

## GOING AGAINST THE TIDE: RICARDO DUCHESNE'S INTELLECTUAL DEFENSE OF THE WEST

*The Uniqueness of Western Civilization*

Ricardo Duchesne

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*Reviewed by Kevin MacDonald*

There was a time not long ago when the idea of Western uniqueness was received wisdom in the academic world. Within this traditional framework, the West was characterized as uniquely rooted in individual freedom, representative government, science, and exploration. The intense dynamism of the West was responsible for dragging the rest of the world from its backward slumbers rooted in collectivism, superstition, and unchanging tradition. It was a view that coincided with a period when the West had a strong sense of cultural confidence.

But all that has changed with the rise of multiculturalism and an academic establishment that is decidedly on the left. In the new dispensation, the West is as a historical backwater whose success is due entirely to luck rather than anything unique, or certainly anything at all that might be seen in a positive light. The alternative put forward by the revisionists is “to treat history as an unending series of ‘lucky shots’ and abrupt turns” (p. 203); Duchesne cites an historian who writes that Europeans “weren’t just lucky; they were lucky many times over” (p. 203)—what one might term an anti-theory of Western uniqueness. In no other area of scientific inquiry would people be satisfied with a theory based on luck.

Ricardo Duchesne, a professor of sociology at the University of New Brunswick, is out to change all that. *The Uniqueness of Western Civilization* is a brilliant work written by an exceptionally wide-ranging scholar and thinker.

Duchesne begins by showing that the decline of the self-confident assertions of Western uniqueness and cultural confidence began in the 1960s when any comparison of West and non-West became fraught with concerns about Western ethnocentrism. Standard college courses in “Western Civilization” were removed in favor of world history courses emphasizing multiculturalism and a downgraded role for the West. Duchesne notes, “In the 1960s world historians were genuinely debating the question of Western ethnocentrism and beginning to write texts from a global perspective. This was merely the onset of what would become a crusade against the West” (p. 6).

An important aspect of the war was “dependency theory” which argued that the nations of the West “had enriched themselves through the exploitation of Africa, the Americas, and Asia and repudiated the idea that European civilization on its own generated the means to out-develop the rest of the world” (p. 14). According to Immanuel Wallerstein, an influential world historian, Western success was due to its imperialism and colonialism, but ultimately “the attack on the West and on the

possibility of universal history, however, did not stem from any one person or school of thought. It was the work of many elite groups, cultural relativists, post-colonialists, Foucault-inspired New Historicists, and deconstructionists" (p. 17).

Although it was indeed a very widely dispersed effort, Duchesne emphasizes the role of two preceding intellectual movements discussed in *The Culture of Critique* as Jewish intellectual movements: The Frankfurt School and Boasian anthropology.<sup>1</sup> The Frankfurt School was active by the 1920s, while Franz Boas was in full culture war mode by 1910 and his disciples were in control of academic anthropology by the 1920s. *The Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, by Frankfurt stalwarts Max Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno, characterized the modern West by "the elimination of the Other" (p. 18) and saw Western civilization as inevitably resulting in totalitarianism, thus eliminating the distinction between liberalism and fascism. Duchesne comments that the Frankfurt School "would generate a whole new form of 'negative' consciousness, otherwise known as 'Critical Theory,' across campuses and across the disciplines: critical ethnography, cultural studies, race theory, critical pedagogy, cultural Marxism, critical legal studies, and much more. The agent of this negative posture would be the engaged 'critical' writer/activist/artist/tenured radical who would use his/her writing, art, and classroom to undermine and expose the evils of Western culture" (p. 19).

Nevertheless, despite the excellent credentials of the Frankfurt School as prime destroyer of the West, Duchesne characterizes Boasian anthropology as "the most devastating assault on the idea of Western progress" (p. 19). In the words of Boas' protégé Margaret Mead, Boasian relativism "stood against any grading of cultures in hierarchical systems which would place our own culture at the top and place other cultures of the world in a descending scale according to the extent that they differ from ours" (p. 20). Duchesne pointedly notes that the idea of cultural gradation retains usefulness, citing the classic work of 19<sup>th</sup>-century anthropologist Lewis Morgan and the work of Leslie White, an evolutionary anthropologist who in his 1959 work *Evolution of Culture* graded cultures on the amount and type of energy they were able to utilize per capita—a criterion that would place Western culture at the peak of human accomplishment.

Duchesne is fond of showing how the critics of the West typically presuppose ideas whose origins are uniquely Western. For example, in discussing Boas, Duchesne notes, "There is ... an unavoidable paradox contained in the very historical origins of cultural relativism, for its roots lie in the uniquely Western idea that there is a universal humanity. Starting with the Stoic cosmopolitan idea that each person is a member of a common cosmos, through to the Christian idea that all humans irrespective of local, ethnic or cultural origin were created by the same God, to the 16<sup>th</sup>-century idea that humans have a 'natural' rights-bearing disposition to life, liberty, and dignity, the West

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<sup>1</sup> Kevin B. MacDonald, *The Culture of Critique: An Evolutionary Analysis of Jewish Involvement in Twentieth-Century Intellectual and Political Movements* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998; first paperback edition: Bloomington, IN: 1stbooks Library, 2002), Chapter 2, "The Boasian School of Anthropology and the Decline of Darwinism in the Social Sciences"; Chapter 5, "The Frankfurt School of Social Research and the Pathologization of Gentile Group Allegiances."

has long cultivated the notion of a universal humanity" (p. 31). Even more pointedly, in his discussion of the fad among historians for a "blinkered, anti-Western" world history, Duchesne notes that

The trend toward a more even-handed evaluation of non-European peoples, initiated by *Western* scholars in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century deserves to be acknowledged. It is, after all, a trend in character with the ideals of human rights and dignity advanced by European civilization. (p. 53; emphasis in text)

Duchesne cannot be said to be an evolutionary thinker. Nevertheless, he notes correctly that sociobiology "was excluded from social evolutionary models for political rather than scholarly reasons" (p. 34), particularly by excluding evolutionary ideas on stratification and aggression. Indeed, one consequence of the triumph of Boasian anthropology was the construction of "a pacified past" in which non-Western peoples were seen as peaceful sharers and gift givers (in contrast to evil, greedy, grasping Westerners) rather than the reality that they are self-interested creatures for whom war and status-seeking are a very important aspects of life.<sup>2</sup>

Because it is central to his theory of Western uniqueness, Duchesne places special emphasis on the general finding that with the advent of simple farming techniques, there is a pronounced tendency toward non-egalitarian social structure with the rise of Big Man cultures where men sought high status, material possessions, and extra wives. Duchesne introduces this idea in the section on sociobiology, suggesting that, in agreement with many evolutionary psychologists, he sees the psychological drive for status as an aspect of the evolved propensities of the human mind. Duchesne emphasizes the psychological aspects of this drive: the desire for "higher deference, respect, desire for that the big man had attained, and admiration of others" (p. 37). He then states that

the unsocial behavior of big men cannot be fully understood within the theoretical ambit of evolutionary psychology or sociobiology. The self-assertive longing for 'prestige,' 'respect,' and 'fame' are no doubt genetically-based traits which evolved in response to long periods of adaptive selective pressures. But I will argue that the pursuit of prestige needs to be examined as a psychosomatic or mental disposition on the part of humans to achieve validation and recognition from other human beings. I will also argue that this disposition assumed a *heightened, more intensive* expression amongst the aristocratic culture of the Indo-European speakers who gradually infiltrated Europe after 4000 BC. The 'noblest' ideal of Indo-European aristocratic warriors was the pursuit of prestige through the performance of heroic acts in proud contempt for one's biological survival. (p. 40)

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 2.

In reply, there is no reason why social status-seeking cannot be based on achieving validation and recognition from other people. Indeed, it's hard to imagine how else it could work. Duchesne at times contrasts materialistic motivation (desire for resources) which he considers "biological" and non-materialist striving for prestige and honor (which he labels "psychosomatic") as if only materialistic striving is comprehensible within an evolutionary perspective. But these desires are not incompatible, and one need not be seen as more "reductionist" than the other. Both have their roots in the evolved proclivities of the human mind.

And although it is true that politically correct evolutionary psychologists, such as Leda Cosmides and John Tooby, have eschewed any attempt to understand human variation in evolutionary terms, this is certainly not a unanimous opinion — indeed, it is widely rejected within evolutionary personality psychology.<sup>3</sup> The latter discipline attempts to account for personality variation in evolutionary terms, and racial and ethnic differences are important for several important evolutionary psychologists, including J. Philippe Rushton and Richard Lynn; differences between Jews and non-Jews in IQ and ethnocentrism are a central aspect of my work on Judaism.

Finally, although it may seem odd to propose that an evolved psychological trait could lead one to not value biological survival, the reality is that, as Duchesne shows, the Indo-European warriors who are so central to his theory of the uniqueness of Western culture did in fact achieve biological success at least sufficient to plant the psychological roots of Western uniqueness. Prestige and honor among one's fellows is in fact typically linked with material possessions and reproductive success. Like other psychological traits related to aggression and risk-taking, the pursuit of social prestige by heroic acts is a high risk/high reward behavior, where evidently the rewards sufficiently outweighed the risks over a prolonged period of evolutionary time. One wonders what alternative theory Duchesne might propose for the existence of such a trait.

Showing that he is in fact something of a closeted evolutionist, Duchesne pointedly dismisses the views of two prominent Jewish intellectuals who have used their credentials as evolutionary biologists to eviscerate evolutionary accounts of human behavior. He notes that Jared Diamond's theory of Western uniqueness in *Guns, Germs, and Steel* "thoroughly deactivates the competition between life forms for scarce resources" (p. 46) (which, one would think, would be central to an evolutionary account) by imagining humans as reactive rather than as imaginatively and aggressively self-interested. Similarly, he rejects Stephen Jay Gould's view that human evolution is driven exclusively by exogenous forces, such as climate change and diseases. Such views omit the creative, active nature of human intelligence, where developing novel solutions to old problems as well as newly encountered problems is

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<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Kevin MacDonald, "Evolution, Culture, and the Five-Factor Model," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 29, 119-149, 1998.

critical.<sup>4</sup> And they omit the centrality of self-interest in human affairs. Duchesne is quite clear that self-interest is critical and that there is variation in self-interestedness. Variation in self-interestedness is important for Duchesne because he sees Western uniqueness as arising from self-aggrandizing "Big Men" who actively and with great psychological intensity sought and attained wealth and power.

Much of Duchesne's book deals with the beast of multiculturalism that now pervades academic discussion of Western accomplishments and uniqueness. Globalism is all the rage, and a corollary is that any developments in the West must ultimately be the result of complex interplay with other parts of the world. History is about interconnections among all the peoples of the world rather than anything unique about the West. All peoples have the same potentialities and they react passively to their surroundings, not actively, thereby automatically precluding any Western exceptionalism apart from the luck of circumstance. There is no such thing as intra-civilizational change and progress. For example, he cites a historian who describes the Renaissance as a "global process occasioned by Europe's connections to the New World and the more 'advanced' culture of the Near East" (p. 58).

Duchesne is deliciously contemptuous of these historians, "happily ensconced" as they are "within a world of like-minded academics, backed by multiple grants and prestigious titles" (pp. 53-54). Much of this "scholarship" is rather blatantly anti-White. He quotes a world history account of Whites in North America as bringing "demographic collapse, ecological imbalance, dependence on trade goods from abroad, heightened intertribal tensions, psychological despair, alcoholism, and deculturation" (p. 55). Duchesne is incredulous when a historian writes about how interconnected Africa was with the rest of the world: "Yes, the same Black Africa that Marlow in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* called 'the blankest of blank spaces' on a map." But according to the multicultural Zeitgeist, the story of Africa is an "idyllic pre-colonial existence" followed by enslavement and racism emanating from the West (p. 57). He notes that what really bothers a historian commenting on the Greeks is that "the Greeks may have been exceptional despite their failings" (p. 63).

Duchesne reviews several books purporting to show the superiority of Chinese civilization. This is a technical discussion. Some of the high points are as follows:

- "Colonial trade profits were neither sufficient nor necessary for the industrialization of Western Europe/England" (p. 86).
- Whatever benefits England obtained from its colonies must be seen as a result of having "earned her riches through her own virtues and talents as a nation that deliberately set out to achieve imperial greatness. It was Britain's development of the best navy in the world, civil institutions, administrative and financial reforms that made it possible for her...to seize upon and appropriate raw materials and slaves in faraway lands" (p. 88; emphasis in text). This is meant to counter the

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<sup>4</sup> Dan Chiappe and Kevin MacDonald, "The evolution of domain-general mechanisms in intelligence and learning," *Journal of General Psychology* 132(1), 5-40, 2005.

arguments of historians blinded by moral considerations to the point of being unable to see England as anything but “inertly parasitic” (p. 88) and contributing nothing to its own greatness.

- Against the claim that the colonies were indispensable for the rise of England: “First, the costs of empire (in people, taxes, and warfare) may have surpassed the benefits; second, Spain acquired enormous tracts of land but ended up poor and undeveloped, and third, countries like Switzerland, Germany and Japan, ended up extremely wealthy even though they lacked colonial annexations” (p. 91).
- “The question is not whether we approve or not of British imperialism. The question is why was the West so dynamic and original in empire-making, warfare, political theory, philosophy, architecture, and poetry? Why was it that the same England that created the greatest maritime empire in history cultivated religious toleration, freedom of expression, and representative government?” (p. 93).
- “While I disagree with the claim that colonial profits and resources were decisive in Europe’s divergence, I agree ... that the transatlantic trade, the transshipment of gold and silver from the Americas, the African slave trade, and the re-export of colonial staples were actual components of European’s willful rise to economic dominance in the world” p. 114).
- “China’s post-1400 expansion was mainly *extensive*, in the sense that both total economic output and population were increasing at about the same rate with no increases in output per capita. ... Conversely, ... England did in fact experience a long process of incremental but steady increases in (agricultural) productivity [i.e., output per capita] from 1500 onwards” (p. 95).
- Duchesne deals with much the same literature I used in my work on monogamy,<sup>5</sup> the main point of which is that because of monogamy, Western Europe had a low pressure demographic profile that allowed the accumulation of capital because there was a substantial lag between economic good times and increases in fertility, whereas in a polygynous society like China, economic hard times simply lowered the price of females and therefore increasing female infanticide.

Duchesne reviews Lee and Feng’s *One Quarter of Humanity: Malthusian Mythology and Chinese Realities*, which purports to show that China was in fact a low fertility, low demographic pressure society. Duchesne makes several telling points against Lee and Feng but does not raise the issue of Chinese polygyny as a factor. Lee and Feng make the following argument: “Whereas Malthus regarded marriage in China as universal and early, we show that although this pattern held for females, marriage was neither early nor universal for males.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Kevin MacDonald, “The Establishment and Maintenance of Socially Imposed Monogamy in Western Europe.” *Politics and the Life Sciences*, 14, 3–23; Kevin MacDonald, “What Makes Western Culture Unique?,” *Occidental Quarterly*, 2(2), Summer 2002, 9–38.

<sup>6</sup> James Lee and Wang Feng, *One Quarter of Humanity: Malthusian Mythology and Chinese Realities* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 12.

But this is exactly the pattern expected in a polygynous culture: All females mate, but only males able to control sufficient resources are able to mate. Lee and Feng call attention to female infanticide as an important mortality check in China, lowering the total number of females available for marriage. But even so, a sex ratio biased in favor of males would exacerbate sexual competition among males, and, as Duchesne points out, infanticide is merely another form of the positive check of mortality: There is no logical difference between starvation and infanticide where parents kill daughters because the cost of rearing them would not be covered by what they would bring on the marriage market. Duchesne notes that there is a moral difference between infanticide typical of China and the rational control of fertility typical of the West based on, in Malthus's terms, "a genuine and constant attachment" between the sexes and concern for the welfare of children.

Finally, Duchesne also notes that the total fertility rate was higher in China than in the West because of the presence of so many unmarried females in the latter. This phenomenon results from monogamy, since marriage is difficult in hard economic times for the less well off, whereas in a polygynous society during hard times wives become cheaper, enabling wealthy men to have more wives and ensuring that all women will have the opportunity to mate.<sup>7</sup> And he convincingly reviews data showing that in fact there were mass migrations caused by population pressure and famines in several regions in 19<sup>th</sup>-century China.

Chapter 3, "Whence the Industrial Divergence," provides a detailed review of Ken Pomeranz's *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* whose thesis can be summed up as "Lucky Europe, Normal China." Duchesne notes that Han China colonized large areas during the 18<sup>th</sup> century roughly equal in size to "inner China" and that Han China had been expanding its territory since the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Thus Europe was not a uniquely colonial power. The Han expansion was accomplished with military conquest, the confiscation of land, the suppression of tribal cultures, and brutal massacres against rebellious natives. Secondly, against Pomeranz's argument on how advanced Chinese technology was on the basis of its agricultural output, Duchesne notes that rice has inherent advantages to wheat, since it is can produce two crops per year without crop rotation or a fallow period. Far from being lucky, Europe began at a large natural disadvantage to China.

Chapter 4, "The Continuous Creativity of Europe" contests standard academic works purporting to show that European culture was not creative or original, but borrowed mostly from elsewhere, particularly the East. Duchesne does not deny the contributions of the East, but emphasizes that the Europeans were eager learners who elaborated

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<sup>7</sup> MacDonald, "The Establishment and Maintenance of Social Imposed Monogamy in Western Europe," *Ibid.*

inventions imported from elsewhere, whereas both China and Islam stagnated after the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Unique to Europe was the contribution of the Greeks who “invented scientific reasoning by offering explanations of natural events that were entirely general; Greeks were also unique in “thinking of the universe as a single entity or ‘cosmos’ with an underlying mathematical reality comprehensible through deduction and proof.” While the East stagnated, beginning in the 12<sup>th</sup> century the West entered into a period of sustained and cumulative invention.

Chapter 4 discusses the contribution of Puritanism to the rise of a scientific, material culture—“the ‘extraordinary link’ between the scientific spirit of utilitarian improvement and the Puritans’ millenarian vision of spiritual redemption through hard work and worldly reform” (citing Margaret Jacob’s *Scientific Culture and the Making of the Industrial West* [1996]). The point is that religious zeal resulted in an internal source of motivation that is entirely missed in Marxist accounts. Although other English religious traditions also had similar ideas, for the Puritans especially, scientific knowledge became endowed with “millenarian importance” (pp. 202–203).

Duchesne also reviews work by scholars who propose that European inventiveness beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup> century resulted from competition between different states (resulting ultimately from Europe’s geographic fragmentation), whereas in China the early unification resulted in a lack of interest in new methods of warfare. However, believing as he does that “a higher degree of aggression was one of the defining characteristics of Europeans since barbarian times” (p. 209), Duchesne argues that “Europe was already exceptionally innovative and antagonistic during the medieval and the ancient eras” (p. 217), and he notes that European elites were even more militaristic before 1500 than after.

Indeed, Duchesne notes Victor David Hanson’s thesis that Greek warfare between 800–500 BC had all of the features of a uniquely Western-style warfare, including “reliance on independent farmers capable of self-arming themselves, ... and ... the existence of a culture of warfare based on citizens with a ‘sense of personal freedom,’ ‘egalitarian camaraderie,’ and ‘individual initiative’” (p. 219). Although Duchesne agrees with a critic of Hanson that the reliance on citizen-soldiers was not always characteristic of the West throughout its history, one can easily see that these characteristic were far more common and typical of the West than elsewhere. Obviously, they fit well with the idea that individualism is a fundamental Western predisposition. Another historian reviewed by Duchesne, Geoffrey Parker, notes that extended kinship relations were not characteristic of Western military formations (p. 219). This also fits well with the individualism thesis.

Beginning in Chapter 5 Duchesne argues that the West diverged from the rest in all areas of life, not simply economic production. Although other cultures have managed to have sustained economic growth, none could reasonably be seen as likely to have developed liberal democratic institutions.

The rise of this culture cannot be abstracted from the special developmental history of the Greek and Roman assemblies of citizens; the parliaments, municipal

communes, universities, and estates of the medieval era; the reading societies, salons, journals and newspapers of the Enlightenment; the political parties, trade unions, and nationalist groups of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. ... At the heart of Western modernity ... is the ideal of freedom, and the ideal of a critical, self-reflexive public culture. (pp. 237–238)

This is important because the great majority of those who would dismiss Western accomplishments focus only on economic development (typically analyzed, as noted above, as the result of predatory colonial exploitation or simply luck), not on cultural differences that long preceded differences in economic development.

Duchesne argues that Western science is a unique accomplishment. Although the Chinese made many practical discoveries, they never developed the idea of a rational, orderly universe guided by universal laws comprehensible to humans. Nor did they ever develop a "deductive method of rigorous demonstration according to which a conclusion, a theorem, was proven by reasoning from a series of self-evident axioms" (p. 250). (The same is said to be true of Indian geometry.) Whereas there was a strong tendency within China for intellectuals to uphold ancient wisdom (emanating from Confucius), the Greeks "challenged existing explanations by trying to deliver new and better explanations and by seeking incontrovertible truths [i.e., objectively true—true for all observers] based on the strictest modes of demonstration" (p. 251). Thus while the Chinese essentially gravitated to collectivist reaffirmation of social wisdom, the Western tradition was one of individuals questioning received wisdom and the weight of tradition.

Duchesne seeks the sources of Western uniqueness in its prehistory. Following Peter Bogucki,<sup>8</sup> Duchesne argues that hunter-gatherer bands enforced sharing norms and egalitarianism until the end of the Ice Age, around 12,000 BP. The more productive economies that developed at this time enabled "individual aggrandizers" to succeed in obtaining hugely more wealth than others. Duchesne's argues that "the Indo-European speakers who began to migrate into Europe roughly after 3500 BC, coalescing with and subordinating the 'ranked' Neolithic cultures of this region, were a uniquely aristocratic people dominated by emerging chieftains for whom fighting to gain prestige was the all-pervading ethos. This culture [is] interpreted as 'the Western state of nature' and as the primordial source of Western restlessness" (p. 51).

Duchesne argues that the roots of the West lie in "aristocratic egalitarianism" — the aristocratic warlike culture of Indo-European speakers who spread throughout Europe during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium" (p. 344). They originated not in the North but in the Pontic steppe region of south Russia and the Ukraine. In the Near East, Iran and India, this conquering group was absorbed by the local population. In Europe, they displaced the native languages but not the natives: Originally, at least, as in the other areas they conquered, they were an alien elite ruling over the older Europeans.

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<sup>8</sup> Peter Bogucki, *The Origins of Human Society* (London: Blackwell, 1999).

According to Duchesne, the novelty of Indo-European culture was that it was not based on a single king but on an aristocratic elite that was egalitarian within the group. Duchesne rejects a purely linguistic conceptualization of the Indo-Europeans: They were an ethnic entity, a race of horse-riding conquerors superimposed on an older European culture that was less aggressive, less hierarchical and less individualistic. These Indo-Europeans prized heroic warriors striving for individual fame and recognition, often with a “berserker” style of warfare – i.e., frenzied, foolhardy intensity.

The men who became leaders were not despots but peers with other warriors: aristocratic egalitarianism. Successful warriors individualized themselves in dress, sporting beads, belts, etc., with a flair for ostentation. This resulted in a “vital, action-oriented, and linear picture of the world” (p. 374) – i.e., as moving forward in pursuit of the goal of increasing prestige. Leaders commanded by voluntary consent, and being a successful leader meant having many clients who pledged their loyalty; often the clients were young unmarried men looking to make their way in the world. The leader was therefore a “first among equals.”

These “groups of comrades” ... were singularly dedicated to predatory behavior and to “wolf-like” living by hunting and raiding, and to the performance of superior, even super-human deeds. The members were generally young, unmarried men, thirsting for adventure. The followers were sworn not to survive a war leader who was slain in battle, just as the leader was expected to show in all circumstances a personal example of courage and war-skills. (p. 376)

This last point – that the leader and followers are committed to a fight to the death – is said to distinguish Indo-European culture from other so-called “Big Man” cultures: “Only in reference to Indo-European aristocratic berserkers ... can we speak in Hegelian terms of a fight to the death for the sake of *pure* prestige” (p. 387). Again, Duchesne sees this drive for prestige for its own sake as uniquely Indo-European: “Competitive feasters [i.e., other Big Man cultures] did seek prestige but they did it in a way still heavily conditioned by their economic and evolutionary interests” (p. 388).

When these marauding bands descended down to the Near East and India, there was significant interbreeding with the native populations. Because the cultures in these areas were already quite advanced, they ended up having more influence on the Indo-Europeans than the reverse. Thus the Hittites fused with the native Hattic population; in India the Indo-Europeans fused with the pre-existing Harappan culture, and similarly in Iran. In all areas they gave up the pastoral lifestyle for agriculture and developed despotic rule centered around a king who was “the only character with any individuality and heroic achievement” (p. 379). All subjects and foreigners were required to prostrate themselves – common in virtually all the “state-centered hydraulic civilizations” (i.e., civilizations centered on irrigation agriculture – China, India, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Incans, Aztecs) and quite foreign to the Indo-European cultures of Europe. Interestingly, he describes Stalin as the classic despot. Stalin, from Georgia, is

said to have had a despotic Oriental personality, surrounding himself with "slavish characters" and continuing to need "choruses of public approval to reinforce his ego" (p. 424). I am reminded of the "guru thesis" of Jewish intellectual movements discussed in *The Culture of Critique* – a leading figure like Freud surrounded by devoted followers who eagerly give up their own personalities to be able to bask in the sunlight of reflected glory.

In Europe, however, intermixture did not lead to Oriental despotism. Duchesne gives considerable prominence to Timothy Earle's *How Chiefs Come to Power*. Earle's section on Denmark from 2300-1300BC describes an earlier farming culture followed by the "Single Grave Culture and the "Bell-Beaker" culture which were more individualistic – "intense status rivalry played out through military confrontations among those striving to dominate" (p. 395). Earle emphasizes the "'individualizing' nature of Danish culture and warfare, in particular the single graves and their focus on individual male warriors and the individualizing use of prestige goods and its association with success in warfare" (p. 395). Duchesne claims that this pattern was widespread in Europe. Beowulf, even though set in the Germanic/Scandinavian 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, depicts an "aristocratic ethos of companionship and equality" (p. 398). "The formation of voluntary war-bands held together by oaths, camaraderie, and a common self-interest was a common characteristic of these chiefdoms. This was a time when social status and rank were still openly determined by one's heroic deeds and by the number of followers or clients one could afford" (p. 399).

Duchesne's take on Greek culture of the Mycenaean period and described by Homer is in line with the aristocratic egalitarian hypothesis. Aristocrats are warriors who are renowned for heroic deeds and seeking personal immortality. Government is not despotic but rather there is a lot of discussion and argument about what to do. Kings acted after consultation with other aristocrats. For Achilles and other Greek gods, fate was self-chosen and sometimes personally tragic. "There is also a spirit of overweening confidence in man's capacity to strive, in the midst of moments of fear and doubt, against the most difficult obstacles" (p. 417). "The gods speak as if they were speaking to peers, 'with chivalrous courtesy,' offering their advice, telling them it is better to follow the gods, if they wish, while the heroes communicate and react to the gods without losing their freedom and honor" (p. 418).

Amazingly, Hippocrates (460 BC-370 BC), the founder of medicine, saw Greeks and Persians as fundamentally different from the Greeks in ways strikingly congruent with Duchesne's thesis: "Europeans ... were independent, willing to take risks, aggressive and warlike, while Asians were peaceful to the point of lacking initiative, 'not their own masters ... but ruled by despots'" (p. 484).

Also interesting is the account of the individualist ethos pervading the Scandinavian sagas, based on Aaron Gurevich's *Origins of European Individualism*. Heroes were individuals first and foremost – people who separated themselves from the others by their feats, as shown by these lines from *Beowulf*:

As we must all expect to leave

our life on this earth, we must earn some renown,  
If we can before death; daring is the thing  
for a fighting man to be remembered by. ...  
A man must act so  
when he means in a fight to frame himself  
a long lasting glory; it is not life he thinks of.

After the period of conquest by berserker aristocratic military units, the warrior ethic was lost but individualistic competition and the desire to be publicly acclaimed continued. Thus in classical Greece (i.e., after the Homeric period),

the ultimate basis of Greek civic and cultural life was the aristocratic ethos of individualism and competitive conflict which pervaded [Indo-European] culture. Ionian literature was far from the world of berserkers but it was nonetheless just as intensively competitive. New works of drama, philosophy, and music were expounded in the first-person form as an adversarial or athletic contest in the pursuit of truth. ... There were no Possessors of the Way in aristocratic Greece; no Chinese Sages decorously deferential to their superior and expecting appropriate deference from their inferiors. The search for the truth was a free-for-all with each philosopher competing for intellectual prestige in a polemical tone that sought to discredit the theories of others while promoting one's own. (p. 452)

This underlines the individualistic nature of scientific endeavor. Scientific movements are highly permeable groups whose members are prone to defection if they find a better theory or if new data are uncovered. This is a theme of Chapter 6 of *The Culture of Critique*: In contrast to the Western individualist tradition of science, the Jewish intellectual movements reviewed in *The Culture of Critique* were composed of slavish followers centered around charismatic leaders who expounded dogmas that were not open to empirical disconfirmation. Individuals convinced by their own judgments to adopt different theories or reject fundamental dogmas (like the Freudian Oedipal Complex or Boasian views on cultural relativism) were simply expelled; dissent was not tolerated. The movements far more resembled despotic politburos rather than individualist truth seeking.

As the Western world of antiquity decayed, the West was infused with new lifeblood from the Germans.

It was the vigor, boldness, and the acquisitiveness of Germanic war-bands that kept the West alive. These lads were uncouth and unlettered, much given to quarrelsome rages, but they injected energy, daring, and indeed an uncomplicated and sincere love of freedom, a keen sense of honor and a restless passion for battle, adventure, and life. (p. 465).

Even during the putative nadir of Western freedom and democracy, the medieval period, "the *aristocratic* principle of sovereignty by consent was the hallmark of feudal government. The king was not above the aristocracy; he was first among equals" (p. 483; emphasis in original). (In terms of the Discussion section below, the Middle Ages represented the triumph of the aristocratic-egalitarian model of the West, followed by a resurgence of primeval Western egalitarian-individualism.) Nevertheless, Duchesne does not ascribe the development of modern representative government to aristocratic liberalism as the "'essential'" force (p. 483). He argues that the Church played a role because it insisted on its independence. Medieval society was a "society of estates" – "kingdoms, baronies, bishoprics, urban communes, guilds, universities, each with important duties and privileges" (p. 484).

We have seen that Duchesne rejects an evolutionary/genetic account of the desire for fame and recognition. Given that, his last chapter is inevitably disappointing to an evolutionist because it attempts to provide a purely psychological/cultural account of "the emergence of the self" – that is, an account that is divorced from genetics and adaptive function. This perspective results in passages like "The exalted state of berserker inspiration associated with the fight for pure prestige, together with the entire [Indo-European] aristocratic way of life, had a profound effect on the constitution of the human personality, awakening within it a sense of human 'inwardness' and thereby leading to the discovery of the mind" (p. 431). It seems obviously wrong to suppose that Western uniqueness has something to do with using personal pronouns and having a sense of psychological coherence (p. 436). In any case, as noted above, there is no reason why this desire for prestige for its own sake need be divorced from strong evolutionary roots.

Duchesne concludes that "it is my contention that the aristocratic culture of Indo-Europeans was *dominated* by men whose souls were 'too high-spirited, too intrepid, too indifferent about fortune'" (p. 486; emphasis in text; the inner quote is from philosopher David Hume).

The expansionist aggression of the West is an inescapable expression of its roots in aristocratic men who are free and therefore headstrong and ambitious, sure of themselves, easily offended, and unwilling to accept quiet subservience. The "civilizing process" of this era [950-1350] brought under restraint the original ferocity of the barbarians. But the goal of the Church was to spiritualize the baser instincts of this class, not to extirpate and emasculate them. The highly strung and obstinate aristocrat has been a fundamental source of destruction in Western history as well as the source of all that is good and inspiring. (p. 481)

Modern liberalism has resulted in this restless and fearless spirit to be just one of several human drives, like survival and comfort. It no longer dominates the West, its spirit "suppressed by the ethical demands of modern democratic liberalism, rechanneled into economic inventiveness, or confounded with bodily appetites. Since the restlessness of the West could not be attributed to biological drives equally present

in all human beings, the tendency was to attribute it to the purely rational part of the soul. ... I hope to have persuaded some that the roots of the West are to be found in a profoundly different aristocratic character that first came into the light of history in the Pontic steppes" (p. 488).

## DISCUSSION

Should we be persuaded? Duchesne's view of the West fits well with the classic race science view of conquering Indo-Europeans becoming an elite and then degenerating as they become genetically assimilated to surrounding societies.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, he convincingly argues, as have others,<sup>10</sup> that this was the case for the Hittites in the Near East as well as in Persia and India.

However, this did not occur in Europe. If, as Duchesne argues, the Indo-Europeans surged into Western and Northern Europe from the Pontic steppes in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, there was plenty of time for these cultures to degenerate just as had the IE cultures in other areas. I suggest that the reason that the West retained its characteristic individualism for so long is that the primeval populations of Europe had already evolved in the direction of individualism. Genetically there is very little, if anything, to distinguish them.

From the perspective briefly described in the following (what might be termed a précis of a book that is in preparation), the invasion of an Indo-European-speaking elite warrior class is a variant on a previously existing culture of northern hunter-gatherers resulting in two quite different cultural stands in Europe: An individualist-egalitarian culture and an aristocratic-egalitarian culture.

The population genetic evidence indicates that the genetic core of European populations dates from Paleolithic times—well prior to any putative Indo-European invasion. For example, a 2000 study using Y-chromosome data found that nearly 80% of European Y Chromosomes are Paleolithic in origin.<sup>11</sup> The study notes that (maternally transmitted) mitochondrial DNA presents a similar picture, with most lineages deriving from >25,000 years ago. For both Y chromosomes and mitochondrial DNA, the origins are at least 25,000 years ago, long before the proposed Indo-European invasion. The balance of the Y chromosomes dating from the Neolithic are thought to be from farmers originating in the Middle East.

The point is that the genetic roots of European culture are far more likely to be found in the hunter-gatherer groups that spread over Europe after the last glacial maximum (~15,000 years ago) than anything unique to elite Indo-European conquerors. Indeed, the Indo-European conquerors share some basic traits with the rest of Europeans. Duchesne notes that Germanic warrior groups coalesced around successful leaders; they were not strongly based on kinship. Individualism implies what one might term a

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<sup>9</sup> E.g., John Day, *Indo-European Origins: the Anthropological Evidence* (Washington, DC: Institute for the Study of Man, 2001); Arthur Kemp, *March of the Titans* (London: Ostar Publications, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Ornella Semino et al., "The genetic legacy of Paleolithic *Homo sapiens sapiens* in extant Europeans: A Y chromosome perspective." *Science*, 290(10 November, 2000), 1155–1159.

rational market economy in human relationships: People are evaluated on their talents and abilities rather than on kinship distance.

This is the main marker of individualism—lack of deep enmeshment in kinship groups and extended families. There is a great deal of evidence that individualistic family patterns characterize the West. These tendencies are most apparent in the Northwest of Europe rather than the Pontic steppe region as would be expected if influences from the latter region were decisive (see below). Both cultural tendencies are thus individualistic but in somewhat different ways.

The main intuition for this proposal is that certain features of important European cultural forms do not mesh well with the aristocratic egalitarian model.

1. The tendency toward monogamy. Monogamy makes a great deal of sense as a response to harsh ecological conditions confronted by northern hunter-gatherers but makes little sense from that standpoint of a warrior elite. Northern hunter-gatherers need to concentrate their investment in one female under adverse ecological conditions.<sup>12</sup> European groups are part of the North Eurasian and Circumpolar culture area.<sup>13</sup> This culture area derives from hunter-gatherers adapted to cold, ecologically adverse climates.

On the other hand, for wealthy, powerful males, the ideal reproductive strategy is to have numerous wives and concubines and distinguish among them regarding inheritance rights—for example, concentrating most wealth in one or a few offspring, typically the children of the daughter of another wealthy man able to provide a handsome dowry. This is the pattern throughout the entire non-European world where there is a clear tendency for males in societies above the hunter-gatherer level to engage in resource polygyny.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the historical record shows that when Indo-European warrior elites conquered India and Persia, they were polygynous. From an evolutionary perspective, it is quite natural and understandable that an elite class of warriors would adopt local patterns of resource polygyny, with little or no opposition.

In Europe, the tendency toward monogamy was far more genetically and culturally fixed as the result of a prolonged period living under harsh ecological conditions. As a result, although some elite males did indeed engage in low levels of polygyny as late as the early Middle Ages, powerful forces were arrayed against this practice, so that in general, "there has been a remarkable continuity within a varied set of institutions that have uniformly penalized polygyny and channeled non-monogamous sexuality into non-reproductive outlets (or suppressed it altogether)."<sup>15</sup> Importantly, these strictures against polygyny were popular among non-elite males—what amounts to a high degree

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<sup>12</sup> This is the basic ecological argument for monogamy. See MacDonald, "The Establishment and Maintenance of Social Imposed Monogamy in Western Europe," *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> M. L. Burton, C. C. Moore, J. W. M. Whiting, & A. K. Romney, "Regions based on social structure," *Current Anthropology* 37, 87–123, 1996.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*; see also Kevin MacDonald, "Production, social controls and ideology: Toward a sociobiology of the phenotype," *Journal of Social and Biological Structures*, 6, 297–317, 1983.

<sup>15</sup> MacDonald, "The Establishment and Maintenance of Social Imposed Monogamy in Western Europe," *Ibid.*, 18.

of sexual egalitarianism despite enormous differences in wealth and power. Like the social practices in hunter-gatherer groups generally, lower-status males were keen to curb any reproductive advantage held by the aristocratic elites; and, as is typical of hunter-gatherer societies, they succeeded.<sup>16</sup>

Thus an important thrust of Western culture has been to regulate the behavior of elites in order to create a relatively more egalitarian social structure—in other words, to recreate the conditions of hunter-gatherer culture.

The genetic hypothesis for monogamy receives support from Peter Frost's finding that there are around 19 genetic mutations related to physical appearance in European populations, notably blond hair and blue eyes.<sup>17</sup> There is far more diversity in hair color in European populations than any other population. Theoretically, this means that Europeans have been under sexual selection for these traits. That is, these traits have no functional significance (another example is the peacock's tail), but are seen as sexually attractive and therefore spread in the population.

Frost associates sexual selection among Europeans with monogamy as a marriage system, selected for in the northern areas where Whites evolved because of the need for fathers to provision children. Rather than marry on the basis of known kinship relations and family dictates, marriage is based on individual choice. And one criterion of importance (among others) is physical beauty.

Such selection pressures would also lead Europeans to value love as the basis of marriage—**analyzed** as a trait that makes close relationships between spouses mutually rewarding.

These findings are compatible with Frank Salter's hypothesis that recessive genes, such as those for blond hair and blue eyes, are part of an individualist mating pattern because males who invest in their children have more confidence in paternity if they child looks like them.<sup>18</sup> Such features make the woman a "blank slate" because it would be easier to discover the offspring of unfaithful females. Males who invest in their children must be vitally concerned about paternity, and individualist societies tend to lack the strong cultural controls common in collectivist societies in which women of reproductive age are sequestered or constantly supervised.

Marriage for Europeans was thus far more based on individual choice than on cementing kinship relationships by, for example, marrying first cousins whatever their traits (which is the pattern in much of the rest of the world). Again, as a result of individualism, Western relationships, including marriage, are more market oriented (predisposing to capitalism as an economic system): those with attractive traits, including physical beauty (especially the case with women), do well on the marriage

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<sup>16</sup> Christopher H. Boehm, *Hierarchy in the Forest: The Evolution of Egalitarian Behavior* (Cambridge: Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> Peter Frost, "European hair and eye color: A case of frequency-dependent sexual selection?," *Evolution and Human Behavior* 27 (2006) 85–103.

<sup>18</sup> Frank Kemp Salter, "Carrier females and sender males: An evolutionary hypothesis linking female attractiveness, family resemblance, and paternity confidence," *Ethology and Sociobiology* 17(4), 211–220, 1996.

market. Besides physical traits, psychological attraction (especially love)—another aspect of individual choice—has been valued far more in Western culture than the other cultures of the world. This fits well with John Murray Cuddihy's comment on a long line of Jewish intellectuals who viewed love as the product of an alien culture, as indeed it was.<sup>19</sup> (For example, he quotes one of Freud's disciples, Theodor Reik: "Love or romance had no place in the Judengasse [Jewish quarter]."

2. Nuclear (simple family) structure. A result of individualist marriage patterns is a tendency toward the nuclear family (the simple household) rather than extended family of collateral kin. The nuclear family, freed from extended kinship obligations, is the basis of Western social organization. It is unique relative to other culture areas. This pattern is particularly noticeable in the Northwest of Europe rather than the Pontic steppe region.<sup>20</sup> As one goes from the Northwest of Europe to the Southeast, there is an increase in joint family structure, with brothers living together with parents, grandparents and children. Family historian John Hajnal discovered the "Hajnal line" that separates Western Europe from Eastern Europe, the former characterized by nuclear family structure, relatively late marriage and large numbers of unmarried in economically difficult times, the latter by joint family structure and relatively early and universal marriage.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, French historian Emmanuel LeRoi-Ladurie notes the major differences in family structure within France corresponding to the division between the Germanic peoples who lived northeast of "the eternal line," which connects Saint Malo on the English Channel with Geneva in French-speaking Switzerland—the former more prone to nuclear family.<sup>22</sup> This area, which should also be extended to Northern Italy, settled by the Lombards, originally a Scandinavian people, in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. (The Hajnal line excludes southern Italy, southern Spain, and Ireland from the Western European family paradigm.) This area is also the region where Charles Murray's concentrations of human accomplishment (reviewed by Duchesne) are to be found.<sup>23</sup> The Southeast of Europe is thus an unlikely source for a complete understanding the uniqueness of Western civilization.

3. Another European cultural tendency, apparent especially in the North of Europe, is an extreme egalitarianism that is far more compatible with the hunter-gatherer model than the warrior elite model. The "Jante Law" of Scandinavia is paradigmatic: Basically, no one can rise above the others in the group—the very antithesis of the sort of culture invented by an aristocratic elite. Such social practices are common in hunter-gatherer

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<sup>19</sup> John Murray Cuddihy, *The Ordeal of Civility: Freud, Marx, Levi-Strauss, and the Jewish Struggle with Modernity* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).

<sup>20</sup> The extended biological argument for the nuclear family as the fundamental Western social form can be found in: MacDonald, "What Makes Western Culture Unique?," *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> J. Hajnal, "Two kinds of pre-industrial household formation system," in *Family Forms in Historic Europe*, R. Wall, J. Robin & P. Laslett (Eds.) (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>22</sup> Emmanuel LeRoi-Ladurie, *The French Peasantry 1450–1660*, trans. by A. Sheridan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986 [Originally published in 1977]), 342.

<sup>23</sup> Charles Murray, *Human Accomplishment: The Pursuit of Excellence in the Arts and Sciences, 800 BC to 1950* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003).

groups around the world.<sup>24</sup> The 10 commandments of Jante Law so apparent in Scandinavian society represents the archetype of the individualist-egalitarian cultural strand of Western social organization: 1. Don't think you are anything; 2. Don't think you are as good as us. 3. Don't think you are smarter than us. 4. Don't fancy yourself better than us. 5. Don't think you know more than us. 6. Don't think you are greater than us. 7. Don't think you are good for anything. 8. Don't laugh at us. 9. Don't think that anyone cares about you. 10. Don't think you can teach us anything.<sup>25</sup> Again, these tendencies are the antithesis of an aristocratic culture.

Reflecting this pattern, Scandinavian society in general has a history of relatively small income and social class differences, including the absence of serfdom during the Middle Ages – a pattern that reflects a hunter-gatherer model far more than an aristocratic model. A recent anthropological study of hunter-gatherers found that the economic inequality approximated that of modern Denmark.<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless, despite these indications that an egalitarian, hunter-gatherer ethic of individualism is a powerful strand of European society, there is no question that aristocratic elites have indeed dominated Western societies for fairly long stretches of historical time. These elites may well have originated in the Pontic steppe region as Duchesne and others suppose, and they may indeed have had fair physical features, as John Day has cogently argued (although sexual selection for fair physical traits also appear to be part of the northern hunter-gatherer culture as well).

Good examples that fit Duchesne's aristocratic-egalitarian model are the Virginia colonists described by David Hackett Fischer in his classic *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*.<sup>27</sup> Virginia colonists were distressed Cavaliers, younger sons of the British aristocracy or refugees from the English Civil War. Their values were elitist, hierarchical and hostile to social change. This group originated as a result of German West Saxons immigrating to Southwestern England where they became an endogamous, intermarried elite – thereby exhibiting less of a tendency toward exogamy apparent in the egalitarian-individualist model. This group had large estates with lower-middle class *servi* and *villani* – essentially slaves,<sup>28</sup> dating from the 9th century in England. They reproduced this aristocratic culture in America: It was characterized by “deep and pervasive inequalities, by a staple agriculture and rural settlement patterns, by powerful oligarchies of large landowners with Royalist politics and an Anglican

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<sup>24</sup> Boehm, *Hierarchy in the Forest*, *Ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> Aksel Sandemose (1899–1965) in his novel *En Flyktning Krysser Sitt Spor (A Fugitive Crosses His Tracks*, 1933).

<sup>26</sup> Eric A. Smith, Kim Hill, Frank Marlowe, D. Nolin, Polly Wiessner P, M. Gurven, S. Bowles, Monique Borgerhoff-Mulder, T. Hertz, & A. Bell., “Wealth Transmission and Inequality Among Hunter-Gatherers,” *Current Anthropology*.51(1),19–34, 2010.

<sup>27</sup> David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1989).

<sup>28</sup> For a discussion of the distinctions between *villani* (villeins) and *servi* (slaves), see J. P. Somerville, “Medieval English Society.”

<http://history.wisc.edu/sommerville/123/123%20123%20Society.htm>

faith."<sup>29</sup> Like Duchesne's model of aristocratic egalitarianism, relationships were relatively egalitarian within the group but the society as a whole was highly hierarchical.

Nevertheless, the point here is that there have also been strong countervailing trends against the culture of aristocratic-egalitarian individualism, apparent not only in the social imposition of monogamy on aristocratic elites and the pervasive ethic of egalitarianism that is typical of Northern Europe mentioned above. There have also been struggles between the lower orders of Western society ultimately culminating in the overthrow of aristocratic social and political forms in favor of relatively democratic, republican, and egalitarian social forms more conducive to the primeval hunter-gatherer model of social organization.

I suggest that the Puritans exemplify the egalitarian-individualist trend of Western society. (Recall that Duchesne regards the Puritans as exponents of the "scientific-materialist" culture of Western modernization—a testament to their intelligence [the Puritans founded Harvard within a few years of landing in Massachusetts] as well as their commitment to science as an individualist quest for understanding and practical knowledge.) Puritan culture does not at all fit the warrior elite model. Kevin Phillips, who based his work on Fischer, traces the egalitarian, anti-hierarchical spirit of Yankee republicanism back to the fact that East Anglia was settled by Angles and Jutes (both from the Jutland peninsula) in pre-historic times. They produced "a civic culture of high literacy, town meetings, and a tradition of freedom," distinguished from other British groups by their "comparatively large ratios of freemen and small numbers of *servi* and *villani*."<sup>30</sup> East Anglia continued to produce "insurrections against arbitrary power" — the risings and rebellions of 1381 led by Jack Straw, Wat Tyler, and John Ball, Clarence's Rising in 1477, Robert Kett's rebellion of 1548, which predated the rise of Puritanism. President John Adams, cherished the East Anglian heritage of "self-determination, free male suffrage, and a consensual social contract."<sup>31</sup>

This is not at all a culture of aristocratic individualism but, quite clearly, a culture of egalitarian individualism. Note particularly the relative absence of strong social class differences in traditional East Anglian society and the relative absence of *villani* and *servi*. I suggest that the struggle between egalitarian individualism and aristocratic individualism has been central to the dynamics of Western history in recent centuries. The uprisings of the East Anglians are only part of a larger pattern: the English civil war mainly pitted the Puritans against the aristocracy, resulting in the triumph of Cromwell and the beheading of King Charles I; the American Civil War pitted the Yankee-dominated North against the Cavalier-dominated South.

It is noteworthy that the French Revolution had pronounced egalitarian, anti-aristocratic trends, often couched in the language of moral ingroups and outgroups in opposition to the aristocracy. For example, the moral condemnation of social hierarchy

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

<sup>30</sup> Kevin Phillips, *Cousins' Wars: Religion, Politics, Civil Warfare and the Triumph of Anglo-America* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 26.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

by the Jacobin radicals during the French Revolution is a major theme of Lothrop Stoddard's *The French Revolution in San Domingo*.<sup>32</sup> Thus Stoddard notes the hatred toward the White slave-owning colonists. During the height of the Reign of Terror, colonists sent home to France were greeted, in the words of one such unfortunate, with "a furious hatred ... . A hatred so intense that our most terrible misfortunes did not excite the slightest commiseration." At the same time, mulatto and Black delegates from San Domingo were greeted with delirious applause.

Such sentiments recall the moral fervor of the Puritan-descended Yankee abolitionists in the period prior to the American Civil War. For example, for Orestes Brownson (1803–1876), a prominent publicist and activist, the Civil War was a moral crusade waged not only to preserve the union, but to emancipate the slaves. He argued for "for the unity of races and the inherent dignity of each person, and he lambasted Southerners for trying to enlarge their political base" by adding to the number of slave states.<sup>33</sup> Writing in 1840, Brownson claimed that we should "realize in our social arrangements and in the actual conditions of all men that equality of man and man" that God had established but which had been destroyed by capitalism.<sup>34</sup> According to Brownson, Christians had to

bring down the high, and bring up the low; to break the fetters of the bound and set the captive free; to destroy all oppression, establish the reign of justice, which is the reign of equality, between man and man; to introduce new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, wherein all shall be as brothers, loving one another, and no one possessing what another lacketh.<sup>35</sup>

It's interesting that whereas the aristocratic-egalitarian military groups emphasized by Duchesne produced cohesion and loyalty as a result of fealty to a successful leader (rather than on the basis of kinship), the East Anglian model for cohesion was the creation of moral and ideological bases of group cohesion (rather than on the basis of kinship). These two models are thus variants on the individualist theme. The Puritans famously imposed penalties on people who departed from the moral/ideological strictures of the society. They were also willing to incur great costs to impose their moral/ideological version of truth. Puritan "ordered liberty" was the freedom to act within the confines of the moral order. This might be called the paradox of individualism: In order to form cohesive groups, individualists have at times erected strong social controls on individual behavior that result in group cohesion.

The logic connecting these tendencies to the individualist hunter-gather model is obvious: Like all humans in a dangerous and difficult world, hunter-gatherers need to

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<sup>32</sup> Lothrop Stoddard, *The French Revolution in San Domingo* (London: Wermod and Wermod, 2011; originally published in 1914).

<http://shop.wermodandwermod.com/index.php/the-french-revolution-in-san-domingo.html>

<sup>33</sup> Philip F. Gura, *American Transcendentalism: A History* (New York, Hill and Wang, 2007), 266.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 138–139.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

develop cohesive, cooperative ingroups. But rather than base them on known kinship relations, the prototypical egalitarian-individualist groups of the West are based on reputation and trust. Egalitarian-individualists create moral-ideological communities in which those who violate public trust and other manifestations of the moral order are shunned, ostracized, and exposed to public humiliation—a fate that would have resulted in evolutionary death during the harsh ecological period of the Ice Age—the same fate as the derelict father who refused to provision his children.

A possible evolutionary legacy of this phenomenon is a greater tendency to engage in what social scientists term "altruistic punishment,"<sup>36</sup> defined as punishment of people who depart from the moral-ideological consensus that costs the punisher. A cooperative culture derived from European hunter-gathers would be expected to be characterized by high levels of altruistic punishment directed at free-riders. This is studied in a game among strangers who donate to a common pot that is increased by a set multiplier by the experimenter and then divided equally. Free riders contribute little but get all the benefits. Altruistic punishers incur costs to punish the cheaters. This punishment is motivated by moral outrage. Because it is played among strangers, the game mimics individualistic societies.

Whatever the political and economic complexities that led to the Civil War, it was the Yankee moral condemnation of slavery that inspired and justified the massive carnage of closely related Anglo Americans on behalf of slaves from Africa. Militarily, the war with the Confederacy was the greatest sacrifice in lives and property ever made by Americans.

The Puritans tended to pursue utopian causes framed as moral issues, not hesitating to endure high costs in order to punish those who violated the moral norms of the ingroup. They were prone to utopian appeals to a "higher law" and the belief that government's principal purpose is moral. New England was the most fertile ground for "the perfectability of man creed," and the "father of a dozen 'isms'."<sup>37</sup> It goes without saying that all of the great European wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been rationalized in moral terms—to secure the Enlightenment ideals of freedom, democracy, and individual rights against the state.

To conclude, my proposal is that the culture of the West as it developed in the modern era owes much more to egalitarian individualism than to aristocratic individualism. It's interesting that all of the intellectual movements discussed in *The Culture of Critique*<sup>38</sup> involved moral indictments of the West and its history of slavery, segregation, colonialism, anti-Semitism, and exclusion of Jews from the Protestant elite. Clearly the most egregious of these moral failings stem from the cultural strand of aristocratic egalitarianism, not the egalitarian individualism that eventually won out. Nevertheless, these movements have managed to create a moral community that taps into the hunter-gatherer ethic of egalitarian individualism. As noted above, Duchesne attributes the decline of aristocratic individualism partly to "the ethical demands of

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<sup>36</sup> E. Fehr & S. Gächter, "Altruistic punishment in humans," *Nature* 415, 137-140, 2002.

<sup>37</sup> Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, *Ibid.*, 357.

<sup>38</sup> MacDonald, *The Culture of Critique*, *Ibid.*

modern democratic liberalism.” However, the psychological power of the ethical demands of modern liberalism themselves require explanation. The argument here is that the roots of the creation of a moral-ideological ingroup stem from the unique egalitarian-individualist strand of the culture of the West.

The general dismantling of the culture of the West, and eventually its demise as anything resembling an ethnic entity, is occurring as a result of a moral onslaught triggering a paroxysm of altruistic punishment and based ultimately on these evolved tendencies. Thus the intense effort among Jewish intellectuals to continue the ideology of the moral superiority of the Jewish community and its role as undeserving historical victim while at the same time continuing the onslaught on the moral legitimacy of the West.

In any case, Duchesne is to be congratulated on a wonderful effort to stem to tide against the barbarians at the gate.