-based definition of life.

A *person* is that subject of a judgment who can be regarded with practical objective validity as the agent of his own actions and to who alone these actions can be attributed as effects for which the person is the original cause. A *corporate person* is the regulative Idea of the one-ness of the civil Community of a group of people regarded as a body-politic. The object of a corporate person is a Community in its entirety. What features, then, are found in a corporate person that comprise a functional analog to Critical life in *H. sapiens*? After all, a corporate person, being a mathematical entity, can not be said to possess the human appetitive power.

What, though, is appetitive power? Here the Critical *Realerklärung* is a practical real explanation. Appetitive power is the capacity of an Organized Being to be, through its representations, the cause of the actuality of the objects of those representations. Human beings manifest their appetitive power through the agency of their action expressions. For a corporate

⁴ if there ever was in fact a single tribe who can be so-called; that issue is under debate.

person the functional counterpart of human representation subsists in the dynamics of purposive determinations of actions by individuals. The human capacity to be the cause of the actuality of his representations subsists in the liberty of each individual to act, and this liberty is determined and limited by each individual's *Personfähigkeit*. The *Personfähigkeit* of the corporate person is merely the union of cooperative employments of *Personfähigkeit* by its individual members.

However, individual free liberty to act does not necessarily produce cooperative interactions. **Competition** is *activity interaction in which the activities of one person or group hinders or retards the success of the activities of another person or group*. An individual person never takes a deliberate action that is contrary to his Self-interests *as these interests are practically defined* in the person's manifold of rules in pure practical Reason. A person can make a mistaken judgment in his ends/means determinations and subsequently discover through experience that the action was contrary to his Self-interests, but this is always discovered by the person *ex post facto*. The situation is otherwise with a corporate person because a corporate person is not regulated in its actions by the unified structure of a single manifold of practical rules.

Practical cooperation subsists in collective behaviors of a group of interacting people such that each individual acts from a basis of Duties according to his personal and private moral code but in such a way that he interacts congruently with the Duty-determined behaviors of the other people. To congruently interact in this context means that satisfaction of Duty by one person in the group does not thwart satisfaction of Duty by another person in the group. Understood in this practical context, competition can be called negative cooperation or, equivalently, cooperation can be called negative competition. Within the overall leadership dynamics of a corporate person cooperative and competitive actions can coexist. Where the cooperative actions taken by one person, mini-Community or group are in competition with those of another person, mini-Community or group, this competition produces a real opposition of effects in which the joint actions wholly or partially cancel each other by negating successful realization of some or all of the divers purposes of the actions. This cancellation of effects, and the accompanying frustration of purposes, either wholly or partially renders the corporate person incapable of realizing (making actual) the exercise of its potentialities of corporate *Personfähigkeit*.

It follows that the isomorphic functional equivalent of appetitive power in a corporate person is the capacity of the corporation to preserve or increase *Personfähigkeit* for all of its members' liberties of action, and this realizes practical Order and Progress. Social Community exists for no other purpose than to accomplish these ends. For this purpose alone human beings bind themselves in civil associations by social compact. Without effects of Order and Progress a Community has no ground for its real *Existenz* and disintegrates. Locke wrote,

Men being, as has been said, by nature all free, equal, and independent, no one can be put out of this estate, and subjected to the political power of another, without his own consent. The only way whereby anyone divests himself of his natural liberty, and puts on the *bonds of civil society*, is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any that are not of it. This any number of men can do, because it injures not the freedom of the rest; they are left as they were in the liberty of the state of nature. When any number of men have *so consented to make one community* . . . they are thereby presently incorporated and make *one body politic*. . . . And thus every man, by consenting with others to make one body politic . . . puts himself under an obligation to everyone of that society . . . or else this *original compact*, whereby he with others incorporates into *one society*, would signify nothing and be no compact if he be left free and under no other ties than he was in before in the state of nature. . . . Whosoever therefore out of a state of nature unite into a *community* must be understood to give up all power necessary to the ends for which they unite into society . . . And this is done by barely agreeing to *unite into one political society*, which is *all the compact* that is, or needs to be,

between the individuals that enter into or make up a *commonwealth*. [Locke (1690) pp. 52-53]

The appetitive power of a corporate person is therefore understood to imply a capacity for the Community to enforce the terms and meet the conditions of a social compact. However, this mathematical concept has no real objective validity unless it contains the concept of a principal quantity by which corporate appetitive power can be judged to be manifested in human behaviors. If the terms are being enforced and the conditions are being met, there must be a characteristic of human *Existenz* that corresponds to it. There is such a characteristic in the *homo noumenal* Nature of man, and it is called *tranquility*. Critically, ***tranquility*** is a *state of mind that results from being sufficiently satisfied in relationship to one's general state of life and desiring nothing more or different in this relationship*.

However, this characteristic in an individual is not sufficient to stand as a demonstration that corporate appetitive power is actual in a corporate person of a Society. The idea must understand a wider scope than this, and we may call the concept of that wider scope the idea of *domestic tranquility*. ***Domestic tranquility*** is *collective tranquility in the members of a Society insofar as this tranquility pertains to the social Molecule within the Society's body politic*. Now, the *Dasein* of domestic tranquility cannot be gauged by positive appearances because whether or not an individual is experiencing tranquility is only represented mentally. Put another way, individual tranquility is not an observable in the appearances of Nature. Therefore the only objectively valid standard gauge for assessing the *Existenz* of domestic tranquility is to measure its degree in terms of *lacking it*. ***Lack of tranquility is manifested by uncivic competition***. A strike by members of a union, a protest rally or political demonstration, commission of criminal actions – all of these manifest lack of tranquility and thereby denote incompleteness of domestic tranquility.

Demonstration of incomplete domestic tranquility signifies a practical motive to realize Progress in perfecting (making more complete) the corporate state of domestic tranquility. This motive is: to secure the continued *Existenz* of the Society. Furthermore, demonstrations denoting a deterioration of the civil state by rising degrees of lack of domestic tranquility signifies a loss of Order within the Society *that must be counteracted to prevent the onset of social breakdown*. It denotes rising social tensions among the membership and is a disturbance to equilibrium in the corporate person. Toynbee called such a situation a *challenge* to the Society and noted that the continued *Existenz* of the Society depended upon whether or not it could meet the challenges presented to it. This, however, is a corporate capacity if the challenge is met, a corporate incapacity if it is not. From this we arrive at a real explanation for the isomorphic function of social life. ***Social life*** is *the capacity of a Society to produce, by means of the social interactions among its members, a general state of domestic tranquility*.

Contrariwise, incapacity to produce domestic tranquility eventually results in the breaking of the ionic social-chemical bonds that hold mini-Communities (and their corporate persons) together to make up the greater Society in which they are associated. It follows that ***social death*** is *the disintegration of a Society into divers mini-Communities that coexist in a mutual state of nature relationship with one another*.

§ 5. The Falls of the Hellenic and Syriac Civilizations

The fall of Hellenic Civilization presents us with one of the most famous historical examples of a Society disintegrating. "Why did Rome fall?" is a question debated by historians. It is instructive to look at how Durant posed his answer to this question:

We may come nearer to understanding [how to account for the fall of Rome] if we remember that the fall of Rome, like her rise, had not one cause but many, and was not an

event but a process spread over 300 years. . . . A great civilization is not conquered from without until it has destroyed itself within. The essential causes of Rome's decline lay in her people, her morals, her class struggle, her failing trade, her bureaucratic despotisms, her stifling taxes, her consuming wars. . . . Barbarian inroads, and centuries of mining the richer veins, had doubtless lowered Rome's supply of the precious metals. In central and southern Italy deforestation, erosion, and the neglect of irrigation canals by a diminishing peasantry and a disordered government had left Italy poorer than before. The cause, however, was no inherent exhaustion of the soil, no change in climate, but the negligence and sterility of harassed and discouraged men. . . .

A serious decline of population appears in the West after Hadrian. It has been questioned, but the mass importation of barbarians into the Empire . . . leaves little room for doubt. . . . So many farms had been abandoned, above all in Italy, that Pertinax offered them gratis to anyone who would till them. . . . What had caused this fall in population? Above all, family limitations. Practiced first by the educated classes, it had now seeped down to a proletariat famed for its fertility; by A.D. 100 it had reached the agricultural classes . . . Though branded as a crime, infanticide flourished as poverty grew. . . . Second only to family limitation as a cause of lessened population were the slaughters of pestilence, revolution, and war. Epidemics of major proportions decimated the population under Aurelius, Gallienus, and Constantine. . . . The holocausts of war and revolution . . . had a dysgenic as well as a numerical effect: the ablest men married latest, bred least, and died soonest. The dole weakened the poor, luxury weakened the rich; and a long peace deprived all classes in the peninsula of martial qualities and arts. The Germans who were now peopling north Italy and filling the army were physically and morally superior to the surviving native stock; if time had allowed a leisurely assimilation they might have absorbed the classic culture and reinvigorated the Italian blood. But time was not so generous. . . . The rapidly breeding Germans could not understand the classic culture, did not accept it, did not transmit it; the rapidly breeding Orientals were mostly of a mind to destroy that culture; the Romans, possessing it, sacrificed it to the comforts of sterility. Rome was conquered not by barbarian invasion from without, but by barbarian multiplication within it. . . .

Moral decay contributed to the dissolution. The virile character that had been formed by arduous simplicities and a supporting faith relaxed in the sunshine of wealth and the freedom of unbelief . . . The greatest of historians held that Christianity was the chief cause of Rome's fall. . . . There is some hard truth in this indictment. . . . But the growth of Christianity was more an effect than a cause of Rome's decay. . . . Moral disintegration had begun with the Roman conquest of Greece, and had culminated under Nero . . . It was because Rome was already dying that Christianity grew so rapidly. Men lost faith in the state not because Christianity held them aloof, but because the state defended wealth against poverty, fought to capture slaves, taxed toil to support luxury, and failed to protect its people from famine, pestilence, invasion, and destitution . . . Rome was not destroyed by Christianity any more than by barbarian invasion; it was an empty shell when Christianity rose to influence and invasion came.

The economic causes of Rome's decline . . . need only a reminding summary here. The precarious dependence upon provincial grains, the collapse of the slave supply and the *latifundia*⁵; the loss of provincial markets to provincial competition; the inability of Italian industry to export the equivalent of Italian imports, and the consequent drain of precious metals to the East; the destructive war between rich and poor; the rising cost of armies, doles, public works, an expanding bureaucracy, and a parasitic court; the depreciation of the currency; the discouragement of ability, and the absorption of investment capital by confiscatory taxation; the emigration of capital and labor, the strait jacket of serfdom placed upon agriculture, and of caste forced upon industry; all these conspired to sap the material bases of Italian life, until at last the power of Rome was a political ghost surviving its economic death.

⁵ literally, "broad farms"; the term means "little homesteads."

The political causes of decay were rooted in one fact – that increasing despotism destroyed the citizen's civic sense and dried up statesmanship at its source. Powerless to express his political will except by violence, the Roman lost interest in government and became absorbed in his business, his amusements, his legion, or his individual salvation. . . . Local governments, overrun by imperial *correctores* and *exactores*⁶, no longer attracted first rate men. . . . The rise of provincial and mercenary armies, the overthrow of the Praetorian Guard by Septimius Severus, the emergence of provincial generals, and their capture of the imperial throne, destroyed the leadership, even the independence, of Italy long before the fall of the Empire in the West. The armies of Rome were no longer Roman armies. . . . The Empire, grown too vast for its statesmen to rule or its armies to defend, began to disintegrate. . . . In this awful drama of a great state breaking into pieces, the internal causes were the unseen protagonists; the invading barbarians merely entered where weakness had opened the door, and where the failure of biological, moral, economic, and political statesmanship had left the stage to chaos, despondency, and decay. [Durant (1944), pp. 665-669]

Durant is correct in the logical essentials he records here, although incorrect about the duration of the fall lasting only 300 years. This, at most, only covers the final downward spiral of Rome into full disintegration. The breakdown process had in fact been going on much longer, predating even Julius Caesar's rise to power. It is an error of presupposition to think that the decline and fall of a great Society is a monotonic process. Within it various periods of partial recovery, rather like the Carolingian Renaissance during Europe's Dark Ages, can and usually do occur. But these recoveries are short-lived in a failing Society because they do not resolve an underlying general dynamic of malaise that produced the decline in the first place. Rome had its periods of partial recoveries. The reigns of Caesar Augustus and Vespasian are examples of this, just as Charlemagne is an example in Dark Age Europe and the European Union is in today's Europe.

Not one of Durant's *partial* causes by itself could have brought down Rome. It took their confluence, auto-reinforcement, and co-generation to produce a general movement into a net process of breakdown that culminated in the disintegration of Roman Society. Romans, in individual efforts or in small groups, did try to deal with these things piecemeal. But their efforts failed because they failed to recognize that the partial causes were not independent of one another but instead were merely manifestations of a Society-wide unsuccessful leadership dynamic. This was nothing else than the unplanned institution of *uncivic state of nature competitions* within and throughout the body politic of Rome. These led to enormities and perpetuations of injustice that finally shredded the Roman social contract that had built the old Republic to its high summer. They destroyed their social contract and, in doing so, destroyed their Society. Every single partial cause factor Durant cites here can be seen operating in parallel form within the body politic of the United States today. American history is not much unlike Roman, nor we unlike the Romans.

We, at least in the West, know much less about the details of the decline and fall of Syriac Civilization that overlapped with Europe's Dark Ages and Renaissance period. What we do know of it, however, does not suggest it was different in kind from the social dynamic that destroyed Rome, and the Hellenic civilization of which it was a part, except for one thing. This difference I call *the phenomenon of interruption*.

Syriac civilization is the name Toynbee gave to a Middle East civilization immediately prior to a Middle East interregnum, from A.D. 975-1275, that preceded the rise of the Arabic and Iranic civilizations (whose fusion forms modern day Islamic civilization) [Toynbee (1946), pp. 15-19]. The names of the social entities that comprised it are familiar to most Western people, although the idea that these groups were part of – or, better put, considered by Toynbee to have been a part of – one overall Toynbee civilization is not so familiar, nor without controversy among historians.

⁶ financial commissioners and tax collectors

I put the following summary together from various sources including Hood (1971), Toynbee (1946), and Durant (1935, 1939, 1944, and 1950). If there is a single historical literary source dedicated to Syriac civilization, I have not been able to locate it.

Syriac civilization seems to have first arisen in the Middle East *c.* 1400-1300 B.C. In a number of ways it is culturally distinct from its contemporary civilizations, i.e. Egyptian civilization and the Hittite and Babylonian Societies, and thus Toynbee distinguished the Syrians from them. Syriac civilization was located in the region around modern Syria and its people seem most likely to have originally been participants in a mass migration (*Völkerwanderung*) that occurred after the fall of Minoan civilization in the 15th century B.C. Its constituent mini-Societies included the ancient Philistines, the Hebrews who established biblical Judea, and the Phoenicians.

Syriac civilization had reached its first peak and entered into the process of breakdown by *c.* 937 B.C., i.e. the time of King Solomon in Judea and King Hiram of Tyre. However, before this breakdown had progressed to its final phase – the establishment of a universal state such as Rome presents in Hellenic civilization – its breakdown was interrupted by invasion and conquest by the Assyrians. Indeed, it was the developing breakdown of Syriac civilization that opened the doors to the Assyrian conquest of the region. Although the Syrians lost their political independence to the Assyrians, the Assyrian conquest *interrupted* continuation of the breakdown of Syriac civilization until 555 B.C., perhaps by giving the Syrians a common alien tyrant to hate and imposing a ruling caste over them who kept them mindful of their own cultural heritage. Toynbee wrote,

What caused the breakdown of a civilization which, during its brief foregoing age of growth, had proved its genius and displayed its vitality in the three immense discoveries of monotheism and the Alphabet and the Atlantic? At first glance it may seem as though we have stumbled here, at last, upon an authentic example of a civilization being struck down by the impact of an external human force. Did not the Syriac Civilization break down under the hail of blows with which it was belabored by Assyrian militarism during the ninth, eighth and seventh centuries B.C.? So it might seem; but closer inspection shows that, when 'the Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold', the Syriac World was no longer one fold with one shepherd. The tenth-century attempt to unite politically, under an Israelite hegemony, the group of Hebrew, Phoenician, Aramaean and Hittite cantons which lay in the fairway between the Babylonian and Egyptian worlds had failed, and it was the resulting outbreak of Syriac fratricidal warfare that gave the Assyrians their opportunity. The breakdown of Syriac Civilization is to be dated, not from the first crossing of the Euphrates by Ashurnasirpal in 876 B.C., but from the dissolution of Solomon's empire after the death of its founder in 937 B.C. [Toynbee (1946), pp. 263-264]

Like Chinese civilization under the heel of the Mongols, Syriac civilization did not disappear at this time. It re-ascended vigorously with the ending of Assyrian hegemony when Cyrus the Great established the Achaemenian Dynasty (the Persian Empire) in 555 B.C. For a time the Persian Empire restored Progress in Syriac civilization and united it in its first universal state. With this, however, came the return of the breakdown of Syriac civilization and by the time of Darius III in the 4th century B.C. this breakdown was again well advanced.

At this point it was interrupted a second time, this time by Hellenic invasion and conquest by Alexander the Great in 330 B.C. As before, political subjugation by alien rulers had the effect of preserving Syriac civilization in an arrested state – one that lasted this time for nearly a thousand years. Toynbee wrote,

Behind the 'Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad we find the Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus, and behind that a thousand years of Hellenic intrusion, beginning with the career of Alexander of Macedon . . . followed by the Greek Seleucid monarchy in Syria, Pompey's campaigns and the Roman conquest, and only ending with the Oriental *revanche* of the

warriors of early Islam in the seventh century after Christ. The cataclysmic conquests of the primitive Muslim Arabs seem to respond antistrophically, in the rhythm of history, to the cataclysmic conquests of Alexander. Like these, they changed the face of the world in half a dozen years; but instead of changing it out of recognition, *more Macedonico*, they changed it back to a recognizable likeness of what it had been once before. As the Macedonian conquest, by breaking up the Achaemenian Empire (i.e. the Persian Empire of Cyrus and his successors), prepared the soil for the seed of Hellenism, so the Arab conquest opened the way for the Umayyads, and after them the 'Abbasids, to reconstruct a universal state which was the equivalent of the Achaemenian Empire. If we superimpose the map of either empire upon the other we shall be struck by the closeness with which the outlines correspond; and we shall find that the correspondence is not simply geographical but extends to methods of administration and even to the more intimate phenomena of social and spiritual life. We may express the historical function of the 'Abbasid Caliphate by describing it as a reintegration and resumption of the Achaemenian Empire – a reintegration of a political structure which had been broken up by the impact of an external force and the resumption of a phase of social life which had been interrupted by an alien intrusion. The 'Abbasid Caliphate is to be regarded as a resumption of the universal state which was the last phase of the existence of [Syriac civilization]. [*ibid*, pp. 17-18]

What has been called by some the Sword of Islam established a great Middle Eastern empire, first under the Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus from A.D. 661 to 750 and finally under the 'Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad from A.D. 750 to 1058. The latter gave birth to a renaissance in science, medicine and philosophy unmatched since the golden age of Greece. Among the Moslem scholastics we find the greatest of the medieval mathematicians, inventor of algebra and the algorithm, Muhammad ibn Musa, also known as al-Khwarizmi (780-850 A.D.). It also saw the greatest of the Moslem geometers, Thabit ibn Qurra (826-901). Modern trigonometry can be credited to Abu Abdallah al-Battani (850-929), who also made discoveries in astronomy that far predated the work of Tycho Brahe. Abu'l-Farghani (*c.* 860) wrote a textbook on astronomy that stood as the authoritative text on that subject in Europe and Western Asia for 700 years. This period was also the time of the greatest of the medieval physicians, Muhammad al-Razi, known in Europe as Rhazes (844-926). His *Treatise on Smallpox and Measles* was still being printed in Europe in 1866, making it probably the most successful textbook in history.

Moslem theological-philosophy also began during the 'Abbasid Caliphate, starting with Abu Yusuf Yaqub ibn Ishaq al-Kindi, born *c.* 803 A.D. Other notable Moslem Scholastics include Abdul-Hasan al-Ashari (873-935), Muhammad Abu Nasr al-Farabi (*d.* 950), and the greatest of the Moslem philosophers, Abu Ali al-Husein ibn Sina (980-1037), known in the West as Avicenna. With Avicenna ends the period of Moslem Enlightenment. The last three-quarters of a century of the 'Abbasid Caliphate witnessed the final disintegration of Syriac civilization and the beginning of an interregnum that lasted from 975 A.D. to 1275 A.D. The only other Moslem scholar of great note during this period was Abu al-Walid Muhammed ibn Rushd (1126-1198), known in the West as Averroës, the Great Commentator on Aristotle.

The last decades of the 'Abbasid Caliphate were characterized by numerous fratricidal civil wars and the rising of an extreme Islamic fundamentalism movement that was implacably hostile to scholarship and science. Syriac civilization disintegrated into a Europe-like mosaic of petty competing principalities, unable to maintain or unite a great Society. In 1219 the governor of Otrar, a part of the independent state of Khwarizm, executed two Mongol merchants as spies. Genghis Khan demanded that Ala al-Din Muhammed, the Shah of Khwarizm, hand the governor over to him. The Shah had the bad judgment to refuse this demand and the even worse judgment to behead Genghis' chief ambassador and send the others back to him without their beards. Genghis declared war and the Mongols came west.

They did not come to conquer and stay. They had no intention of subjugating and ruling the

people of the Middle East. They came for revenge and to kill and plunder. Mongolian military science followed a simple, brutal, and effective policy. Any community who resisted them or put them to any trouble at all was slaughtered down to the last man, woman, and child. Only skilled artisans might be spared, to be taken back to Mongolia as human booty. The Mongols came again and again from 1219 to 1260. As Durant noted,

When their bloody tide ebbed it left behind a fatally disrupted economy, canals broken or choked, schools and libraries in ashes, governments too divided, poor, and weak to govern, and a population cut in half and shattered in soul. Epicurean indulgence, physical and mental exhaustion, military incompetence and cowardice, religious sectarianism and obscurantism, political corruption and anarchy, all culminating in the piecemeal collapse before external attack – this, and no change in climate, turned Western Asia from world leadership to destitution, from a hundred teeming and cultured cities in Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, the Caucasus, and Transoxiana into the poverty, disease, and stagnation of modern times. [Durant (1950), pp. 340-341]

Out of this ash heap the Arabic and Iranic civilizations arose *c.* 1275 A.D. – two civilizations that would later unite to form the single Islamic civilization of modern times.

Events like these, involving great civilizations, do not happen very often or play out very quickly. However, in the fall of Societies more generally we find there is a fractal-like quality to their disintegration that mathematicians call self-similarity. It can be observed with much greater frequency and over a much shorter time at the scale of business and commerce.

§ 6. Real Society and Commercial Entities

The notion of *similarity* has a precise mathematical definition [Nelson (2003)]. It is a notion defined on a metric space that more or less means that two different geometric representations are "similar" if they each have the same shape but not necessarily the same size, position, or angular orientation. The high school geometry notion of "similar triangles" (e.g., figure 4.3) is an example of this.

The mathematical notion of similarity is extended to a notion of *self-similarity* in the branch of mathematics known as "fractal geometry." Mandelbrot introduced the idea of fractals and fractal geometry in 1977 (and in some earlier technical papers he wrote), and these ideas have found applications in computer graphics, studies of crystal formation, electrical discharges, coagulation of particles, urban growth, and some other areas. Self-similarity basically means that a self-similar structure is a structure in which sets of its parts are scaled-down versions of a set that describes it overall. Less esoterically, it means that if one examines all the pieces of the structure at some particular smaller scale, one discovers those pieces all have some set of features that are the same in every piece except for position, size, or orientation. For example, figure 4.4 provides two photographs of Idaho's Mt. Heyburn in the Sawtooth National Wilderness Area. The photos are taken at different distances from the mountain's summit, thereby providing different scale views of Heyburn's geological structure. Self-similar features can easily be noted in each.



Figure 4.3: Illustration of two similar triangles. The triangles have the same set of interior angles.



Figure 4.4: Two photographs of Mt. Heyburn in the Sawtooth National Wilderness Area in Idaho. Left: the mountain viewed from approximately five miles away. Right: close-up of part of the mountain summit viewed from less than one mile away and part way up Heyburn's slope. At each scale similar features in the shapes of the terrain can be seen such that the mountain seems to be "made up" of repeated similar shapes.

Most naturally-occurring physical and social phenomena do not exhibit the noticeably artificial regularities found in computer-generated graphics and other mathematically constructed objects. Some degree of abstraction is therefore needed to identify features that can be compared to determine self-similarity. Nonetheless, commercial enterprises ranging from the stores of your local merchants to large Fortune 500 companies all possess socio-economic features that are self-similar and that are also self-similar to features found in political entities such as nations or great civilizations. Indeed, we could not productively call these latter objects "civilizations" if they did not all contain self-similar features allowing us to see them as being in some way (defined by the features) "the same" (a civilization) despite their distinguishing differences (Hellenic; Egyptian).

Taking this point further, a commercial entity can and should be viewed as a Community whose members are individuals engaging in their own private enterprises, most often for the common purpose of "earning a living" that each member purposes to accomplish by means of his laboring in common cooperation with the other employees. This topic is one I have previously discussed in detail in Wells (2010). Most commercial entities employ a model of governance that emerged during the Industrial Revolution and that Critical Social Contract theory calls the monarchy/oligarchy form of government [Wells (2012)]. For example, the owner of, say, a used car dealership might behave as if he were a petty king, and often might even affectively regard his own particular position within the common enterprise as being the commercial equivalent of a monarch ruling over the other members who labor in the commercial enterprise.

The government institution of a business entity is called its management structure, and the typical Industrial Revolution model of business organization deliberately constructs its social organization in the form of a caste system. If the business is large enough, this usually consists of the business equivalents of nobles of various ranks (the managers) with further supporting castes of commoners made up of gentlemen (supervisors), yeomen (foremen) and serfs (the productive laborers). Most of what passes for "people-management skills" in today's Taylorism of "human resource management" is aimed at preventing revolts by the commoners or *coups de main* by the lesser nobles. On the whole, this model produces an uncivil Community.

The stamp of traditional British social structure is deeply imprinted on most business organizations. It is quite a different model from the prevailing social structure in Revolutionary-era America up to the time when the Industrial Revolution arrived at her shores. British political militarism was unable to hold on to the Colonies, but British business models did re-colonize the United States during the nineteenth century and, as the birthplace and exemplar of the Industrial Revolution in the business world, the sun still never sets on the British Empire.

Even so, this feudal model is not universal. Within otherwise plutocratic businesses it is not altogether uncommon to find cantons where cooperation is produced and maintained by *Gemeinschaft* social intercourse. Indeed, in many small businesses – where the owner is daily in direct contact with his employees – a *Gemeinschaft* Society is found to exist and the owner behaves more like a "first citizen," a village headman, or the chief of a Bedouin tribe than a king. Rarely are such Communities as purely *Gemeinschaft* as a BaMbuti camp, nor is the little business Community as stable as one, but within such a canton we find a tacitly civil Community whose chief threat comes from the more antisocial business environment in which it is situated. Here we find social situations reminiscent of the sort of local civil Community governance that probably held Syriac civilization together during those long periods when its breakdown was interrupted by foreign subjugation. Some large companies that seek to establish "a small business culture" are trying to do nothing else than actualize a Society of *Gemeinschaft* mini-Enterprises.

More rarely, occasional examples can be found of large commercial enterprises where a state of civil Community is produced and maintained in its entire corporate person by means a confederate republic form of government [Wells (2012), chap. 11]. For reasons discussed in *The Idea of the Social Contract*, the effectiveness of *Gemeinschaft* governance breaks down after the population of a Community exceeds some small critical level and some other form of Community governance must take its place if the Community as a whole is to satisfy the expectations of its citizen body. Of the four historically frequent general forms of government (*Gemeinschaft*, republic, monarchy/oligarchy, and non-consensus democracy), only *Gemeinschaft* and republic forms of government maintain a civilly-social orientation in the actions of government. The remaining two have a fundamentally antisocial orientation in their practices, and this orientation tends to promote the production of Toynbee proletariats within the Community leading to the breakdown of the Society [*ibid.*].

Two examples of large businesses that successfully maintained their civil character for many years are provided by the IBM Corporation under the administrations of Thomas Watson, Sr. and Thomas Watson, Jr., and the Hewlett-Packard Company under the administration of Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard. In both cases, these companies operated under social contract terms stated in over-arching corporate objectives that provided a judicial reference for the setting of local social contract objectives in all the divers mini-Communities that composed these firms. IBM and HP were confederated republics with Tocqueville governance for many years. Packard wrote,

Another significant event that occurred early in 1957 was the company's first off-site meeting of senior managers. This was a two-day meeting that took place at the Sonoma Mission Inn, about seventy miles north of San Francisco. About twenty people attended.

Bill Hewlett and I decided to have the meeting for at least three reasons. First, we thought it was a good idea to get our key managers together at least once a year to discuss policies and problems, to exchange views, and to make plans for the future. Second, there were now more than 1,200 people in the company, making it difficult for Bill and me to know everyone well and to have a personal knowledge of everything that was going on. So we felt it essential that despite HP's growth, we try to maintain a small-company atmosphere and to have our key managers thoroughly familiar with our management style and objectives.

The third reason we had the meeting was to present to the group for their review and study a set of corporate objectives that I had previously drafted and discussed with Bill. By way of background, Bill and I often thought about how a company like ours should be organized and managed. We thought that if we could get everybody to agree on what our objectives were and to understand what we were trying to do, then we could turn them loose and they would move in a common direction.

We devoted a good part of the Sonoma meeting to a review and discussion of the proposed objectives. Bill and I felt strongly that if our managers and supervisors were to be

guided by written objectives, they should have a part in developing them. We also pointed out that objectives were meant to be evaluated from time to time and, if necessary, to be modified for the future benefit of the company. [Packard (1995), pp. 79-80]

When Packard said "everyone" here, he meant "*everyone*." Eighteen years later, when I joined the company, HP's method of management by objectives and the corporate objectives were explained to me during my first few days with the company. By the end of the week I understood them and knew them all by heart. All during the nearly two decades that followed, I felt that I was a citizen of Hewlett-Packard, not an employee. In all that time, not one word in the corporate objectives – HP's social contract in its 1966 revision – was ever changed or ever needed to be changed. Yet they were re-examined every year to ascertain their appropriateness for the changing times.

A similar form of corporate governance operated in IBM from its founding in 1914 until around the time of Watson, Jr.'s retirement in 1971. In IBM's case, the corporate social contract was not called its "corporate objectives"; Watson called it "IBM's beliefs." There were three of them, each giving rise to numerous locally specific ones. Watson wrote, in 1963,

Of the top twenty-five industrial corporations in the United States in 1900, only two remain in that select company today. One retains its original identity; the other is a merger of seven corporations on that original list. Two of those twenty-five failed. Three others merged and dropped behind. The remaining twelve have continued in business, but each has fallen substantially in its standing.

Figures like these help to remind us that corporations are expendable and that success – at best – is an impermanent achievement which can always slip out of hand.

One may speculate at length as to the cause of the decline or fall of a corporation. Technology, changing tastes, changing fashions all play a part. But the fact remains that some companies manage to flourish while others in the very same industry may falter or fail. Normally we ascribe these differences to such things as business competence, market judgment, and the quality of leadership in a corporation. Each of these is a vital factor. No one can dispute their importance. But I question whether they in themselves are decisive.

I believe the real difference between success and failure in a corporation can very often be traced to the question of how well the organization brings out the great energies and talents of its people. What does it do to help these people find common cause with each other? How does it keep them pointed in the right direction despite the many rivalries and differences which may exist among them? And how can it sustain this common cause and sense of direction through the many changes which take place from one generation to the next?

These problems are not unique to corporations. They exist in all large organizations, in political and religious institutions. Consider any great organization – one that has lasted over the years – and I think you will find that it owes its resiliency, not to its form of organization or administrative skills, but to the power of what we call beliefs and the appeal these beliefs have for its people.

This, then, is my thesis: I firmly believe that any organization, in order to survive and achieve success, must have a sound set of beliefs on which it premises all its policies and actions.

Next, I believe that the most important single factor in corporate success is faithful adherence to those beliefs.

And finally, I believe that if an organization is to meet the challenges of a changing world, it must be prepared to change everything about itself except those beliefs as it moves through corporate life. [Watson (1963), pp. 3-5]

What Watson is speaking of here, using other words, is what Critical Social Contract theory calls Order and Progress in corporate *Personfähigkeit*. This, however, is only achieved when the corporate Community is a civil Community with its members all bound to a common social contract, whether this contract be called its corporate objectives or its corporate beliefs.

The views quoted above were reiterated in the findings of Peters' and Waterman's now classic study of management effectiveness, *In Search of Excellence*. What Watson called "beliefs" Peters and Waterman called "values":

Let us suppose that we were asked for one all-purpose bit of advice for management, one truth that we were able to distill from the excellent companies research. We might be tempted to reply, "Figure out your value system. Decide what your company *stands for*. What does your enterprise do that gives everyone the most pride?" . . . We call the fifth attribute of the excellent companies, "hands-on, value driven." We are struck by the explicit attention they pay to values, and by the way in which their leaders have created exciting environments through personal attention, persistence, and direct intervention – far down the line. . . .

Every excellent company we studied is clear on what it stands for, and takes the process of value shaping seriously. In fact, we wonder whether it is possible to be an excellent company without clarity on values and having the right sorts of values. . . . Virtually all of the better performing companies we looked at in the first study had a well-defined set of guiding beliefs. The less well performing institutions, on the other hand, were marked by one of two characteristics. Many had no set of coherent beliefs. The others had distinctive and widely discussed objectives, but the only ones they got animated about were the ones that could be quantified – the financial objectives such as earnings per share and growth measures. Ironically, the companies that seemed the most focused – those with the most quantified statements of mission, with the most precise financial targets – had done *less* well financially than those with broader, less precise, more qualitative statements of corporate purpose. (The companies without values fared less well, too.) . . .

[We] find among the excellent companies a few common attributes that unify them despite their very different values. First . . . these values are almost always stated in qualitative rather than quantitative terms. When financial objectives are mentioned, they are almost always ambitious but never precise. Furthermore, financial and strategic objectives are never stated alone. They are always discussed in the context of the other things the company expects to do well. The idea that profit is a natural by-product of doing something well, not an end in itself, is also almost universal.

A second attribute of effective value systems is the effort to inspire the people at the very bottom of the organization. . . . Any business is *always* an amalgam of important contradictions – cost versus service, operations versus innovation, formality versus informality, and the like. It is noteworthy, we feel, that the value systems of the excellent companies do come down rather clearly on one side of these apparent contradictions. . . . The specific content of the dominant beliefs of the excellent companies is also narrow in scope, including just a few basic values:

1. A belief in being the "best"
2. A belief in the importance of the details of execution, the nuts and bolts of doing the job well
3. A belief in the importance of people as individuals
4. A belief in superior quality and service
5. A belief that most members of the organization should be innovators, and its corollary, the willingness to support failure
6. A belief in the importance of informality to enhance communications
7. Explicit belief in and recognition of the importance of economic growth and profits. [Peters and Waterman (1982), pp. 279-285]

The mental physics of social contracting teaches us that Peters and Waterman were correct to "wonder whether it is possible to be an excellent company without clarity on values and having the right sorts of values." It is *not* possible "to be excellent" without them; it is not even possible to survive as a corporate Society without them. The same is true for Societies of other genres. Let us recall the prime objectives of governance stated in the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution:

- to form a more perfect union
- to establish justice
- to insure domestic tranquility
- to provide for the common defense
- to promote the general welfare
- to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.

These were the "values" or "beliefs" or "corporate objectives" for governance in post-Revolutionary America. In one form or another they are inherent in all the "value systems" Peters and Waterman described. In one form or another, they are all inherent in the social contract of every civil Community and every unified corporate person.

But although republic governance – what Montesquieu called a confederate republic – is superior in its potential for large Societies to the other classical forms, it too suffers from a fatal shortcoming, namely: it is too easy for this form of governance to devolve into a despotic monarchy/oligarchy form of governance. The results of this devolution are: enormities eventually are perpetrated that violate the Society's social contract; these tend to become perpetuated; and the process of social breakdown to eventual disintegration begins. This happened at IBM after Watson and at Hewlett-Packard, arguably late during the administration of John Young but most definitely, visibly, and finally during the ruinous reign of Carly Fiorina from 1999 to 2005. Both companies are now disintegrated into divers mini-Communities that operate together in mutual states of nature bound by no common social contract – no common system of values or beliefs. The old IBM and the old Hewlett-Packard, as corporate Societies, are dead. What remains in their places are uncivil commercial entities sharing with the fallen parent Societies nothing but a name.

§ 7. Societies Fall From Within

Practical actuality of a Society is real Society. Real Society, regarded as a corporate organized being, is the contextual Object in whose context all ideas of the rise or fall of a Society must be judged if the judgment is to have objective validity in nature. The parts of real Society are comprised of the activities of its members, and these activities are called the *personal enterprises* of the members. A Society has practical real *Existenz* when these enterprises have a common Object for their instantiations, and this common Object is called their Enterprise [Wells (2010), chap. 9].

Sciences as Enterprises tend to be destroyed when a civilization falls, and so a social-natural scientist cannot expect to carry out more than a rather limited amount of research on the rise-and-fall or life-and-death of a Society from a sole basis in the archeology and history of great civilizations. But a civilization is only one type of Society and differs in scale rather than in kind from commercial Societies, leisure Societies, religious Societies, professional Societies or any of the other divers types of Society definable by the contexts of their Enterprises. These smaller instantiations of Societies exist in abundance, and the time-scale of the real *Existenz* of such a smaller Society, coupled with the practical possibility for the social-natural scientist to participate as an anthropologist within it, provides a much better laboratory for the practice of the science. They also directly present phenomena of the coming-into-being (rise, *γένεσις*) and the passing-away (fall, *φθορία*) of a Society not obtainable from historical records or archeology in the study

of vanished great civilizations.

One justly-cautionary warning raised by critics of Toynbee's conclusion is that the historical data upon which he apparently based this finding – that civilizations fall from within – is too thin. Although accounts such as that given by Tacitus of civilian behavior in Rome during the battle between Vespasian's forces and the defenders of Vitellius lend credence to Toynbee's finding, it cannot be denied that the sufficiency of such data for the drawing of the conclusion does not rise to meet the standards of evidence usually insisted upon in physical-natural science. Critics of Toynbee argue that, as Bacon would have put it, "he drew too much from too little."

The antidote to this in normal empirical science is to simply increase the data collection by making more observations and conducting more experiments. (The social-natural scientist must, of course, understand "experiment" in the more general context provided by Claude Bernard). So it is with the Toynbee's finding. Toynbee drew his idea of the Society-object from an ontology-centered pseudo-metaphysic instead of a proper – i.e., Critical – epistemology-centered science of metaphysics, and this hindered him and other historians from the pursuit of follow-up research. This hindrance is removed once we have come to recognize the Object properly and to see Toynbee's Society-object as just one object among other like objects in social-nature.

The fall of Hewlett-Packard from real Society to "its" present but merely nominal *Existenz* as a granulated mixture of individual enterprises and divers, somewhat cooperative yet also mutually competitive, mini-Communities of special interests is merely one case study; there are a great many other such cases available for study. I give HP particular prominence here in this treatise because it happens to be a case where I have been able to personally observe what happened to this company over a very long period of time (30 years) from the vantage points of being both an insider (employee) and an outsider (independent contractor)⁷ during that time. This gave me the opportunity to carry out very intimate and detailed observations of the social dynamics in play within that organization as well as intimate knowledge of the evolution of its corporate culture from the late era of the founders to the Fiorina regime. However different in the specifics as the factual details of this corporate disintegration are from those of other cases (e.g., U.S. Steel, the Soviet Union, the Roosevelt Coalition of the Democratic Party, the British Empire, the Pakistan-India political subcontinent, the Roman Catholic Church, Egypt, the University of Idaho, or the General Government of the United States), the set of pertinent social-natural features involved is quite isomorphic in all these cases.

These divers cases leave no room for reasonable doubt about the correctness of Toynbee's finding. There is a tendency to confuse the *fall* of a Society with the *disappearance* of a Society. But a Society "disappears" only when people stop referring to it by the name that has become associated with a particular social Molecule. A real Society falls when its corporate Enterprise has ceased to function and members collectively categorized under the old name splinter into a plurality of lesser enterprises (either personal or mini-Communal). All personal enterprises arise from individual actions serving duties-to-Self [Wells (2010), chap. 9]. A real Society is only possible when a collective Enterprise operates successfully. The *Realerklärung* of successful Enterprise is Critically understood as: ***the essence of successful Enterprise is the realization of satisfaction by each member of the Enterprise Community of his purposes that ground his***

⁷ From 1994 to 2005 my laboratory was contracted to provide outside research services to Hewlett-Packard. During that time I was a frequent visitor at Hewlett-Packard sites and had unrestricted access to its people and facilities. I was thus able to witness first-hand the balkanization and breakup of the Hewlett-Packard real Society, and to compare the emergent social Molecule with earlier ones from the days when Hewlett and Packard themselves were still active in the day-to-day management of the company. The features of the Hewlett-Packard social Molecule in the last years of the Fiorina regime were isomorphic at a smaller scale to those of Austria-Hungary in 1914 with Fiorina acting very much in the role of Emperor Franz Joseph.

individual enterprise activities [Wells (2010), chap. 10].

When these satisfactions are frustrated by the social dynamics occurring in the social Molecule, the resulting frustrations and tensions stimulate the formation of Toynbee proletariats and what was a Society breaks down into competing and uncivil mini-Communities, individual outlaws, and civic criminals. The breakdown of the Syriac civilization underwent two lengthy intervals of interruption merely because subjugation by outside forces provided its people with a re-unifying common cause – enmity to the subjugators – while at the same time depriving their Community of a self-governing power by which its own rulers had been perpetrating the various enormities that were breaking it down. When it eventually threw off outside rule – first during the Persian Empire and lastly during the 'Abbasid Caliphate – the breakdown resumed.

There has been insufficient scholarship carried out to determine whether or not any of the Native American Societies of the nineteenth century were in the process of breakdown before they underwent military subjugation by the United States. What does appear to be clear in regard to today's still-affiliated tribes is that if a breakdown was in process in the nineteenth century, this process is presently interrupted. The Native American Societies are still in actual *Existenz* today and have not fallen. Whether they are bound to the rest of the United States by anything more than the most minimal and tenuous social contract is problematical, but the same is correctly said about the general community of the United States overall. For a Community to have been subjugated is not at all the same thing as for a Society to have fallen. Likewise, for the members of a Society to have been annihilated, as the Mongols did to various cities in the thirteenth century, is not the same thing as for a Society to have fallen. The parts of a Society subsist in actions, not in the human members who make up its population.

A Society's institutions of education play an important and essential role in maintaining Order and realizing Progress within it. They are also causal factors in phenomena of breakdown and disintegration. The fall of a Society reflects a failure in its education institutions to accomplish their social missions. I take up this subject in the next chapter.

§ 8. References

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