

Book Review Debate

Reply to Gerhard Meisenberg's Review of *Individualism and the Western Liberal Tradition* in *Mankind Quarterly* 60: 440-445, with Discussion

Kevin MacDonald*

California State University–Long Beach, USA

*Address for correspondence: Professor Emeritus of Psychology, California State University–Long Beach, 1250 Bellflower Boulevard, Long Beach, CA 90840. Kevin.macdonald@csulb.edu

My book *Individualism and the Western Liberal Tradition* traces not only the origins of Western civilization but also the rise and fall of Darwinism in the social sciences (Chapter 6). Given the interest of many readers of *Mankind Quarterly* in these topics, I expected a more sympathetic review than Meisenberg's in the Spring 2020 issue of the journal. Obviously, my book deals with some very thorny intellectual issues. Disagreement is to be expected, but several of his comments reflect a failure to grasp the theory and data presented in *Individualism*, and he exhibits a lack of sympathy toward my concern about the future of peoples and cultures of the West. Here are some important points of disagreement:

1. Origin of Ancient Greeks

Meisenberg cites a study by Mathieson et al. (2018), writing:

MacDonald is on thin ice when he presents the classical Greeks as paragons of "Indo-European" individualism and science. Genetic studies show that Greeks had very little Indo-European genetic roots, but were overwhelmingly of Anatolian farmer origin (Mathieson et al., 2018).

Although I do note that Greek culture was less individualistic than other European Indo-European cultures, the idea that ancient Greece was not an Indo-European culture is surprising given the structure of Greek culture as highly militarized culture along the general lines of what we see in other Indo-European

cultures and the fact that Greek is an Indo-European language. Ricardo Duchesne (2011) reviews scholarly evidence indicating that conquering I-Es originally dominated a much larger indigenous population (as was typical of I-E conquests), and created Mycenaean civilization as an aristocratic warrior culture characteristic of Indo-European cultures generally. Moreover, the genetic evidence is consistent with such a scenario. Mathieson et al. write:

Other Copper Age (~5000–4000 BCE) individuals from the Balkans have little evidence of steppe ancestry, but Bronze Age (~3400–1100 BCE) individuals do (we estimate 30%; CI: 26–35%). The four latest Balkan Bronze Age individuals in our data (later than ~1700 BCE) all have more steppe ancestry than earlier Bronze Age individuals (3200–2500 BCE...), showing that the contribution of the Steppe to southeast European populations increased further during the Bronze Age.

I read this as indicating substantial and increasing steppe ancestry in classical Greece during the Bronze Age consistent with the common pattern of Indo-European conquests and implying increased genetic fitness for the conquerors.

Finally, I am not aware of evidence that an Anatolian farmer culture would have been able to attain the heights of Greek civilization, since they certainly did not do so elsewhere in Europe. My book does not have a separate chapter on the southern European cultures deriving from the Anatolian farmers, the reason being that they were not important for understanding the main currents of European culture that derived from the other two groups — the Indo-Europeans and the northern hunter-gatherers.

Meisenberg's reply:

There is no doubt that Indo-Europeans brought their language to Greece sometime during the 3rd or early 2nd millennium BC. The perhaps most pertinent source on genetic origins is not Mathieson et al. (2018), but Lazaridis et al. (2017). These authors write: "We show that Minoans and Mycenaeans were genetically similar, having at least three quarters of their ancestry from the first Neolithic farmers of western Anatolia and the Aegean, and most of the remainder from ancient populations like those of the Caucasus and Iran. However, the Mycenaeans differed from Minoans in deriving additional ancestry from an ultimate source related to the hunter-gatherers of eastern Europe and Siberia, introduced via a proximal source related to the inhabitants of either the Eurasian steppe or Armenia" (p. 214).

So yes, there is some presumed steppe ancestry, but Indo-European language and culture were introduced to Greece mainly by elite dominance, not the wholesale replacement of most of the earlier population as happened in central and northern Europe. The classical Greeks were a nation with primarily Indo-European culture as described by MacDonald, but their genetic roots were mainly Anatolian.

Suggestion: Perhaps the individualism and rationality displayed by classical Greeks are better understood as consequences rather than genetically based preconditions of “Western” civilization. This interpretation is supported by the observation that today, democracy is well established in India and in East Asian countries with the only exception of China, which is ruled by a non-democratic but highly rationalist Western ideology.

MacDonald’s reply:

Again, as noted, I have no quarrel with the idea that the Indo-Europeans were an elite dominating a native indigenous population. My point was that Mycenaean civilization was an Indo-European culture. And my comment emphasized increasing I-E genetic contribution over time, suggesting selection for I-E genes. The most recent samples studied by Mathieson et al. date from 1100 BC, and the most recent samples studied by Lazaridis et al. date from around 1200 BC—toward the end of Mycenaean civilization. Thus the data do not shed much light on the genetic constitution of classical Greece—the flowering of classical Greek culture dated to the fourth and fifth centuries BC that epitomized so much of what we think of as Western culture. This is certainly time enough for selection or incursion of steppe-derived genes, but as yet there are no genetic studies I am aware of for this later period.

Further, there continues to be uncertainty regarding the causes of violent collapse of Mycenaean civilization inaugurating the Greek “Dark Age” (~1200BC–~750BC) of “isolation, introversion, and instability” (Hall, 2013, 82). More importantly for present purposes is the identity of the people who later formed classical Greek culture. There is a long history of proposing a “Dorian invasion” from the north which altered spoken dialects from Achaean to Dorian as well as aspects of culture (e.g., knowledge of ironworking and a shift to individualized burial practices (Hall, 2013, p. 70; Nagy, 2019), the latter suggesting a more individualist culture. This began as a literary tradition and persisted for nine centuries, down to the first century AD and remains the “most economical hypothesis,” although the Dorian invasion hypothesis purporting to explain it remains unproven (Hall, 2013, p. 68). As noted, genetic data on the people responsible for classical Greek civilization are lacking; however, it is reasonable

to posit a shift toward increased steppe contribution, not only during the Mycenaean period (Mathieson et al., 2018), but continuing thereafter given that genetic changes may occur quite quickly (Cochran & Harpending, 2010).

Regarding the suggestion that “individualism and rationality displayed by classical Greeks are better understood as consequences rather than genetically based preconditions of ‘Western’ civilization,” this produces a chicken-egg problem: If individualism is a consequence of Western culture, one must still explain the uniqueness of Western culture in producing individualism. Moreover, individualism is much more than democracy or rationality: nuclear family structure, reciprocity as fundamental, egalitarianism, the importance of reputation in a moral community rather than a kinship-based community, and the psychological characteristics of individualists reviewed in Chapter 3, based on Henrich et al. (2010). These latter include social traits (fairness, cooperation, moral reasoning, self-concept and related motivations), perception (visual perception and spatial reasoning) and cognition (categorization and inferential induction, reasoning styles [e.g., field independence vs. field dependence; analytical vs. holistic]). Moreover, some aspects of what we think of as Western individualism, such as democracy or even the pervasive dedication to rationality that we see today, have certainly not been characteristic of most Western societies prior to the Enlightenment but developed only as a result of long historical processes discussed in *Individualism*.

The question of whether and to what extent some or even all aspects of individualism are exportable is a complex question beyond the scope of this comment. Some societies appear to be more amenable to individualism than others, quite possibly because of their own evolutionary history. For example, Japan and Korea, classified, along with Europe, as in the North Eurasia and Circumpolar culture area (Burton et al., 1996), appear to have shifted toward greater individualism since World War II (Kelly, 1991; Oyserman, Coon & Kemmelmeier, 2002; Oyserman & Uskul, 2008), and the “alleged” replacement of the traditional Japanese extended kinship family with the nuclear family has received much scholarly attention (Kelly 1991, p. 404). On the other hand, Burton et al. (1996) classify China and India as being in the Middle Old World culture area which continues to be far more prone to collectivism.

Moreover, some aspects of individualism, such as democracy and rationality, are compatible with kinship-based collectivism in other vital realms, such as family structure and the importance of kinship. As Meisenberg notes, China is not democratic, and both India and China retain collectivist, kinship-based cultures at the family level. Rationality and science would seem to be the most exportable aspects of Western individualism. Western rationality, including such

manifestations as Western-style universities, has been established throughout the world, including Middle Eastern countries and Africa which clearly have not departed significantly from kinship-based collectivism.

2. The Genetic Basis of Individualism

Meisenberg makes the following claim:

For prehistoric cultures, MacDonald can only point to rather flimsy archaeological evidence based on burials (p. 39), and there is no direct evidence for the role of genetics.

I agree that there is no direct evidence for genetics. However, the thrust of Chapter 1 is that there is a north-south genetic cline, with farmer genes more common in the south and hunter-gatherer and steppe-ancestry genes more common in the north, with the far north being highest in h-g ancestry. This genetic cline persists into the present. The genetic findings then parallel the findings on family structure reviewed in Chapter 4, with h-g “extreme individualist” families most common in the far northwest (Scandinavia), “moderate individualist” families in north-central Europe, and “moderate collectivist” families in the south. So even though we don’t have direct genetic evidence, we have a genetic cline that parallels a cline in family structure. Thus it seems quite reasonable to infer a genetic pattern, particularly in light of the data I review in Chapter 4 indicating a primordial origin for European family patterns:

1. Family historians are unable to date the origins of the individualist family, nor are they able to date practices such as taking in unrelated people as servants in northwest Europe — their origins lost in prehistory and suggesting a primordial origin; and, in addition to the individual burials noted by Hall (2013, p. 70) and Nagy (2019), I also note burials of nuclear families in an I-E-derived culture dating from ~4600 years ago (p. 38).
2. Contextual explanations proposed by several historians emphasizing the manorial system of parts of central Europe fail at explaining the individualist family (e.g., the most extreme forms of individualism occur in Scandinavia, but the manorial system did not occur there, and moderately collectivist families prevailed in the south of France despite a version of the manorial system occurring there).
3. The persistent contrasts between the relatively collectivist south and the much more individualist north, as well as the persistent contrast between relatively

collectivist Irish versus the moderately individualist Germanic family structure (pp. 146–148), have continued into the present despite all the historical changes that have occurred in political and economic institutions.

My claims that these patterns are primordial and rooted in the evolution of European peoples are certainly far from “an article of faith.”

Meisenberg’s reply:

I agree that history and archaeology point to a continuity that suggests genetic causes. The point I was making is that we better suspend final judgment about this hypothesis for now because we are becoming increasingly able to test it at the molecular level. The alternative hypothesis that nuclear families are a cultural response to an agrarian economy in a strongly seasonal climate can be approached by examining other early civilizations with similar ecologies in places like China and Japan.

MacDonald’s reply:

I develop the idea that harsh climate resulted in the nuclear family in Chapter 3:

Northern European groups are part of the North Eurasian and Circumpolar culture area. This culture area derives from hunter-gatherers adapted to cold, ecologically adverse climates. In such climates there is pressure for male provisioning of the family and a tendency toward monogamy, because the ecology never supported either polygyny or large groups for an evolutionarily significant period.

I agree that the climate hypothesis is consistent with either a cultural or a genetic shift. However, there is a scholarly consensus that China, despite evolving in a harsh climate, developed a kinship-based, collectivist family structure. The argument in Chapter 3 is that areas like China where it was possible to dominate a resource-rich area that could be defended by a kinship group on a year-around basis (the Yangtze river valley) developed systems based on extended kin networks. On the other hand, the resource-rich marine environments of northern Europe did not support year-around occupation; these peoples created societies with a high level of social complexity in a non-agricultural context. As I note:

In northern Europe, despite their complexity, these hunter-gatherer groups were not able to remain in one area for the entire year, thus maintaining relatively small, family-based, face-to-face groupings for part of the year. It was in these small groupings that egalitarian individualism survived in a world that was becoming dominated by agriculture.

My general perspective on evolution and plasticity, from Chapter 1, is that cultural shifts result in relatively rapid genetic shifts compared to the accumulation of mutations followed by natural selection: “An advantageous phenotype that occurs because of some environmental input in an organism that has some degree of plasticity gradually builds up mutations that make the development of the phenotype more reliable and under genetic control/influence” (p. 1, citing West-Eberhard, 2003). The idea that individualism is genetically based is also presented in Chapter 1, citing Frost (2017), as is the idea that genetic changes can occur rapidly, citing Cochran and Harpending (2010); the latter fits well with West-Eberhard’s work on plasticity in evolution. Empathy is a key trait related to individualism, and in Chapter 8 I discuss its heritability, citing the review in MacDonald, Patch, and Figueredo (2016), and noting that this trait is higher in women for entirely understandable evolutionary reasons. Empathy is key because of its role in historically important social movements such as the campaign against slavery in Britain (Chapter 7) and as a component of the contemporary West “saturated with images of suffering refugees, immigrants, and other non-whites” that appeal to women more than men (Chapter 8); I argue, on the basis of Richard Lynn’s (2018) work, that empathy is higher in Western populations. Finally, in Chapter 8 I argue that the north-south cline in individualist family structure described in Chapter 4 is reflected in a cline in psychological traits related to individualism, with Scandinavia being the most prone to social structure based on non-kinship-based moral communities, with high levels of empathy and trust within the community and hostility and aggression against those who violate moral norms.

3. Altruism in Tribal Moral Communities

Meisenberg:

What I am missing in MacDonald’s analysis is the insight that the altruism that is cultivated by these tribal moral communities is not genuine. If it were, altruism would be directed at those who most need it no matter to which tribal entity they may belong. However, Western intellectuals of both the left and the right have largely abandoned the universal(ist) moral values that characterized both Christianity in its mature form and the Enlightenment. Today’s moral

communities define themselves instead by advocacy for their chosen groups: gays, women, whites, non-whites, natives, immigrants, bearers of the “Judaeo-Christian” heritage, or whatever other group. Therefore, MacDonald’s claim that altruism is deployed indiscriminately is a misdiagnosis. It is tribalism that is tearing Western societies apart, not the inappropriate diffuseness of altruism.

I nowhere claim that altruism is deployed indiscriminately, and in Chapter 8 I discuss the increasingly tribal nature of Western politics (what I term the “racialization of politics”) and the increasing hatred displayed toward whites and their culture in the elite media and apparent as well among many non-whites and liberal/left whites, the latter of whom have often internalized guilt for the Western past. This guilt for the Western past has become a central component of media messages, the educational system, and even religious denominations. The discussion on altruism in Chapter 8 emphasizes that the culture of the West is now dominated by elites who are hostile to the people and culture of the West while dominating the media and the educational system. These elites have created a moral community in the West that is contrary to white interests but, as I note, “tapped into a pre-existing tendency [see Chapter 3] among individualists to create such communities as a force for cohesion that does not rely on kinship relations.” These hostile elites have been able to promote identity politics — but only for non-white and non-gender-conforming groups, while the traditional Western majorities are encouraged to continue with their universalist ideas of morality and are increasingly subjected to various penalties if they explicitly advance white interests.

My discussion points out that, because of their power in the media and educational system, elites have created a moral community that encourages white altruism and universalism while simultaneously inhibiting expressions of white identity and ethnocentrism by presenting them as immoral; the power of this moral community is based ultimately on psychological mechanisms of explicit processing (see MacDonald, 2008). The creation of this moral community has been a top-down process that originated in the elite power centers of academia and the media that achieved the full flowering of their influence in the 1960s (MacDonald, 1998/2002). The values of this new moral community are in opposition to the previously held attitudes of the vast majorities of Western populations. For example, in the United States, immigration restriction and bias toward northwest Europe was enshrined in law from 1924 until 1965. And immigration laws were changed only on the promise that the ethnic balance of the country would not change.

Within this moral community, white identity and interests are anathematized as evil, and as a result, whites are encouraged to be altruistic toward non-whites and to retain their moral universalism. This is far from indiscriminate altruism, since Westerners are incentivized to be altruistic toward non-whites but not toward their own people. I also document cases of obviously pathological altruism where white people are praised for behaving altruistically toward non-whites. It's certainly true that non-whites are encouraged toward ingroup, tribal favoritism and even altruism, but that is far from the case for whites. Indeed, whites who engage in self-sacrificing behavior explicitly aimed at advancing white interests are viewed with horror by virtually the entire establishment.

Moreover, my analysis of phenomena related to altruism is far more nuanced than one would infer from reading Meisenberg's review. My analysis presents a complex combination of evolved propensities interacting with the social context. For example, I discuss the evolved personality system of empathy which predisposes to altruism and, on the basis of Richard Lynn's (2018) work, is higher in Westerners. Since Westerners are less tribal, this empathy is more likely to be directed at others outside one's kinship group. This is the main point of Chapter 7 on the abolition of slavery in Britain, where the campaign against slavery was based on messages of suffering Africans and evil white slaveholders. Today, whites are bombarded with media messages of suffering people from the Third World in order to facilitate migration and refugee status.

Moreover, critical to my analysis is my claim that the social glue of Western groups is reputation in a moral community, not one's status in a kinship group. This results in Westerners being highly concerned about the opinion of others in their moral communities, particularly so for the extreme individualists typical of Scandinavian countries. These psychological mechanisms are then proposed to interact with elaborate systems of rewards and punishments which, at the present time, are established by hostile elites that dominate the media and educational systems—again illustrating top-down control of culture. These rewards and punishments are both psychological and material. For example, psychological rewards for whites who go along with the system include praise from respected others and increased self-esteem and social standing consequent to behaving altruistically toward non-whites; material rewards include career opportunities (e.g., advancement as an academic administrator). There are also punishments for those who do not go along with the system, both psychological (e.g., ostracism) and material (e.g., job loss); such punishments are common for those who are known to reject the attitudes favored by the moral community created by current Western elites.

Meisenberg's reply:

The journalists and academics who present themselves as advocates of non-whites and other trendy "disadvantaged" groups do not hate whites. Altruism cannot be their motivation either. If it were, they would advocate for those who actually are disadvantaged: the poor, the homeless, those with physical and mental disabilities, those with chronic mental illness, the dying, etc. Disadvantage is not primarily a matter of belonging to some ethnic group or sexual minority, but of individual handicaps that demand attention to the individual rather than the group. That's what genuine altruism is about.

A justifiable reason for the "altruistic" rhetoric of Western intellectuals is the true insight that aggressive identity politics of a powerful majority is far more dangerous than equally aggressive identity politics of a minority group. However, efforts to strengthen a sense of identity among minority groups while undermining that of the majority promotes what is perceived as hatred of cis hetero white males, with the predictable backlash. This vicious circle is perpetuated by the opportunism of virtue signaling. Fighting evil people is more intuitive, therefore is more glamorous and brings more acclaim than fighting evil diseases, genes and disabilities, or those features of the economic and political system that condemn a certain percentage of the population to poverty.

By endorsing the categories and presuppositions of traditional racism, merely redirecting advocacy from whites to non-whites, certain academics and the mainstream media end up whipping up all forms of racism. The casualty of this activism is the common-sense attitude that simply treats people as individuals, not as representatives of this-or-that race or ethnic group. This is not only a retreat from common sense but also from individualism (and with it democracy) by major sections of the intellectual elite, symptomatic for the decline of European civilization. Too bad that our thinkers are lacking the intellectual and moral stamina to put something better in its place.

MacDonald's reply:

I have a section in Chapter 8 documenting anti-white attitudes and the inculcation of white guilt in the elite media. I argue that, based on social identity mechanisms well researched by psychologists, these attitudes are likely to promote an upsurge in white identity and sense of having interests as white people. Further, a central aspect of the book is that the social glue of Western societies is membership in moral communities rather than kinship-based communities. This sets up an ingroup-outgroup dynamic in which outsiders are seen as evil and worthy of punishment, even at cost to self (i.e., altruistic punishment; data showing altruistic punishment is more characteristic of

individualist cultures is reviewed in Chapter 3). This dynamic is then illustrated at length in Chapter 6 on the Puritan legacy in America, with an emphasis on the moral idealism characteristic of nineteenth-century Puritan-descended intellectuals and its centrality in forming the ideological basis of the crusade against the slavery of Africans, which resulted in the largest bloodletting in American history.

My understanding and experience with the left in contemporary America is that they not only advocate for racial minorities and sexual minorities, but also for people with disabilities and the poor generally (e.g., all Democrat candidates for president), although there is certainly an emphasis on identity politics and charges of white racism. Many advocate universal, government-paid health care, free education from pre-school through university, canceling student loans, powerful restrictions on gun ownership, and radical proposals to combat climate change (e.g., Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren), so it's not all about identity politics, although identity politics is often used to frame some of those issues as well.

In Chapter 8 I argue that, although some on the left are likely motivated by empathy and thus likely to be genuine altruists, for most, advocacy for these programs is motivated not by altruism but by virtue-signaling (often competitive, as people compete to increase their status in a moral community), personal ambition in a culture that incentivizes such attitudes, and, among Democrat elites, by *realpolitik* beliefs that these positions will build a majority political coalition centered in the Democratic Party. Meisenberg seems to imply that I am unaware of the importance of these non-altruistic motives, but on the contrary they are central to the discussion in Chapter 8.

The second and third paragraphs of Meisenberg's reply describe exactly the argument in Chapter 8: Encouragement of minority-group ethnocentrism promotes anti-white attitudes which results in a backlash in which whites become more conscious of their racial identity, begin to realize they have interests as whites, and start acting to promote these interests.

However, I don't believe that encouraging minority-group ethnocentrism is "justifiable" because majority-group ethnocentrism is "far more dangerous." In the long run, if and when whites become a minority—as expected within the next few years—there is no reason to suppose non-white ethnocentrism will decrease or that elites will not continue to encourage it. And, as I note, this would result in a very dangerous situation for whites who would then have much less political power. The lesson of the horrific consequences of the Bolshevik Revolution (e.g., Panné et al., 1999) should be a reminder that giving up political power to ethnic outsiders is very dangerous indeed, especially if those ethnic outsiders are more

prone to collectivism and if they have historical grudges. At present, the media and educational system are encouraging all non-white ethnic groups to have historical grudges against whites.

As a result, I believe that a plea to “treat all people as individuals” is utopian in the current multi-ethnic context. Ethnic conflict is well-known to be associated with ethnic diversity, along with decreases in trust and in contributions to public goods (Salter, 2018). As Salter notes, “Though mainstream theorists, especially Marxists such as the late Eric Hobsbawm, thought that tribal behavior is vestigial and will eventually be eliminated by modernity, ethnic distinctions continue to be implicated in many of the bloody conflicts around the world, as they have throughout history (Hopcroft, 2016/2010).”

Further, in Chapter 8 I cite a study indicating that whites informed of their impending minority status “tend to feel angry and fearful. They are also more likely to identify as whites and have sympathy for other whites,” citing Outten, Miller and Schmitt (2011). Whites feeling a sense of threat because of their impending minority status are predicted to coalesce into a group as whites with a sense of shared fate (MacDonald, 2001; MacDonald, 1998/2003, Ch. 1).

4. Populism and the Intellectual Elite

Meisenberg:

MacDonald is not a particularly neutral writer. He is an intellectual leader of one of the many tribal moral communities that he describes, one that goes under the name of white identitarian. Although this tribe is outlawed in academia, it may well be the most influential moral community in adult politics today; its main attraction being that its teachings are intuitively intelligible for simple-minded white voters while those of its competitors are too contorted to appeal to non-intellectuals of any race.

The point of my analysis is to understand why white identitarianism is outlawed not only in academia but in the wider society. For example, as noted above, whites who express identitarian views publicly have been ostracized from family and friends, and they have been fired from their jobs by major corporations, etc. *Individualism* draws on my previous book, *The Culture of Critique* (MacDonald, 1998/2002), to trace the origins of these phenomena. Meisenberg never asks the critical question why white identitarianism is outlawed in academia (see MacDonald, 2010), as though such suppression is natural and obviously a good thing. But the culture we live in now is not natural — indeed, it is unprecedented that a culture would anathematize the identity and interests of the peoples who created it. And it is unprecedented that a culture would turn on itself

to the point that the Western past is now presented in the elite media and throughout the educational system as little more than a long series of oppressions and the proper basis for white guilt. This new culture has a historical beginning—it certainly did not exist to any substantial extent prior to the 1960s, but it has been becoming ever more extreme in recent years, resulting in hyperpolarization of the political landscape and the racialization of politics. We have to understand how and why it developed, and we have to understand why so many Westerners have been so easily persuaded to go along with it.

The disdain Meisenberg shows toward “simple-minded white voters” is revealing. Meisenberg is typical of what I describe in Chapter 8 as “contemporary liberal-minded elites throughout the West [who] are indifferent or even dismissive of the negative effects of immigration on the white working class in terms of lowered wages, lessened community cohesion and involvement, and deteriorating public schools” (pp. 385–386). Meisenberg’s implication is that if only these voters could grasp the ideas of their intellectual superiors, they would happily go along with the current system in which they are being replaced and their prospects diminished.

This is essentially an appeal to elite control. It’s interesting therefore that a major theme of my book *The Culture of Critique* is that at least by the 1940s Jewish intellectuals were a nascent elite well aware of their history as an elite in Western societies since the Enlightenment and their long history of making alliances with ruling elites in traditional societies, often in opposition to the interests and attitudes of non-elite citizens. This nascent elite was, in the words of Peter Novick (1988, p. 341) cited in Chapter 5, “one generation removed from the Eastern European *shtetl* [small Jewish town], where insurgent gentile peasants meant pogrom.” Thus, a major thrust of Jewish intellectual activism was in opposition to populism, preferring top-down elite control. Meisenberg’s comments are thus reminiscent of a theme of Chapter 5 of *The Culture of Critique*—the hostility of Jewish intellectuals associated with the Frankfurt School toward populism and the lower middle class generally.

Meisenberg claims that white identitarian ideas “may well be the most influential moral community in adult politics today.” In fact, white identitarianism has been relegated to the fringes of political culture, outlawed, as noted above, throughout the media, all levels of the educational system, and the mainstream political culture. Even media figures like Tucker Carlson and media sites like *Breitbart* and *The Daily Caller*, while definitely to the right of the mainstream media, avoid explicit advocacy of white identity and interests. To the extent that white identitarianism exists to any significant degree, it does so at the implicit level, as discussed in my section on implicit versus explicit white identity (pp. 399–

406). But, “because there is no mainstream attempt by whites to shape the explicit culture in ways that would legitimize white identity and the pursuit of white ethnic interests, implicit white communities become enclaves of retreating whites rather than communities able to consciously pursue white interests” (p. 409). Implicit whiteness is not enough to make major changes in the system.

However, I do note there that explicit assertions of white identity and interests are increasingly common as a result of whites’ legitimate feelings of being threatened by the possibility of becoming a minority and because of the anti-white hatred so commonly seen in the liberal media and on social media. The same messages that have been so effective in inducing guilt among whites often provide a justification for non-white hatred of whites, but they also appear to be making whites more conscious of their racial identity and more willing to support politicians who appeal, at least implicitly, to white identity. President Trump’s rhetoric during the 2016 election (if not his actions since the election) comes to mind. However, the fact remains that the wider culture of the West, now dominated by the anti-white left, poses a major obstacle to developing an explicit culture favorable to white identity and interests.

Meisenberg’s reply:

Admittedly, after the Brexit referendum my first thought was: “That’s what you get when you let the rabble decide about important issues.” Others must have thought the same way. Brexit and Trump showed not only the crudeness and irrationality of the populist backlash. They also showed the weakness of the virtue-signaling elites, and in consequence reinforced the anti-democratic direction of the Western intelligentsia.

There are striking similarities between all the different tribes: the centrality of tribal identity, the insistence on treating people as members of this-or-that group rather than as individuals, the pervasiveness of incivility and outright deviance. The most important cultural changes are not those that are restricted to one or another tribe, but those that manifest across the entire spectrum, society-wide.

I agree that the difference between the tribes is power. Should a super-Trump ever emerge who manages to impose his control on academia and the media, the allegiance of the intellectual elite will flip instantly — as happened when communism collapsed in the Soviet Union (Kuran, 1997). This is the only way to achieve an “explicit culture favorable to white identity and interests”. Such an outcome is made more likely by left-wing activists and intellectuals who are crusading against free speech and other trappings of liberal democracy.

MacDonald’s reply:

The Brexit vote and the 2016 election in America did indeed indicate the weakness of elites given that the outcomes were opposed by virtually the entire political, media, and academic establishments, including a great many prominent politicians and intellectuals who identify as conservatives. I agree that Western elites, particularly on the left, are adopting authoritarian, anti-democratic views as a result — e.g., advocating police-state controls on speech and succeeding in much of Western Europe. And I agree that some of the backlash is crude. But is it irrational? In America, this comes down to whether it was rational for white voters to vote for Trump in 2016. Trump's rhetoric was certainly populist — e.g., continually excoriating the media as “the most corrupt people in the world” and the like, but he also proposed policies on immigration, trade and foreign policy that were in opposition to consensus opinions among elites from across the political spectrum.

Of these aspects of Trump's rhetoric, the most salient to voters appears to have been his rhetoric on immigration. Research has supported the hypothesis that white people reminded of their impending minority status were more likely to vote for Trump (e.g., Major, Blodorn & Blascovich, 2016). Major et al. interpret their results in terms of social identity theory which is a major component of my treatment in Chapter 8: greater ingroup loyalty and outgroup hostility under conditions of perceived threat. Another study showed that growing domestic racial diversity and globalization contributed to a sense that white Americans are under siege and to voting for Trump (Mutz, 2018).

The issue of whether these attitudes are irrational was addressed in the previous section: again, the long and bloody history of ethnic conflict, increasing anti-white attitudes apparent in elite media and on social media, and high levels of ethnocentrism among non-whites — attitudes that are encouraged by establishment media and academics — do not provide assurance that whites living as a minority would be safe or likely to get fair treatment by the judicial system. I agree that both sides are behaving tribally (what I term the ‘racialization of politics’ in Chapter 8), although at this time most whites are behaving far less tribally than other ethnic/racial groups — likely due in part to whites being more individualist by nature, but also because white identity and interests are anathematized in the elite media and the educational system, and whites who dissent from mainstream views suffer a range of penalties.

Moreover, as is increasingly the case with whites, feelings of perceived threat among non-whites result in greater ingroup loyalty and outgroup hostility — greater ethnocentrism — in a situation where the mainstream media and the educational system are dedicated to the view that non-whites are under constant threat of white racism and that it is racist to do research or assert that genetic

differences influence the racial achievement gap. This is a major reason why *Mankind Quarterly* is regarded as a pariah among many academics.

The bottom line is that the multicultural, identity politics of the left has created a monster. But the answer is not utopian pleas for treating people as individuals but to adopt a realist view that individual interests for whites are increasingly converging on group interests — the sense of shared fate mentioned above. Given that there is no reason to suppose that the ethnocentrism and sense of group interests among non-whites will dissipate in the future, the plea to treat everyone as individuals really amounts to a plea for whites to surrender.

I agree that the only way at present to achieve what I term “an explicit culture favorable to white identity and interests” in the West would be a coup establishing top-down authoritarian control, but we should ask why this is the case. The short answer is that elite media and academic culture are now dominated by the increasingly authoritarian multicultural left. And, as noted in Chapter 8, access to influential positions in these areas is intensively policed — e.g., by activist organizations successfully pressuring companies to fire people who dissent, and by academic departments failing to hire dissidents or ostracizing and blacklisting them if they have tenure. On the other hand, Hungary and Poland have adopted what are regarded as “far-right” policies, including refusing migrants and refugees; these policies have been enacted with the approval of large majorities (Kovács, 2020) and they have received favorable media coverage in those countries. At the same time, pro-EU figures lament the cratering support for the center right and the fact that “centre-right parties have been unable to deal with the rise of the far right” (Muller, 2020). As in the United States, we see increasing polarization in Western Europe, and there is a backlash against globalism and the inundation with migrants to the point where millennia-old dominant groups are threatened with minority status within the coming decades. Given the costs of multiculturalism mentioned above and the evolutionary costs discussed below, it is eminently rational for Poland and Hungary to attempt to retain a culturally and racially homogeneous society.

5. Causes and Effects

Meisenberg:

Thus MacDonalld himself is a symptom or promoter (or both) of tribalism and the decay of Western civilization, and the later chapters of his book are marred by advocacy for whites in America and elsewhere. His central concern is the impending collapse of traditional European civilization with its deep-rooted individualism and liberalism under the onslaught of multiculturalism and replacement migration (Coleman, 2002).

I am indeed a symptom and promoter of (white) tribalism, but only as a reaction to massive non-white immigration and the non-white tribalism that has become a reality throughout the West as a result of the activism of our hostile elites. Prior to my realizing the dangerous future toward which we are headed, I was a liberal individualist and I would prefer to live in a society conducive to that perspective. However, these new peoples derive overwhelmingly from kinship-based cultures, such as are prevalent throughout the non-Western world. In general, they have retained their tribal ways in the West and they are encouraged to do so by the contemporary culture of the West. It is this tribalism of non-whites that is destroying the culture of the West. My advocacy of tribalism for whites is a defensive measure necessitated by the current cultural context. From an evolutionary or even a common sense viewpoint, it's obvious that individualists will lose out in competition with tribalist competitors in a democratic system (see Hartshorn, Kaznatcheev & Schultz, 2013). As emphasized in Chapter 8, politics throughout the West has become racialized, with non-whites voting on the left against white majorities.

Meisenberg's reply:

Agreed. Massive immigration over the last half century is the root cause of today's identity politics in the US, with similar developments in the countries of Western Europe. Countries throughout the West are now closing their borders to new immigrants while trying to assimilate those who are in the country already. My estimate is that assimilation will be up to 80 percent successful, although this can take 2 or 3 generations. The likely outcome: a world in which the rich and the highly qualified are free to live wherever they choose while hoi polloi are restricted to their country of origin.

MacDonald's reply:

I am less confident that the groups migrating to the West will assimilate, particularly Muslims and other groups from the Middle East. Again, non-whites tend to be less individualist, and the old phrase "America is a melting pot" is adamantly rejected by the left. In Western Europe Muslims tend to live in parallel societies and I see no reason why this should end given that they are setting up sharia law in their communities (e.g., Puppinck, 2019) and punishing apostates (Anonymous, 2018; Cottee, 2015). Moreover, even 20 percent unassimilated is substantial, given that immigrants and their children are expected to be majorities. This is a recipe for continued social conflict, especially because the culture of the West celebrates non-whites and vilifies whites.

I study Jewish groups, and it's quite clear that Orthodox and Hasidic groups have continued to live in parallel sub-cultures in the United States for over 100 years (e.g., Chafetz, 2007), as traditional Jewish groups did in Western societies for 2000 years. And although the great majority of Jews have assimilated in a surface manner, speaking local languages, not living in segregated communities, (only 28 percent are either Orthodox [10 percent] or Conservative [18 percent] [Pew Research, 2015]), Jewish identity, Jewish networking, and Jewish activism continue to be influential, and the foci of their activism continue to diverge from the interests and attitudes of the traditional white majority.

For example, my book, *The Culture of Critique*, argues that Jewish activism consequent to their rise to elite status in the media and academic worlds, was the main force responsible for the 1960s counter-cultural revolution, including the ideology of multiculturalism, the ideology that the U.S. is a "proposition nation" dedicated to certain Enlightenment principles with no ethnic connotations, and the beginnings of the era of massive non-white immigration beginning with the 1965 immigration law, which repealed the Western European bias in U.S. immigration laws. The attitudes of Jewish immigrants in the early twentieth century, at a time when the Jewish community was famously not assimilated, were well to the left of white Americans generally, and contemporary versions of these attitudes continue to diverge from white Americans generally. Liberal/left attitudes dominate the mainstream Jewish community in the twenty-first century where around 70 percent of Jews vote for Democrats, compared to 40 percent for the white population generally.

The organized Jewish community continues to promote multiracial immigration and refugee policies throughout the West, although such policies are conspicuously absent in Israel. Jews remain the financial engine of the left in the Western diaspora (Podhoretz, 2009). Jews have also become a prominent financial and intellectual force within the Republican Party and have moved the party to the left on social issues in line with the views of the mainstream activist Jewish community (MacDonald, 2004). Moreover, Jewish activism in foreign policy has resulted in overwhelming support for Israel in opposition to the legitimate national interests of the United States, including costly wars in the Middle East (MacDonald, 2004; Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). Jewish ethnic networking — an aspect of Jewish non-assimilation — is a prominent feature of Jewish activism described in the citations mentioned above, particularly *The Culture of Critique* (MacDonald, 1998) which describes influential Jewish intellectual and political movements. As noted previously, collectivist groups will ultimately outcompete individualists (Hartshorn, Kaznatcheev & Schultz, 2013).

6. Survival (aka Sustainability) as the Central Issue

Meisenberg:

MacDonald has strayed far away from the path of the early Indo-Europeans (and Attila's Huns and the hordes of Genghiz Khan's successors), who readily absorbed foreign peoples while scattering their seed — but so have today's Europeans, who have not only lost their cultural bearings but are not even able to maintain their numbers.

This is ironic given that the point of my book is to explain how and why today's Europeans have lost their cultural bearings. Moreover, Meisenberg misses the point of my section on Roman culture (Appendix to Chapter 2) in which I note that Rome's openness resulted ultimately in the replacement of her people — an evolutionary dead end — and eventually the death of her culture. Note also that the Indo-European conquerors, Genghiz Khan's Golden Horde and Attila's Huns were intensely resisted by the peoples they conquered — just as any animal group, e.g., a wolf pack, would resist colonization by another group. This makes excellent evolutionary sense, but contemporary Western populations are enjoined by elite media and the educational system to welcome the invasion and their ultimate replacement — a phenomenon that is unprecedented in human history.

Whereas the I-Es et al. were conquering groups that spread their seed, now Africans, Asians, and Middle Easterners are the conquering groups spreading their seed throughout the West. The adaptiveness of resisting this is obvious. As I note in Chapter 8, relying on Salter (2007):

Whites who fail to attend to the interests of their wider kinship group benefit themselves and their families at the expense of their own wider ethnic interests. ... They are in effect sacrificing millions of ethnic kin — for example, by turning their backs on the white working class who are well known to suffer most from non-white immigration and the multicultural regime — for the benefit of themselves and their immediate family.

This is a disastrously wrongheaded choice by the standard measures of evolutionary success. However, because our evolved psychology [especially for whites] is much more attuned to individual and family interests than to the interests of the ethnic group or race, whites who benefit economically or professionally from adopting conventional views on race and ethnicity are unlikely to feel unease at the psychological level.

Meisenberg's reply:

Fighting off foreign invaders is no longer adaptive. Evolutionary success is defined by one and only one outcome: inclusive fitness, which comes very close to being the number of surviving offspring. We must not be spell-bound by the evolved tendency to resist foreign invaders while falling into the “it’s natural, therefore it’s morally right” trap of the naturalistic fallacy. Today, inclusive fitness is best served by the biblical “be fruitful and multiply” strategy of the Haredim (ultra-orthodox Jews) in Eretz Israel — which doesn’t make it the morally preferable choice either. This (in the evolutionary sense) exceptionally successful group has “an average of 7.1 children per ultra-Orthodox woman compared to 3.1 in the general population [of Israel]” (Malach, Cahaner & Choshen, 2018). Parenthetically, most Haredim reject the state of Israel and refuse to serve in its army.

Replacement migration is in large part a response to sub-replacement fertility. If there are not enough young working-age people, who but immigrants will take care of aged baby boomers in their nursing homes? The question is: Is Western civilization worth defending if this attitude is shared by the majority of the population? We should not blame the migrants but the natives.

MacDonald’s reply:

Inclusive fitness defined in terms of surviving offspring ignores the vast storehouse of genetic fitness in one’s wider ethnic group or race—the “ethnic family” carrying several orders of magnitude more copies of its members’ genes than even the largest nuclear family. For example, the gene assay data show that ethnic kinship within French and Japanese populations (in relation to one another) is about 0.06, which is equivalent to that between a person and his great grandchild (Salter & Harpending, 2013). Thus a population of say 50 million carries 6 million copies of each member’s genes. Surely it is in an individual’s interest to advance the interests of such a group.

I commented in my original reply that resisting invasion is natural. However, it should be noted that the current situation is quite different from an armed invasion with obviously hostile intent. Such an invasion would certainly be resisted by whites. But the current invasion is gradual and is advertised as an asset in and of itself. The message that “diversity is our greatest strength” permeates the media and educational system, and there are penalties for those who dissent from it and rewards for those who promote it. The societal risks of high levels of ethnic diversity—ethnic conflict, and decreases in social cohesion, trust and in contributions to public goods (Salter, 2018)—are ignored. Given these costs and potentially much greater costs in the future, the adaptiveness of resisting multi-ethnic immigration and multiculturalism seems obvious.

Moreover, my point is that whites have a relatively weak tendency toward tribalism compared to other peoples as a result of their unique evolutionary history, and I recommend whites attempt to overcome their sense of what is natural to preserve vital interests as discerned by rational calculation in the current context of massive non-white immigration and multiculturalism. My recommendation is quite the opposite of the naturalistic fallacy; it's a recommendation that whites overcome their natural tendencies via the ability of prefrontal mechanisms able to inhibit natural tendencies related to ethnocentrism (MacDonald, 2008; discussed in Chapter 8 of *Individualism*).

It is simply not the case that "replacement migration is in large part a response to sub-replacement fertility." Jewish groups, which I have argued were the main lobbying force in favor of non-white immigration, have been motivated by the belief that homogeneously white America would ultimately be dangerous for Jews, a perception stemming from their experience in Germany in the 1930s (MacDonald 1998/2002). They have been joined more recently by post-1965 immigrant ethnic lobbies seeking to increase their numbers in the U.S. and big business seeking cheap labor (US Chamber of Commerce, 2020). It is certainly the case that one argument made by pro-migration advocates is that migrants will take care of the aged, but I know of no studies showing that this argument has been effective in producing replacement migration; indeed, the movement toward replacement-level migration originated long before the baby boom generation began reaching retirement age.

Moreover, Japan, which also has below-replacement fertility, is attempting to solve the demographic problem by admitting workers without their families and by limiting work terms to five years because of "worries about social and political turmoil" (Gale & Davis, 2019). Such a policy would allow flexible adjustment to economic recessions, while granting citizenship does not. However, immigration advocates have strongly favored making migrants, whether skilled or unskilled, legal or illegal (including children of illegals via the U.S. policy of birthright citizenship) into citizens, and they have sought to increase total numbers (e.g., Joyce, 2018; Kammer, 2013). Since business desire for cheap labor can be met with temporary work permits, this indicates that pro-immigration forces are mainly motivated to alter the permanent ethnic balance of the United States.

Similarly, Israel allows foreign citizens who are not eligible for Israeli citizenship (essentially: evidence of Jewish ancestry or conversion to Orthodox Judaism) to obtain work permits for limited time periods with the possibility of renewal (Israeli Embassy, n.d.). Israel has also built an effective wall barring entry to illegal immigrants from Africa, so that entrants dropped from 17,000 in 2011 to zero in 2017, and it has expelled migrants who entered prior to building the wall

(Benaroya, 2019; i24NEWS, 2020). Nations determined to remain ethnically homogeneous can do so without negative repercussions on the workforce if they have the political will.

Finally, I certainly don't blame the immigrants — the vast majority seek a better life, but it's obvious that their leaders are promoting their ethnic interests in a context where promoting white interests is essentially proscribed. And I dislike the lies that accompany diversity (e.g., "Diversity is our greatest strength"), the distortion of history, the suppression of debate, and the fact that non-whites are being educated to have grudges against whites — a phenomenon which is a dire omen for the future.

7. Genetic Interests

Finally, *Meisenberg writes*:

What, for example, is the problem with replacement migration? If the natives are too self-absorbed to raise children, perhaps they should be replaced.

The problem with replacement migration is that different human ethnic groups and races have been separated for thousands of years, and during this period they have evolved some genetic distinctiveness. This genetic distinctiveness constitutes a storehouse of genetic interest (Salter, 2007). People have an interest in their ethnic group in exactly the same way that parents have a genetic interest in their children. Even a cursory look at the historical record shows that conflict between biologically related tribal groups has been common throughout history. Cooperative defense by tribal peoples is universal and ancient and it is bound to have boosted the genetic fitness of those who successfully acted to further the interests of their group.

Meisenberg writes that "if the natives are too self-absorbed to raise children, perhaps they should be replaced," where 'should' seems to have the force of 'ought'? A purpose of my book is to describe Western individualism — its roots, its history, and its psychology. I do not address the relative decline in white fertility in my book, but white people have been around for a long time and have had no problem with reproducing and caring for children at least through the 1950s' baby boom. To the extent that whites are abandoning these fundamental tasks — and many whites are not — I would suggest that it is no coincidence that the decline in white fertility coincides with the rise of the counterculture that came to power in the 1960s which also marked the origins of the immigration onslaught and the decline of the white working class; in my book, I restrict myself to a discussion of the effects of the countercultural revolution on the white working class (pp. 467–477). Nevertheless, the decline in white fertility certainly bears investigation within

the context of the psychology of individualism, since part of the 1960s zeitgeist was self-centered instant gratification and the ideology that raising families was less important for women than having a career. This new culture was intensely promoted throughout the elite media and academia.

It's critical to note, however, that the decline in white fertility would be of little or no importance in the absence of massive non-white immigration. Population declines have occurred previously in European history, as, for example, with the bubonic plague which killed a third of the European population in the fourteenth century. But when the plague ended, European populations restored themselves and centuries of unparalleled prosperity ensued. There is no reason why white populations could not reverse current trends in fertility. But in the present context of massive immigration by relatively high-fertility groups, their collective fitness in relation to immigrating groups has been lowered, and they are in danger of ultimately being replaced.

My approach is quite different — to make white people aware of the origins of our contemporary malaise, aware of our vulnerabilities stemming from individualism, and to begin to take steps to reverse course. First and foremost, that means developing an adaptive sense of white tribalism rather than wishing for a utopian future in which other groups eschew tribalism, in which there are no important genetically based average differences between these colonizing groups, and in which whites eschew any concern for their long-term genetic fitness. Whites must understand that Western individualism has been a great blessing, but that in the current environment dominated by hostile elites, it is dangerously maladaptive.

Meisenberg's reply:

The collapse of white fertility in the US and other Western countries after the baby boom cannot be a consequence of the 1960s counterculture or any other special feature of Western culture. Today, fertility is lowest in East Asian countries that were untouched by counterculture. The World Bank (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN>) reports the following total fertility rates (TFR) for 2017: Japan 1.4, South Korea 1.1, Hong Kong 1.1, Singapore 1.2. This is substantially less than the fertility rates of the United States and Britain (both 1.8). Even Iran's TFR has dropped to 2.1. Western counterculture was most likely driven by similar causes as sub-replacement fertility: rapidly rising prosperity with greater consumer choices and rampant consumerism, combined with massive expansion of the educational system and rising intelligence (the Flynn effect).

If we insist on genetic interests, ethnocentrism based on national origin is not the only possible extension of kin selection. Social classes are distinguished by allele frequencies, too, as shown by social class differences in polygenic scores for education and intelligence (Belsky et al., 2018). Following Marx we might as well divide the species into social classes rather than nations or races, and let them compete with each other — although it would be smarter to decide what genes we want for everyone, and select for them or engineer them.

Individualism is an important book about the origins and current misadventures of Western civilization, but there will always be disagreement about the lessons we can draw from the past for our efforts to create the future. We cannot change the past; therefore our main concern should be the peoples and cultures of the future: those we are creating today. They will be very different from the peoples and cultures of the past.

MacDonald's reply:

I have not researched the causes of the changes in fertility that occurred after the 1950s, noting that it's a topic that "bears investigation." It is not discussed in *Individualism*. There are likely different causal scenarios in different countries.

Regarding the important claim that people have a genetic interest in their social class because they share genes with others of their social class: Class kinship within ethnically homogeneous or heterogeneous populations has not been measured, so the discussion at this point must be speculative. The study cited by Meisenberg on education-related genes (Belsky et al., (2018) does not measure genetic kinship within social classes or genetic distance between classes, and uses a homogeneous population of "European descent." As a result, genetic distance between and within social classes in the contemporary West is not known.

In a society with high levels of upward and downward social mobility, a pure class-based strategy would imply that offspring who rise or fall out of the parents' class — a common occurrence (Belsky, et al., 2018) — would be removed from their kinship group. They cannot be shown solidarity without frustrating the class strategy. Given the negative correlation between social class and fertility, class-strategizing people would be more inclined to direct resources to fellow class members than to their own downwardly mobile children even though the latter would tend to produce more grandchildren. On the other hand, ethnic solidarity allows offspring to find their class level according to merit, ethnic networking, and even luck while remaining able to direct resources within the group.

Mixed strategies of incorporating both class solidarity and close relatives are more promising. An example would be the ethnically stratified caste system of

India that developed after the Indo-European invasion. It was structured to maintain genetic distance between ethnic groups in an ethnically diverse society — unlike in Europe where, for example, barriers between the Romans and other peoples were removed relatively quickly (Appendix to Chapter 2; other examples in Chapter 2). The caste-based strategy acknowledges the importance of inclusive fitness beyond immediate family to include others of the same ethnic group.

Compared to India, a relatively weak form of class solidarity developed in Western societies, which were also far more ethnically homogeneous than India so that the genetic distance between the Indo-Europeans and the Europeans they conquered was much less. Class solidarity was supported, for example, by taboos against marriage with people from lower classes. These barriers to social mobility presumably resulted in greater genetic differentiation between classes, and again, as in India, people favored close relatives via inheritance while acting to maintain class barriers between themselves and lower classes — a mixed strategy. Over time, as the Western aristocracies became ossified prior to modernization, the IQ and personality profile of the aristocracy would be expected to change because people with various combinations of founders' genes remained in their class of birth regardless of IQ or personality, presumably contributing to the phenomenon of aristocratic fops and wastrels. The practice of primogeniture among the aristocracy would exacerbate this because inheritance is not based on merit; IQ and personality of heirs would be influenced by random genetic combinations resulting from birth order.

It is probably a rule of nature that elites will attempt to retain their social status by erecting barriers to class entry. The Puritan-descended elite of the United States attempted to retain their status via intermarriage and such practices as legacy admissions to elite universities and *numerus clausus* policies to restrict Jewish admission during the early twentieth century.

It's interesting that democracy evolved in Western nations that were relatively ethnically homogeneous but class divisions were less sharply drawn than in India. *Individualism* (Chapter 5) discusses the imperfect alliance between the Church and the urban and merchant classes beginning in the medieval period and arrayed against the power of the feudal lords. These urban areas created a middle class that over time was successful in increasing its power at the expense of the aristocracy. Medieval cities “contained the seeds of a modern constitutional order.”

On the other hand, there are reasons to suppose that class kinship declines in ethnically heterogeneous populations. Given the present policies of Western societies, class kinship, at least at the upper levels, is especially likely to be

attenuated because of increasing representation of ethnic groups with different average levels of education-related genes. In such a case, class kinship would be diminished by policies such as affirmative action — common in Western societies — in which some groups are given advantages in accessing middle- and upper-middle-class jobs (Groseclose, 2014) because they have genes that are not education-related or genes negatively related to education. There is also a movement to end standardized tests that have been a key pathway to upward mobility and many jobs that pull for education-related genes (Freedberg, 2019).

Moreover, findings indicate that cognitive style (e.g., field independence/dependence; analytical vs. holistic style) is linked to individualism-collectivism (Nisbett, 2013). This suggests that different groups would have differences in education-related genes, especially given that Chinese have a high average IQ and are upwardly mobile in Western societies but tend toward a collectivist thinking style associated with field dependence and holistic problem-solving. Jews, another high-IQ group, are biased toward verbal intelligence (Lynn, 2011; MacDonald, 1994/2002), while the Chinese are biased toward spatial intelligence, whether in China or the United States (Lynn, 2015). Such differences are likely mediated genetically. For example, the brain regions in older adults associated with cognitive decline vary by ethnicity (Zahodne et al., 2015).

Thus there may be different education-related genes in different groups, which would diminish class kinship within multiethnic populations. Class kinship in the contemporary West would also be attenuated by a mixed strategy of favoring close relatives via inheritance noted above — e.g., the phenomenon of wealthy trust-fund children who have fewer genes favoring traits such as IQ and conscientiousness that are linked to upward mobility.

Finally, another mixed strategy that is common in contemporary Western societies involves ethnic solidarity combined with favoring close relatives via inheritance. For example, ethnic networking and supporting ethnic activist organizations have been important features of Jewish behavior in Western societies continuing into the present (MacDonald, 1998/2002) — a group evolutionary strategy. Ethnic networking among Jews inflates Jewish representation among elites, thus diluting class kinship based on education-related genes. There is also evidence suggesting that the Jewish mixed strategy of favoring both ethnic group and close relatives would have similar effects on IQ and personality as with the aristocracy where people with various combinations of founders' genes remained in their class of birth regardless of IQ or personality: Unz (2012, 2018) found that, compared to previous generations of American Jews, recent cohorts have markedly lower academic performance while remaining highly overrepresented at elite universities, the latter likely due to

ethnic networking and policies favoring legacy admissions. Discrimination against Asians and non-Jewish whites is also likely to be involved (MacDonald, 2013). Such strategies mimic other examples of elites protecting their status mentioned above; similar ethnically based strategies are likely to be more common in the future as the racialization of politics, noted above as a prominent feature of the contemporary West, continues to increase.

On the other hand, as the West imports increasing numbers of people with low levels of education-favoring genes, a strategy aimed at enhancing inclusive fitness by exhibiting solidarity among lower-class people may be adaptive because of the ever-increasing percentages of people in the lower classes, thus generating a greater percentage of copies of class-related genes in the population. Nevertheless, at the lower levels, ethnic solidarity remains the rule, as non-Whites see themselves as benefiting from ethnic solidarity in order to obtain benefits for themselves as individuals via race-based entitlements and affirmative action policies. On the other hand, working-class whites do not benefit from such policies and are showing concern because of their perception that their status is threatened by the combination of non-white immigration and policies favoring non-whites; they are responding to this perceived threat by responding to populist, anti-immigration rhetoric (e.g., Trump's 2016 presidential campaign discussed above) rather than making alliances with non-white groups. Working-class whites are the largest segment of Trump's base.

Clearly, quantifying class kinship in various populations remains a desideratum. Since the ethnic composition of Western societies is constantly changing, any measures of class kinship would also be expected to change, as Western societies become increasingly ethnically diverse.

Conclusion

This has been an interesting discussion, and I thank Dr. Meisenberg for the opportunity to respond. Obviously, there is much research to be done, including the genetic characteristics of the Greeks during the classical age, the genetic basis of individualism, which aspects of individualism are exportable to which societies, and quantitative measures of class kinship versus ethnic kinship in different populations. Because of its dynamism — the vast historical changes in political systems, religious orientations, ideologies, technology, and the sciences — understanding the uniqueness of the West is a formidable challenge indeed.

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