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Author(s): Michael Halberstam

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# TOTALITARIANISM AS A PROBLEM FOR THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF POLITICS

MICHAEL HALBERSTAM  
*University of South Carolina*

By the fourth decade of the twentieth century . . . the earthly paradise had been discredited at exactly the moment when it became realizable.

—George Orwell

The subterranean stream of Western history has finally come to the surface and usurped the dignity of our tradition.

—Hannah Arendt

## 1. HISTORY AND MEMORY

In his *Kreisläufe*, Dan Diner, a historian of the Holocaust and postwar Germany, explores the politics of memory at play in the comparison of National Socialism and Stalinism. Diner challenges the “usual parallels between National Socialism and Stalinism” in that they posit an “elective affinity between the two [regimes] expressed by the totalitarianism thesis.”<sup>1</sup> The totalitarianism thesis, first formulated in the early to mid-thirties in England and the United States, holds that there were essential similarities between the fundamentally antiliberal political regimes of Hitler’s National Socialist Germany and Stalin’s Communist Russia—in their revolutionary fanaticism, their purge techniques, their deployment of propaganda, their expansionism, and their rule by violence and police terror—and that an

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understanding of their nature is paramount to the survival of liberal representative democracy.<sup>2</sup>

As an example of the contemporary use and abuse of the historical comparison between National Socialism and Stalinism, Diner seizes on the deployment of the iconography of the Holocaust by the Russian historian Robert Conquest. Conquest draws on the images of the Bergen Belsen concentration camp for an indictment of Stalin's forced collectivization of village households in the Soviet Union and the mass starvation that wiped out millions in its wake.<sup>3</sup> According to Diner, this kind of comparison, suggested by the totalitarianism thesis, occupies and organizes the memory of the atrocities in the name of a less than explicit array of political positionings. This is evident in the strangeness of Conquest's approach, for example, which enlists the iconography of a later historical event (specifically the metaphor and the images of Bergen Belsen) for the evocation of a certain response to an earlier event (the Gulag), as if the latter could not and did not stand on its own. Diner rightly points out that this suggests "a transhistorical, as it were, iconoclastic significance of the National Socialist mass crimes for western consciousness . . . , a consciousness of secularized Christianity, for whom the pictures of the Holocaust mean more in their depth-dimension than the mere representation of the event."<sup>4</sup>

The iconoclastic significance of the Holocaust is a persistent theme. It finds expression in such statements that "in Auschwitz the truth, as constructed by Western civilization, was shattered . . ." that something inherent in Auschwitz "confronts any human being with the peril of losing all control over truth, of not being able to distinguish between what is false and what is true, of plunging into a dangerous abyss of an open-ended relativity, wherein there is no objective reality."<sup>5</sup>

One aspect of the totalitarianism thesis appears to be an implied equalization of the crimes of the two regimes. What troubles Diner is not simply that the specificity of the Holocaust is diluted thereby, nor that such a comparison is altogether unsavory (the scale and scope of Stalinist crimes similarly defy historical imagination). Rather, Diner suggests that "the conjecture implicit in the discourse of comparison—that Stalin's crimes were, perhaps not more reprehensible, but at least as reprehensible as Hitler's crimes—suggests a hidden connection, revealing the comparison of these crimes against humanity as mere material for a *theologically* as well as historically deeply rooted subtext: the one of Christians and Jews."<sup>6</sup> Moreover, he voices the further suspicion that both the strict rejection as well as the urgent demand of the historical comparison between Nazism and Stalinism share the secret assumption that the crimes of Stalin were worse than those of the Nazis.

Diner is right in his characterization of the contemporary deployment of the totalitarianism thesis. Martin Malia, for example, who explicitly frames his history of *The Soviet Tragedy* with the help of the totalitarianism thesis, comes to just this second conclusion:

Seen in this institutional context, the initial “noble dream” of socialism only makes matters worse because it has the perverse effect of legitimizing and thus amplifying the coercive concentration of power. . . . Socialist good intentions, moreover, helped make Soviet totalitarianism quite the most long-lived and the worst of the whole twentieth-century lot. . . . neither the German nor the Italian regime could afford a devastating internal revolution such as Stalin’s and yet be ready for its intended war of revanche. . . . neither of these regimes created internal structures anywhere near so total as those of the Soviet Union: industry was not nationalized, and the market was not suppressed but only subjected to “command” and regulation by the state. And, although society was cowed by the state’s known capacity for ruthlessness, active terror was practiced against no more than a small part of the population. . . . And, needless to insist, the Soviet collectivization, terror, and Gulag took at least twice the number of victims as did Hitler’s camps. This at least is the self-evident score for the two types of totalitarianism if we make the comparison empirically.<sup>7</sup>

Malia associates the totalitarianism thesis with the purportedly empirical questions of which crimes were worse. Here again, it is as if he were enlisting the Holocaust in support of a different thesis, not even so much concerned with the crimes of Stalin as such, but with a narrative that exceeds the empirical body count (an ostensibly neutral scientific approach to the question that is, of course, anything but neutral): the “noble dream” that drives communist totalitarianism is what makes it worse. And this noble dream is still that of Chernyshevsky’s “Crystal Palace,” the figure for the modern, enlightened, rational society, in which the oppression of the tradition has been swept away.

What is of interest to us about Malia’s remarks is that, despite his insistence on the empirical in this context, he is finally concerned with an altogether different dimension of political reality, with a transhistorical dimension of iconoclastic significance for Western consciousness. Following Diner, I want to thematize the *theologico-political* dimension of the totalitarianism thesis. I want to give content to an aspect of the totalitarianism thesis, however, that sets the comparison between the two regimes in a somewhat different light,<sup>8</sup> one that raises the question of the institution of the political.<sup>9</sup> I do not take my departure from the horrific crimes carried out by National Socialist Germany or by the Stalinist regime; rather, I focus on the totalitarian attempt to “fabricate mankind,” on a feature of totalitarianism that resonates with the aspirations of modernity. Dana Villa, for example, remarks about Nazism that “Nazism’s attempt to fabricate mankind can . . . be seen as the

twisted attempt to realize what had long been the dream of the Western tradition: the dream of the city as a work of art."<sup>10</sup> Or again, in the somewhat different terms of Claude Lefort, "It is by detecting the new relationship that is established between the viewpoint of science and the viewpoint of the social order, that we can best arrive at an understanding of totalitarianism. This regime represents the culmination of an artificialist project which begins to take shape in the nineteenth century: the project of creating a self-organizing society which allows the discourse of technical rationality to be imprinted on the very form of social relations, and which, ultimately, reveals 'social raw material' or 'human raw material' to be fully amenable to organization."<sup>11</sup>

Implicit in the idea of totalitarianism is a critique of modernity. Totalitarianism haunts the modern ideal of political emancipation. It conjures up the image of the sorcerer's apprentice, of social and political forces spinning out of control, of a world gone awry, just when it was thought that humanity had made great strides toward political maturity and intellectual independence, had begun finally to liberate itself from the idols of the past, and was ready to assume responsibility for its own destiny. The idea of totalitarianism, I suggest, harbors within itself certain truths and contradictions inherent in the modern conception of politics. The totalitarian regime represents the antithesis to liberalism.<sup>12</sup> By liberalism, I understand very broadly the view that the primary aim of the state is to institute a social order that gives the broadest possible scope to the value of individual freedom, where this freedom is understood negatively as the freedom from state interference in the individual's pursuit of her own conception of the good and is limited only by an equal freedom for all members of that society.<sup>13</sup> If liberalism is the heir to the modern project of Enlightenment and emancipation, however, it is itself implicated by a totalitarianism thesis that contains a critique of modernity.<sup>14</sup> In this essay, I would like to explore this relationship between liberalism and totalitarianism, its implications for the modern project of emancipation, and what it reveals to us about the liberal conception of politics.

In examining the problem totalitarianism poses for modernity and for the liberal conception of politics, I take a philosophical approach that might be called Hegelian in a qualified sense. It is based on the premise that a consciousness is best understood in relation to its other. I therefore urge that, on one hand, we examine totalitarianism as an idea of liberalism, as a kind of projection in which liberalism envisages its anti-thesis. On the other hand, I suggest we examine the self-understanding of totalitarian movements in their peculiar reaction to the politics of emancipation. This approach has several implications: (1) that the two share certain fundamental assumptions about the

relationships human beings enter into with one other and with the world; (2) that both are inadequate in different respects, in respects that are masked in part by their inability to recognize this commonality; (3) that both misunderstand themselves in ways that have to do with their mutual implication. In this essay, I argue that liberal democracy and totalitarianism share the idea that society is an artifact and that politics is a species of making. In proceeding in this manner, I do not mean to suggest that the two understandings are equally valid or invalid—this suggestion would be monstrous. Nor do I wish to leap over historical events. “Since the term *totalitarian* came into existence in 1923,” writes the historian Abbott Gleason, “it has helped focus public debate in Germany, England, France, and the United States on the most central political issues of the century: the nature of freedom, justice, and revolution.”<sup>15</sup> My aim in revisiting liberal and totalitarian self-understandings in their mutual opposition is to bring out the problem that totalitarianism presents for the modern liberal conception of politics.

I here give an immanent critique of the modern idea of society as artifact. I show how this modern commitment presents us with two related problems: the problem of the construction of meanings and the problem of our ontological commitments. Liberal theory generally excludes both of these (moral) problems from the political sphere and relegates them to the private sphere. I try to show that if liberalism wants to understand itself as genuinely emancipatory, and not as simply preserving a political peace or status quo, it must give scope to these areas of ethical contention within a broader conception of the political. The argument advanced in this essay is therefore also intended to speak somewhat indirectly to the problem that the contemporary debate concerning the “construction of meanings,” “identity politics,” or a “politics of meaning” harbors for the liberal democratic conception of politics.

That modernity treats politics as a species of making is, of course, an Arendtian theme. In *The Human Condition*, Arendt advances the thesis that modernity has supplanted the speech and action of human beings, which are the originary political phenomena, with processes of production. Modernity thereby threatens to elide the space of human freedom constituted by the public realm. As Dana Villa writes: “The thesis that totalitarianism is the specifically technological form of politics as art or making is, I believe, implicit in Arendt’s analysis in ‘Ideology and Terror.’ The essay demonstrates how totalitarianism appropriates by naturalizing what is, in fact, a very traditional metaphoric. This approach allows Arendt to underline both the startling novelty of totalitarianism and its deep roots within the ‘traditional substitution of making for acting.’”<sup>16</sup>

## 2. SOCIETY AS ARTIFACT AND THE MODERN ETHOS OF EMANCIPATION

“In that dark night which shrouds from our eyes the most remote antiquity, a light appears which cannot lead us astray; I speak of this incontestable truth: *the social world is certainly the work of men*; and it follows that one can and should find its principles in the modifications of the human intelligence itself.”<sup>17</sup> When Michelet, the great historian of the French Revolution, first read these sentences from Vico’s *New Science*, he felt he had discovered the key to human history. The idea that “the social world is certainly the work of men” can be taken as one of the defining commitments of modern political and social thought. From Hobbes to Marx, the idea of a manmade society is inseparable from the modern political tradition and its ethos of emancipation. Hobbes’s *Leviathan* departs radically from tradition in advancing the doctrine that the commonwealth is a product of human construction; it can be regarded as the founding document of modern politics and emancipation—despite its defense of absolutism.<sup>18</sup>

Liberal, Socialist, and Communist doctrines of emancipation all begin with the notion that the present social order is neither established according to a divine plan nor given ahistorically in the natural order of things, but that it is subject to change and that such change is dependent upon human action. Man is the measure for the organization of society. Society is for the sake of human, not divine, ends. Social ends are human ends. And society does not have a telos that is independent of the goals and aspirations of its members. Society as artifact does not necessarily deny that “man is a social animal,” that it is necessary for human beings to live in a society. But it rejects the idea that the social order that is inherited is a necessary order.

The modern ideal of emancipation, inspired by the Enlightenment, goes hand in hand with the notion of society as artifact. The possible freedom of the individual and the individual’s potential for rational self-determination are the central presuppositions of the notion of emancipation. Neither can be exercised if those social and political structures that have subjected individuals to the arbitrary will of others to begin with are not open to reconstruction. The idea of emancipation implies that we are constrained by conditions over which we are potentially able to assume control.<sup>19</sup> Augustine’s utterly nonpolitical plea, “God, deliver me of my necessities,” provides the stark counterpoint to the modern self-assertion of man.<sup>20</sup> Emancipation rejects the notion that the only relationship individuals can assume with regard to society as a whole is one of passively suffering the station in life to which they are assigned.<sup>21</sup> The question of human suffering and human aspirations is thus brought into the center of the political concern.<sup>22</sup>

The ideal of emancipation has both a practical side and an intellectual side. It seeks to remove existing structures of political and social oppression. And it seeks to refashion our self-understanding for the sake of liberating ourselves from the ideological structures of oppression. Emancipation therefore involves the criticism and unmasking of ideas that propagate existing power relations. By undermining false prejudices and confusions about human nature and the nature of human society, emancipation implies a movement not just toward freedom but also toward truth. It uncovers false preconceptions about the way in which things have to be, while at the same time holding up the possibility of the way things could be. The idea of society as artifact has been advanced in conjunction with the idea of human emancipation as a sober departure from the mystifications of religion and the objectification<sup>23</sup> of power structures masking as universal truths.<sup>24</sup>

### 3. TOTALITARIANISM AND THE RADICAL CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIETY

The very project of an artificial construction of society, however, is also the point of departure for totalitarian politics. Totalitarian politics represent a radicalization of the aspiration to reconstruct society artificially. Buchheim states this view most succinctly: "Totalitarian rule . . . is the claim transformed into political action that the world and social life are changeable without limit."<sup>25</sup> The totalitarian project is represented as one of "radical social engineering,"<sup>26</sup> as a "transvaluation of all values,"<sup>27</sup> as a politics of "social planning,"<sup>28</sup> and so forth.<sup>29</sup> "This element," writes Abbott Gleason in his recent history of the idea, "—the state's remaking of its citizens and their whole world—has remained central to the term's meaning until this day."<sup>30</sup>

The extreme social transformation pursued by totalitarian movements does not attempt a reactionary return to past social and political structures, nor a simple coup d'état, but it expresses the aspiration toward a complete and unprecedented reconstruction of society. Moreover, totalitarian movements share in the belief—implicit in the ideal of emancipation—that the intellectual context legitimizing a particular social order can be determined by human construction as well. They take the idea of an intellectual reconstruction of the ideological basis of society to its extreme. Totalitarian movements propagate an ideology and produce it in the form of propaganda, with the intention of galvanizing the intellectual climate of public discourse to such an extent that all outside reference points disappear.<sup>31</sup> Rousseau's supposed affinity to totalitarianism, for example, is linked to statements like the one in

the *Social Contract* that “everything which disrupts the social bond of unity is valueless.”<sup>32</sup>

Accordingly, totalitarianism views the human subject as fully inscribable by the ideas and practices that reflect one’s particular social organization. The threat of totalitarianism is understood as a fundamental threat to the autonomy and self-determination of the individual, to the capacity to “think for oneself,” championed by the Enlightenment.<sup>33</sup> In an article in *The Listener* written in June 1941, George Orwell gives expression to this picture:

Totalitarianism has abolished freedom of thought to an extent unheard of in any previous age. And it is important to realize that its control of thought is not only negative but positive. It not only forbids you to express—even to think—certain thoughts, but it dictates what you *shall* think, it creates an ideology for you, it tries to govern your emotional life as well as setting up a code of conduct. And as far as possible it isolates you from the outside world, it shuts you up in an artificial universe in which you have no standards of comparison. The totalitarian state tries, at any rate, to control the thoughts and emotions of its subjects at least as completely as it controls their actions.<sup>34</sup>

Is, however, the radicalization of social reconstruction in totalitarianism somehow implicit within these modern commitments from the start? Whenever the idea of emancipation is taken seriously, there appears to be a systematic tendency toward a radicalization of the demand for the artificial construction of society. Take, for example, the critical legal theorist Roberto M. Unger. In his *Politics. A Work in Constructive Social Theory*, he champions the radicalization of social reconstruction as the only way to do justice to modernist goals: “Modern social thought was born proclaiming that society is made and imagined, that it is a human artifact rather than the expression of an underlying natural order. . . . If society is indeed ours to reinvent, we can carry forward the liberal and leftist aim of cleansing from our forms of practical collaboration or passionate attachment the taint of dependence and domination. We can advance the modernist goal of freeing subjective experience more fully from a prewritten and imposed script.”<sup>35</sup> Unger speaks of taking the idea of society as artifact “to the hilt.”

#### 4. SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION AND THE METAPHORICS OF PRODUCTION

To examine more closely what the modern project of emancipation commits itself to by subscribing to the truth that society is an artifact, I would like to bring out some of the conceptual implications of such a model for the idea of emancipation. For the sake of this exposition, I will make use of an

Aristotelian framework, and the basic experience of *poesis* or making which this framework relies upon.

(1) The model of artificial production or *poesis* implies a separation of the maker from that which is made. For example, when the craftsman makes a statue, he is creating something that is outside of himself. In Aristotle's language, he is thereby imposing form onto matter. With this example, the matter is something that is independent of the human subject. And also the final product, the statue, is an independent being. (2) The matter itself is not created by the artist or artisan, but is given. It is appropriated by the artisan or rather appropriated in the actualization of the form. (3) The process is end-directed. It reaches its conclusion in the actualization of the idea of the thing. The process can be aborted or carried out in a haphazard and thus incomplete manner. But the idea of such a production is that a fulfillment or completion is reached in a final product.

When transposing the model of artificial production or making onto the organization of society, this picture gets stretched in its various dimensions.

1. For the proponent of emancipation, the reconstruction of that social space within which the human subject moves about cannot be seen as the creation of something that is separate or independent of the maker or makers. If it is true that social change has to go together with changes in the intelligible structures that accompany and sustain social structures, then it follows that structures are here changed that are themselves constitutive of those who are changing them. While we are perhaps not accustomed to developing these implications from this point of view, they do accord with our general intuitions that there is a strong element of self-determination or self-fashioning implicit in the concept of human emancipation.

If the metaphor of the artifact is fully extended to our conception of the subject—as a cultural product, for example—then we are moving within a closed circle when we advocate the human construction of the social conditions of human existence. If the individual is infinitely malleable, constraints upon the construction of society are thereby removed. If, on the other hand, humans have a nature that is relatively stable, then either the project of emancipation stops short of reaching down and changing the individual subject's self-understanding or the subject's self-understanding or consciousness is relatively independent of the subject's identity. Neither of these latter two possibilities following from the existence of a relatively stable human nature are in accord with the ideal of emancipation. Hence, the implication of the maker (human subject) in that which is made (society) would seem to push us in the direction of radical change.

2. What is the "matter" of social organization? Society as a whole? Specific social institutions? Or human beings and their behavior themselves?

Moreover, in what sense is this “matter” to be taken as a given. How malleable is society as a whole, how malleable are social institutions or individuals?<sup>36</sup>

If we follow Hobbes in regarding the human subject as the matter of social reconstruction,<sup>37</sup> the particular conception of matter we are working with becomes highly relevant. If the subject is thought of as analogous to the atom, a limit is thereby placed on the possibility of social reconstruction.<sup>38</sup> Atoms—in the original sense of the word—are unchangeable and follow definite laws of motion. They are not reconstituted by any force acting from without. On this mechanistic model, subjects are simply moved around and brought into different mutual relationships. But they do not change themselves. Moreover, they are not defined in relation to the social body as a whole, as parts that acquire meaning through their relation to this larger structure. What therefore changes is the organization of society as a whole, not the consciousness of individuals that partake in this organization. This analysis accords with Hobbes’s own explicit avowals that “whosoever looketh into himself, and considereth what he doth, when he does *think, opine, reason, hope, feare, &c.* and upon what grounds; he shall thereby read and know, what are the thoughts, and Passions of all other men, upon the like occasions.”<sup>39</sup> The limits within which society can be changed are, on this view, circumscribed by the characteristic patterns of human behavior considered to be essentially pregiven.

And yet, as we have mentioned above, the idea of emancipation demands not merely a transformation of social institutions and values but also a corresponding change in the self-understanding of the individual subject. The idea of emancipation therefore would seem to involve the reconstruction of both the self and its social context. The power of the idea of emancipation stems from its explicit recognition of their interdependence. Emancipation implies a “coming into one’s own,” a liberation from “*Unmündigkeit*,” the ability to speak for oneself, to be able to exercise one’s judgment. We might think here of Kant’s metaphor of the child coming to maturity.<sup>40</sup> Emancipation, as has already been said, promises a movement of the individual subject toward freedom and truth, simultaneously with the setting free of the self. It therefore would also appear to require the formation of the self. Hobbes’s atomistic view of the subject is therefore inadequate to convey the full implication of the project of emancipation.<sup>41</sup> However, if the project of emancipation demands that the human subject, as the matter of social construction, be regarded as malleable and capable of taking on different forms, the scope of possible social change is drastically expanded.

3. The view of social change as a species of making suggests that social reconstruction is purposive and works toward some form of completion or fulfillment of the promise with which such reconstruction was undertaken. It

therefore raises the demand for a relatively concrete idea of the shape of future society.<sup>42</sup> Small-scale social engineering that is open ended fits badly with the project of creating a final product.<sup>43</sup>

In these several ways, then, the metaphors of society as artifact taken in conjunction with the Enlightenment ideal of emancipation seem to promote a radicalization of social reconstruction. To follow the combined logic of the two ideas is to conceive of a politics that advocates, and hence conceives as possible, the social construction of meanings and identities.<sup>44</sup> The model of an artificial construction of the social conditions of human existence implies the possibility of a radical reconstruction of meanings and identities, as Unger has already remarked. It appears to unhinge all real and existing constraints upon what is politically achievable. To avoid the troubling "totalitarian" features immanent within this constellation of modern commitments, we seem to have to retreat from one or another of its aspects. So, for example, Hobbes's atomism posits a stable human nature or a conception of normalcy thereby establishing a universally shared ground of agreement on matters of social coexistence.<sup>45</sup> But Hobbes's ontology, which fixes human possibility, runs counter to what liberals like Charles Larmore and John Rawls, for example, admit to be "one of the cardinal experiences of modernity[:] . . . the increasing awareness that reasonable people tend naturally to differ and disagree about the nature of the good life."<sup>46</sup>

### *5. SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION AND THE PROBLEM OF MEANING*

The idea that social life brings with it and is dependent upon a certain intelligible context inspires the idea of emancipation, but it also raises a challenge for that notion. As soon as one recognizes that emancipation involves an intellectual dimension and requires an engagement with the ideas and representations attached to a particular form of social life, the problem of social reconstruction takes on a troubling dimension, opening up an intelligible space, a space of meanings, which seeks to be filled or structured. One might distinguish two aspects of the problem of meaning.

If social reconstruction demands the reconstruction of shared meanings and beliefs, as was recognized by the Enlightenment, the question of the standards for such a reconstruction presents itself. What are the standards upon which we can legitimately base our judgments of emancipation? Without a natural or divine order with which to seek a realignment of our communal life, or some other standard apart from the prevailing conceptions of the

current social order, it would seem that the project of emancipation is akin to pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps.

The very idea of an artifact implies that something is brought into being in accordance with a human preconception, in accordance with an idea that provides the model for the thing that is to be brought into existence. The artist can either depend on memory for the reconstruction of a thing according to a model of something that is either real or already has been realized,<sup>47</sup> or she or he can depend upon the imagination for the presentation of a model that has no precedent in the world. The logic of the emancipatory project, its comprehensive "prejudice against prejudice," pushes it into the direction of the second option. If emancipation demands an intellectual reorientation as well, then it would seem that it cannot draw upon ideas from the past, which are heavily implicated by obfuscations of power relationships and distortions of real social aspirations. And if the old standards are applied, and these old standards are part and parcel of the old order, then how can there be hope for genuine social change? The social reconstruction demanded by movements of emancipation would therefore have to find its measure in imagined communities.

According to this analysis, it appears justified to claim that social reconstruction subscribing to the idea of emancipation always has the *air of irreality* about it. It is this irreality or utopianism that haunts movements of social emancipation.<sup>48</sup> Built into the practice of social emancipation is a fundamental uncertainty about the ground of judgment. This is not the case for political projects that take social structures as given. The demand that must arise out of this negative dialectic of social and ideological change is the demand for a greater specification of the content or concrete shape of the future social construction.

A second problem of meaning arises with the project of social reconstruction. What structures are to take the place of the traditional meanings that are discharged? This is the question raised by Edmund Burke in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, by the British Empiricists and by the German Romantics in reaction to the French Enlightenment's social revolution.

The two problems of meaning are related but not the same. One might hold, for example, that one is in possession of a standard that can serve as the basis for social reconstruction but that this standard nevertheless cannot replace traditional meanings in a comprehensive fashion. Such a position is taken by Friedrich Schiller in his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* where he criticizes the one-sidedness of the Enlightenment principle of social reconstruction.

This Natural State (as we may term any political body whose organization derives originally from forces and not from laws) is, it is true, at variance with man as moral being, for whom the only Law should be to act in conformity with law. But it will just suffice for man as physical being. . . . But physical man does in fact exist, whereas the existence of moral man is as yet *problematic*. If then, Reason does away with the Natural State (as she of necessity must if she would put her own in its place), she jeopardizes the physical man who actually exists for the sake of a moral man who is as yet problematic, risks the very existence of society for a merely hypothetical (even though morally necessary) ideal of society. She takes from man something he actually possesses, and without which he possesses nothing, and refers him instead to something which he could and should possess.<sup>49</sup>

Once we follow Schiller in distinguishing between an ideal according to which society is to be organized—such as, for example, the ideal of equality or individual freedom (Reason)—and the arbitrary everyday structures of life (Nature) that persist in their meaning-giving function independently of such an ideal, the difference between the two problems of meaning becomes apparent.

The problem of meaning is therefore not confined merely to the irreality of the new standard but also to the uncertainty of how this standard will translate into the life of the everyday. This includes the additional difficulty, which Schiller points to, that “physical society *in time* must never for a moment cease to exist while moral society *as idea* is in the process of being formed; that for the sake of man’s moral dignity his actual existence must never be jeopardized. . . . When the craftsman has a timepiece to repair, he can let its wheels run down; but the living clockwork of the State must be repaired while it is still striking, and it is a question of changing the revolving wheel while it still revolves.”<sup>50</sup> Again, here too the demand will be raised for a more comprehensive specification of the concrete shape of the future society.<sup>51</sup>

## 6. DIALECTIC OF ENLIGHTENMENT?

Liberal and totalitarian politics of social reconstruction address the problem of meaning in very different ways. In this respect, the two are distinguished and delimited in opposition to one another. Liberal and totalitarian politics, however, can be thought to enter into a dialectical relation in precisely this dimension.

In its radicalization of social reconstruction, the totalitarian movement seeks to redress the sense of irreality that accompanies social transformation. It speaks to an anxiety about the reality of social existence by presenting itself

as a politics of substance that can remedy the fragmentation of society, circumscribe the social relations individuals enter into with one another, and restore to the individual a meaningful place in the order of things. When considered in this light, the concrete and comprehensive ideologies of totalitarian movements appear less ephemeral, less ideal, and more "real" than the abstract political principles of liberalism that emphasize the pragmatics of the political process and the indeterminacy of human nature. The radicalization of social construction can be understood as an attempt to restore a weight to the world, to give politics an authentic substance where the loss of traditional meanings makes social life appear artificial and inauthentic.<sup>52</sup>

Within the space of this essay, I cannot argue in detail that this theoretical development of the problem of meaning arising with the project of emancipation is not mere theory but deeply reflects the attitudes of historical thinkers. For an example of this dialectical relationship, however, I will briefly turn to Karl Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, where Marx criticizes the bourgeois revolution for its "imaginary" politics and its weakness precisely in terms of its essential inability to give substantial content to its social revolution.<sup>53</sup>

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something entirely new, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle slogans and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honored disguise and this borrowed language. . . .

. . . in the classically austere traditions of the Roman Republic its gladiators found the ideals and the art forms, the self-deceptions that they needed in order to conceal from themselves the bourgeois limitations of the content of their struggles and to keep their passion at the height of the great historical tragedy.

The social revolution of the nineteenth century cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future. It cannot begin with itself, before it has stripped off all superstition in regard to the past. Earlier revolutions required world-historical recollections in order to drug themselves concerning their own content. In order to arrive at its content, the revolution of the nineteenth century must let the dead bury their dead. There the phrase went beyond the content; here the content goes beyond the phrase.<sup>54</sup>

Marx explicitly appropriates the idea of society as artifact in the opening passage. At first, it appears as if Marx rejected the possibility of a radical revolution that could free the social from the implications and meanings of tradition. All conscious social transformation, according to Marx, faces the problem of being conditioned by the very ideas that it seeks to dismantle and

is in this sense unable to come to grips with its own reality. The very forms of social and cultural life within which the attempt at change is embedded thwart social transformation. The “nightmare” of the bourgeois revolution is that it undermines its own intentions. For lack of new meanings, it is forced back into past darkness, reaching for those that present themselves ready-made. To bring about a revolution in the social conditions, which it found in place, it had to draw on the heroes and battle cries from its story book of history, imitating an entire aesthetic of the past. The bourgeois revolution, which stops short of a radical reconstruction of society, is suspect because it lacks a genuine content. It has no vision or story of its own and loses the ground of current social reality in its flights into an imaginary aesthetic. It is against this half-baked state of affairs that radical social revolution reacts, not to impose another imaginary scheme, but to provide social change with genuine substance, to reintroduce a measure of reality into the shadow-play of bourgeois politics.

The predicament of the bourgeois revolution is that it lacks a meaningful content, which it seeks to redress by drawing upon dead meanings that should be confined to the annals of history. It is precisely this artificiality and irreality by which the true revolutionary is disaffected. Marxist revolution sees itself as opposing real content to the empty phrases of the liberal revolution. It seeks a radical reconstruction not just of social conditions but of the intellectual space that conditions social reality, because it is self-consciously aware of the interrelation between the two. Therefore, only a radical critique of all that has gone before—“a ruthless criticism of everything existing,”<sup>55</sup> to quote a phrase from a letter Marx wrote to Arnold Ruge in 1843—can serve the purposes of genuine emancipation and engage with the new reality without prejudice.

The question I would raise is whether liberal democracy shares this sense of its own irreality, of its own lack of substance, with the radical reaction to its political project. On one hand, liberalism has to keep alienation in check to convince individuals to project themselves into the political sphere (and carry out their purposes legitimately). To do so, it has to forge some concrete sense of belonging so that individuals can recognize their own identities as somehow tied up with the life of the community as a whole. On the other hand, it has constantly to thwart the desire to articulate the whole, to create a philosophy or an aesthetic that may serve as a unifying force in the life of the community. This predicament of nonutopian liberal politics is exasperated precisely when it accomplishes its emancipatory project and has successfully called into question traditional structures of meaning and turned over responsibility for shaping their own lives to members of the community themselves. What liberalism offers to replace self-understandings overcome by emancipation is

a skepticism about the objective status of values. The liberal revolution is a story without an end.

Sigmund Neumann explicitly relates his concern with the problem of totalitarian dictatorship to the problem of the historical, and therefore transient, contingent and manmade nature of reality. In the introduction to his *Permanent Revolution*, Neumann argues that totalitarianism raises a challenge for democracy because it undermines the very meanings upon which the self-understanding of democracy depends.

Historical reality often changes without having managed to create a new language. . . . Our political vocabulary is antiquated and thus by necessity full of misnomers. It has ceased to possess meaning. Basic concepts have "lost their spell." We must either acquire a new vocabulary or renew the old. This is of primary importance for the survival of democracy which, of all forms of society, is most dependent on "mutual understanding." It is in such a twilight zone that the stability of vital meanings is lost.

Modern [totalitarian] dictatorships have capitalized on this intellectual vacuum, just as they have filled the social vacuum in which the crises strata of contemporary society have found themselves. . . . This usurpation, devaluation, and actual transformation resulting from the dictators' use have caused havoc in democracy's camp no less than dictatorial blitzkrieg tactics have destroyed democracy's ordered battle lines.<sup>56</sup>

Neumann's fear is that the shared understandings of democratic society are too thin to resist the totalitarian temptation and to provide a ground for democratic practices. What is perceived to be at stake in democracy's contest with totalitarianism is the very "vocabulary" of the liberal-democratic self-understanding. The rise of totalitarianism is somehow made possible or even promoted by a gap that has opened up between representation and reality. And totalitarian movements exploit this instability of "vital meanings." The subversion of language is the most comprehensive attack on shared understandings, for it undermines the very medium in which shared understandings can be articulated. The theme of the subversion of ordinary language recurs in almost all representations and treatments of totalitarianism as one of its central features.<sup>57</sup>

### 7. THE PERMANENCE OF THE THEOLOGICO-POLITICAL AND THE LIBERAL WAY

The image of totalitarianism, despite the fact that it has gotten little attention in the recent systematic formulations of liberal politics, has exerted a considerable influence on our conception of the relationship between individual, state, and society. Consider, in this context, what the novelist Anthony

Burghess has had to say about the significance of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. "We must take *Nineteen Eighty-Four* not only as a Swiftian toy," he suggests, "but as an extended metaphor of apprehension. As a projection of a possible future, Orwell's vision has a purely fragmentary validity. Ingsoc cannot come into being: it is the unrealizable ideal of totalitarianism which mere human systems unhandily immitate. It is the metaphorical power that persists: the book continues to be an apocalyptic codex of our worst fears. But why do we have these fears? We fear the state. Why always the state?"<sup>58</sup> It is not altogether an exaggeration to speak of the unparalleled significance of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* for the political imagination of the twentieth century.<sup>59</sup>

Contained in this image, I want to suggest, are certain fundamental truths, commitments, and problems inherent in the liberal conception of politics. An image of this sort is not a descriptive empirical concept. It is an idea or story that answers to the requirements of a certain way of standing in the world. It brings together and charges emotively the demands that a certain style of human (co-)existence places on human possibility.<sup>60</sup> And it does so in a manner that retains and reflects the insights and contradictions that have to exist in an uneasy tension within any style of human existence and coexistence. It is not surprising, then, that the paradigmatic articulation of the image of totalitarianism for modern consciousness is achieved through literature rather than through a rationally consistent articulation of our foundational commitments within political theory. The image of totalitarian violence through a radical reconstruction of society, of shared meanings, and of personal identity functions as a marker of transhistorical significance for liberal society's own self-institution.<sup>61</sup> It serves to justify the liberal doctrine of state neutrality with regard to the ontological commitments of its citizens and their conceptions of the good life<sup>62</sup> and delimits the kinds of discussions that can legitimately be had in the public realm. The absolute ground the image of totalitarianism provides in this respect is evidence of its theologico-political, transhistorical significance.

Liberalism will tend to associate any political demand for fostering shared meanings or shaping personal identities through education with the totalitarian threat. Liberal education is understood as supplying individuals with neutral tools for the pursuit of their own conception of the good life, where individuals should be free to choose what tools they care to acquire in support of their particular individual pursuits.<sup>63</sup> Against totalitarianism, liberalism argues that the individual must develop a self-understanding and an understanding of her relation to others out of her own resources. According to liberalism, individuals substantially institute their own meanings. Shared understandings are considered to arise out of the interplay and plurality of individual institutions of meaning. This is the case precisely because

liberalism has to emancipate the subject from meanings that are imposed from without if it wants to conceive of the individual as free and self-determining.<sup>64</sup> The liberal self-understanding has to resist all attempts to determine the identity of individuals through substantive accounts of their social situation or of any of their other empirical circumstances, because this would undermine the idea that the individual has the capacity for choosing who he or she is.<sup>65</sup> The problem of shared understandings, however, can only be reduced to a matter of choice, where shared understandings are already given. Thus, liberalism typically takes shared meanings for granted, where they are not thought to arise out of our rational agreements.<sup>66</sup>

Shared meanings, however, can only arise between citizens in the public realm who engage their reflective judgment in matters of shared significance. For them to do so, they have to recognize as significant the relation between the life of their country or political community and their own lives. Where the reflective relation between private life and political community is discouraged, citizens will be unable to project themselves toward the public in a manner that truly engages their considered judgments. It is this disengagement or unhinging of reflective judgment that becomes a problem for the constitution of shared meanings in a society instituted by liberal political principles. To answer the problem of the constitution of shared meanings by referring the question of shared meanings back to the individual, or to civil society, simply ignores the difficulty raised by the project of emancipation. Emancipation dismantles established ideas, and these ideas are always ideas held by individuals. The problem of the constitution of shared meanings is a problem that no theory of emancipation can escape.

It is in terms of a failure of "vital meanings" that I understand the problem totalitarianism represents for liberal-democratic consciousness. This problem at the heart of the liberal style of coexistence is displaced from the liberal political as part of the liberal self-institution, but is retained in its image of the other. I suggest that the image of totalitarianism figures the liberal "nightmare" of a "loss of reality."<sup>67</sup> This loss of reality or "vital meanings" arises out of the dynamic engendered by the idea of emancipation and its modern commitments. It is also not unrelated to the liberal project of excluding the theologico-political from the public realm in favor of a scientific approach to the social that is supposedly neutral with regard to the self-understandings of its citizens. Let us here recall Martin Malia's critique of the totalitarian "noble dream" as undermining a practical, empirically oriented common sense, and therefore as a theologico-political moment that needs to be expelled from modern politics.

To step back from the commitments that generate this predicament requires, I think, that we give up either the idea of emancipation or the notion

that society is an artifact and politics a species of making. If liberalism gives up the former and places its emphasis on state neutrality, then it is not clear how the liberal state can be understood to do justice to the Enlightenment aspiration of furthering human autonomy and self-determination. The circumstances of human coexistence are then left to the forces of a(n) (economic) mechanism or procedure of interactions that is arbitrary from the point of view of personal human aspiration.

This is the danger with the kind of position taken recently by Charles Larmore in his subtle and intelligent reformulation of political liberalism.<sup>68</sup> Larmore criticizes John Rawls for his attempt to ground the liberal conception of the well-ordered society in a Kantian conception of the rational and autonomous person.<sup>69</sup> Larmore argues that liberalism is best understood as foundationally committed to the principle of the (procedural) neutrality of the state with regard to controversial conceptions of the good life. He thereby hopes to be able to address just the kinds of concerns I have urged above regarding the constitution of shared meanings within the social order instituted by liberal principles.<sup>70</sup> Directed against Rawls's earlier "Kantian construction" of liberal political principles in *A Theory of Justice* and the Tanner and Dewey Lectures, Larmore's reformulation of political liberalism addresses the criticisms of Kantian moral philosophy by the Romantic thinkers. Larmore tries to incorporate their criticism of Kantian morality while at the same time immunizing liberalism against the Romantic challenge to the presumed ahistorical and culturally insensitive politics of Enlightenment.<sup>71</sup> Following the Romantics, Larmore keenly develops the significant role the capacity for reflective judgment plays in acquiring moral knowledge, rather than merely in applying moral principles. Reflective judgment is capable of making distinctions and establishing similarities where reason, in its widest sense, fails us. Judgment operates within the field of human possibility. The differences and similarities it discovers or establishes are not necessary ones, but they are not arbitrary either. Judgment is a complex experience of value, which discloses the world and, through reflection, ourselves to us in a mode that is different from the rational and that cannot be understood in terms of rules.<sup>72</sup>

According to Larmore, reflective judgment is, however, largely to be excluded from the political realm. In clarifying the importance of the distinction between the political and the private realm for his political liberalism, Larmore agrees with Adam Smith's insight that "the rules of justice are the only rules of morality which are precise and accurate . . . [while] those of all the other virtues are loose, vague, and indeterminate."<sup>73</sup> Larmore expands on this point when he develops the liberal commitment to legal stability and state neutrality.

In some cases, decision making in accordance with a system of rules that yields single directives in almost every case, but that corresponds only in *grosso modo* to our considered moral judgments, may outweigh a more faithfully nuanced appreciation of the way things are. Most of all this is true of the political realm. There system can prove more sensibility than desirable for a very important reason. Whenever the government acts according to publicly known statutes and laws that allow little room for conflicting directives, this gives its actions a *predictability* that can be invaluable for those who must make decisions in other areas of society, or in other branches of government.<sup>74</sup>

Larmore is indeed right when he speaks “in defense of bureaucracy,” recognizing it as a tremendous modern achievement, and of “knowing in advance what government will do,” as one of the most important values of a humane government. (It is precisely the lack of this knowledge that makes the totalitarian regime so terrifying.) But the liberal exclusion of reflective judgment from the political realm, which Larmore undoubtedly has diagnosed correctly as tied up with contemporary liberal theory’s deepest commitments,<sup>75</sup> cannot but promote an ethos of disengagement that severely restricts the kind of meaningful public dialogue Larmore would like to make room for in liberal political theory, and which he alleges in fact already exists in liberal-democratic practice.

Larmore is genuinely concerned with the perspective of the first-person. But he does not give any scope to this perspective, or to the exercise of reflective judgment that is integral to it, in the liberal political realm. Liberal political community, according to Larmore, ought to be grounded in a fixed memory of past violence, rather than in judgments arising out of an ongoing public conversation about the interchange between the individual’s lived life and the actual social life that is instituted by the political community at present.<sup>76</sup> Against Romanticism and communitarianism, Larmore argues that liberalism is not ahistorical, but based on a collective memory of a very specific sort.

This is what Ernest Renan had in mind, when he noted (famously though paradoxically) that “every French citizen must have forgotten the St. Bartholomew’s Day massacre.” He did not really mean that French citizens must have forgotten the Catholic massacre of Protestants in 1572 (many had not, and anyway Renan was addressing this statement to his French readers). His aim was to underscore a common memory rather than a shared amnesia. French citizens, Renan believed, are joined together by remembering the theological-political passion, the urge to anoint political life with religious confession, that they have now outgrown. Not in this case alone has a common sense of citizenship been forged by the memory of what has been left behind. . . . [Liberalism] makes its appearance only in a society that has left behind a homogeneous culture (or more accurately, perhaps, the pretense that it possesses one) and suffered through the violence of political attempts to reimpose it. . . . The common life on which a liberal order depends must involve, therefore, an allegiance to the past that is more reflective than just a sense

of continuity. It must be the life of a people united by what they have learned together from the things that once came to divide them.<sup>77</sup>

Though Larmore is reluctant to buy into the ideological use of the idea of totalitarianism explicitly, I think it is hard to deny that the specter of totalitarianism is here invoked in his account of the liberal *sensus communis*. The only legitimate liberal collective memory is the image of a past violence perpetrated on the citizens in the name of a theologico-political passion. And this fixed memory grounds the liberal order. The critical attitude of Enlightenment that liberalism champions, however, would have us ask: Is this kind of violence a threat for our society today? Or are the primary threats to our contemporary social coexistence perhaps of a different nature? Perhaps the real and present danger for contemporary American society is not the indoctrination of individuals by an all-powerful state, but a radical disaffection with the political process, with the significance of education, or with things meaningfully held in common. This is not a question I am equipped to answer. What I do suggest is that such questions should not be placed beyond the political judgment exercised by the citizens of a democratic society.

The cogency of political judgment ultimately depends upon the relative success of the political regime toward which it projects itself, where "regime" is understood in the richest sense of that term, "giving it all the resonance it has when used in the expression 'the Ancien Regime.'" The idea of a regime, "combines the idea of a type of constitution with that of a style of existence or mode of life."<sup>78</sup> The two cannot be separated from one another absolutely, as liberals like Rawls and Larmore would have it.<sup>79</sup> If the liberal regime cannot be thought of as instituting a social order, then how are we to understand it as a political theory with practical import in competition with other political theories that lay claim to our allegiance? Precisely to the extent that we can no longer make sense of such a competition—to the extent that an alternative regime is hard to conceive of—the liberal regime establishes our way of life. This style of existence, however, cannot be placed beyond question if political judgment exercised within liberal democracy is to have genuine weight.

## NOTES

1. Dan Diner, *Kreisläufe* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 1995), 59.

2. First applied by the journalist Giovanni Amendola in an article denouncing the Fascist attack on the legal structure of the Italian representative democracy and the "remarkable 'war of religion'" foisted upon Italy by the Fascists, the term "totalitarianism" was thereafter appropriated by Mussolini himself as a description of the conception of the all-embracing nature of the

Fascist state. Applied early on by both Catholic and Marxist critics to Hitler's National Socialist regime, the concept never gained much currency within the German National Socialist Party itself. Eventually it became synonymous with the totalitarian thesis formulated by such thinkers as Hannah Arendt, Carl Friedrich, Sigmund Neumann, and others.

3. Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow. Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

4. Diner, *Kreisläufe*, 49 f. (translation mine): "eine überhistorische, gleichsam ikonoklastische Bedeutung der nationalsozialistischen Massenverbrechen für das westliche Bewußtsein . . . , ein Bewußtsein der säkularisierten Christenheit, dem die Bilder und Metaphern des Holocaust in ihrer Tiefendimension mehr bedeuten als bloße Abbildung des Geschehens."

5. Omer Bartov, *Murder in Our Midst* (New York: Oxford, 1996), 130.

6. Diner, *Kreisläufe*, 52: "Die im Vergleichsdiskurs angelegte Vermutung, die Verbrechen Stalins seien—wenn nicht verwerflicher—so doch ebenso verwerflich wie die Hitlers, deutet auf einen untergründigen Zusammenhang hin, für den der Vergleich jener Menschheitsverbrechen sich als blosses Material für einen *theologisch* wie historisch tiefverankerten Subtext erweist: den zwischen Christentum und Judentum. . . ."

7. Martin Malia, *The Soviet Tragedy* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 499 f.

8. Diner leaves the difficult and disturbing question he raises aside: "Die Diskursstruktur des Vergleichs mutet ihrer Struktur nach theologisch an. Doch diese Dimension der Thematik soll hier nicht weiter verfolgt werden." Diner, *Kreisläufe*, 53.

9. See, for example, Claude Lefort, "The Permanence of the Theologico-Political?" in *Democracy and Political Theory*, by Claude Lefort (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1988). Cf. p. 224: "The future that the thinkers of the nineteenth century were attempting to decipher is to some extent our past and our present. The meaning of our present itself is of course dependent upon an indeterminate future; but we enjoy the advantage of an experience that was denied them and which brings a new relief to their debates. In their day, the political form we know as modern democracy was only just coming into being. All its premises had been established, but it still kept its secret, even though its dynamic and its ambiguities were partly visible, as we can see, in particular, from certain of Tocqueville's extraordinary insights into the future. The project of totalitarianism, however, still lay beyond the horizons of their political thought, and there can be no doubt but that it both helps to shed light on the secret of democracy and urges us to investigate anew the religious and the political."

10. Dana R. Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 258. Villa continues: "Within the space delimited by the closure of this tradition and the 'frame' of technological revealing, this dream produces an event—the extermination—the logic of which cannot be reduced to either technology or totalitarianism. For while the Extermination is irreducibly technological and totalitarian, the decision to eliminate *the Jews* flows from a much more specific logic, a logic that exceeds the totalitarian attempt to speed up the natural law of evolution by technological means."

11. Lefort, *Democracy and Political Theory*, 234. See also Peter Holquist, "Knowledge as Power: Bolshevik Surveillance in Its Pan-European Context" (paper presented at conference on Totalitarianism and Modernity, February 1997, Yale University).

12. Abbott Gleason, *Totalitarianism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 3 ff. This is also the thrust of Malia's argument. See also Carl J. Friedrich, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965); Sigmund Neumann, *Permanent Revolution* (1942; reprint, New York: Praeger, 1965), xviii.

13. This definition is best supplemented by Larmore's definition of "political liberalism." Liberalism is a government based on laws. "The distinctive liberal notion is that of the neutrality of the state. . . . The ideal of neutrality can best be understood as a response to the variety of

conceptions of the good life. In modern times we have come to recognize a multiplicity of ways in which a fulfilled life can be lived, without any perceptible hierarchy among them. . . . Political liberalism has been the doctrine that consequently the state should be neutral. The state should not seek to promote any particular conception of the good life." *Patterns of Moral Complexity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 43. Larmore's emphasis on neutrality has the virtue of bringing out the continuity between nineteenth century and contemporary liberals. "Neutrality understood procedurally leaves open to a large extent the *goals* that the liberal state ought to pursue. . . . So a neutral state need not necessarily be a 'minimal state.' Nineteenth-century liberals who demanded a minimal 'nightwatchman' state (the Manchester school, for example) may have had many reasons—some intellectually responsible, some not—for this view, but their best reason was the idea that the free market is the most efficient and neutral means of producing and distributing wealth and resources. A contemporary liberal who desires a more active interventionist role for the state is best understood as still sharing their ideal of liberal neutrality, but as disagreeing with them about the nature of the market" (pp. 44 f.). At the same time, as I indicate below, neutrality represents a subtle retreat from the Enlightenment and liberal ideal of individual freedom.

14. It is just this uneasy relationship between totalitarianism and the politics of modernity that was captured in J. L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (New York: Praeger, 1952).

15. Gleason, *Totalitarianism*, 12.

16. Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger*, 257.

17. Quoted by Wilson, *To the Finland Station* (New York: Doubleday, 1953), 3.

18. "Art goes yet further, imitating that Rationall and most excellent worke of Nature, *Man*. For by Art is created that great LEVIATHAN called a COMMON-WEALTH, or STATE, (in latine CIVITAS) which is but an Artificiall Man; though of greater stature and strength than the Naturall, for whose protection and defence it was intended; and in which, the *Sovereignty* is an Artificiall *Soul*, as giving life and motion to the whole body." Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651; reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 9.

19. See, for example, Raymond Geuss, *The Idea of a Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 2: "Critical theories . . . are inherently emancipatory, i.e. they free agents from a kind of coercion which is at least partly self-imposed, from self-frustration of conscious human action."

20. Again, Paul's Christian prophecy that "the meek shall inherit the earth" is swept aside by the modern ethos, not because emancipation turns its back on human suffering, but because it demands the self-assertion of the human subject.

21. See, for example, Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983), 54, who here agrees with Hans Jonas: "Hans Jonas has currently related the possibility of the idea of progress to the position that is the antithesis of the Pauline/Augustinian doctrine of grace, namely, Pelagianism, which he characterizes as the 'leveling of divine grace into an instructive power working towards progress in the whole of human history and increasingly bringing men to the consciousness of their freedom and responsibility for themselves.'" Also see Blumenberg, more generally on the relationship between modernity and the self-assertion of man.

22. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self, the Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 496.

23. The term "objectification" or "objectification mistake" is here understood in the sense that Geuss uses it, following the Frankfurt School: "A form of consciousness is ideological if it contains essentially an 'objectification' mistake, i.e. if it contains a false belief to the effect that some social phenomenon is a natural phenomenon, or, to put it another way, human agents or

'subjects' are suffering from ideologically false consciousness if they falsely 'objectify' their own activity, i.e. if they are deceived into taking that activity to be something 'foreign' to them, especially if they take that activity to be a natural process outside their control." Geuss, *The Idea*, 14.

24. The modern conception of society as artifact has also frequently been understood as an outgrowth of the epistemological revolution of the seventeenth century. The rise of a modern self-defining subject that aspires to take control of its own social relationships, rather than leaving these structures that shape its everyday existence to the authority of tradition, is related by many different schools of European thinkers to the increasing confidence of man in his own ability to manipulate and control the natural world. Their claim is that the rise and success of the New Science made Bacon's dream of the mastery and control of nature ever more compelling with its stricture to emancipate human thought from self-imposed idols that systematically cloud the mind's capacity to comprehend the natural world. The intellectual reorientation required by the New Science was part and parcel of a shift in the understanding of human subjectivity and its relationship to the world. This shift is characterized by Charles Taylor as an "emancipation from meaning," which he regards as a corollary to the modern notion of the self-defining subject. "Full self-possession," says Taylor, "requires that we free ourselves from the projections of meanings onto things, that we be able to draw back from the world, and concentrate purely on our own processes of observation and thought about things." Taylor, "Aims of an Epoch," in his *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 7. It is this new notion of the self, as the only locus of certainty, that goes together with "a view of the world not as a locus of meanings, but rather of contingent, de facto correlations." "Manipulability of the world confirms the new self-defining identity, as it were: the proper relation of man to a meaningful order is to put himself into tune with it; by contrast nothing sets the seal more clearly on the rejection of this vision than successfully treating the world as object of control." Taylor, "Aims of an Epoch," 8. Or in the words of Louis Dupré who places an emphasis on the prehistory of the New Science: "The actualization of a freedom conceived in this manner requires a certain indeterminacy of its external environment. A totally predefined and predictable universe severely restricts self-determination. The more open the universe, the more creative freedom is allowed to be. Giordano Bruno concluded that an infinite universe infinitely expanded the realm of human freedom." Louis Dupré *Passage to Modernity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), 125. The modern approach to politics and the organization of society is frequently regarded as a product or an outgrowth of the shift in the conception of human subjectivity and its relationship to the world that is attendant upon the rise of the scientific worldview. "This line of thought . . . entrenches its hold in the eighteenth century not only as a theory of knowledge, but as a theory of man and society as well." Taylor, "Aims of an Epoch," 4.

25. H. Buchheim, *Totalitäre Herrschaft—Wesen und Merkmale* (Munich, 1962), cited by Carl Friedrich, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), 16. Friedrich rejects this "essentialist" interpretation of totalitarianism. He argues that it implicates a whole range of thinkers and political projects, such as, for example, Plato and the Spartans, primitive societies and theocratic ones, illegitimately. Instead he argues for a "pragmatic" difference specifying totalitarianism in the class of autocratic regimes, namely, that of "the organization and methods developed and employed with the aid of modern technical devices in an effort to resuscitate such total control in the service of an ideologically motivated movement, dedicated to the total destruction and reconstruction of a mass society" (p. 17). Friedrich's "descriptive" definition sidesteps the philosophical question. What is at issue is precisely the possibility of distinguishing "ideology" from legitimate modes of thought as an artificial construction or tool of a political movement.

26. Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), chap. 9.

27. Ernst Fraenkel, *Der Doppelstaat* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1974), 138.
28. Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), chap. 5.
29. See also Gerhard Niemeyer, *Between Nothingness and Paradise* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), vii: "They [the believers in totalitarian politics] put the index of reality not on what exists but on what they fancy might be brought into existence, thereby changing the character of politics from an order of 'action' to a technique of 'making,' in Aristotle's conceptual distinction."
30. Gleason, *Totalitarianism*, 10.
31. See, for example, Giovanni Gentile's formulation of the totalitarian state published in the *Encyclopedia Italiana* (1932) under "Doctrine of Fascism" and signed by Mussolini. Gentile writes: "The fascist conception of the State is all-embracing; outside of it no human or spiritual values can exist, much less have value. This understood, fascism is totalitarian, and the fascist state—a synthesis and a unit inclusive of all values—interprets, develops and potentiates the whole life of a people." Cited by Gleason, *Totalitarianism*, 19. The generally accepted view that such a regime was never instituted in Italy is not at issue for the immediate purposes of my argument.
32. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, ed. Ernest Barker, *Social Contract* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), 301.
33. Immanuel Kant, "What Is Enlightenment?" in *Foundations of Metaphysics, and, What Is Enlightenment*, trans. L. W. Beck (New York: Macmillan, 1990).
34. George Orwell, "Totalitarianism and Literature," *The Listener*, June 19 (1941).
35. Roberto M. Unger, *Social Theory: Its Situation and Its Task* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 1. *Social Theory* is the first volume of Unger's three-volume *Politics, A Work in Constructive Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
36. On an Aristotelian model, what predominates is the form or intellectual structure of the artifact. The matter plays a subordinate role and is only potentially some (determinate/determined) thing. The form is the essence of the thing. If individuals are regarded as the "matter" for social construction in this sense, then the model of society as artifact would seem to detract from the principally individualistic emphasis of the idea of emancipation.
37. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 10: "To describe the Nature of this Artificiall man, I will consider[:] First, the *Matter* thereof, and the *Artificer*, both of which is *Man*."
38. See also, Charles Taylor, "Atomism," in his *Philosophy and the Human Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
39. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 10. And yet, Hobbes feels the need to add a more than hundred-page addendum about religious doctrine and belief to his model state, deconstructing, as it were, his own claim that what binds men together in a commonwealth is their rational interest. See Tracy B. Strong, "How to Write Scripture: Words, Authority, and Politics in Thomas Hobbes," *Critical Inquiry* 20 (autumn 1993) for a discussion of the profound sense in which Hobbes "takes over the doctrine of Scripture" associated with a certain branch of Protestantism "and makes it central to his notion of civil authority" (p. 153).
40. Kant, "What Is Enlightenment?"
41. In the view of the German Enlightenment, for example, the emancipation of the subject calls for education not just on a professional or practical level, but education in the sense of *Bildung*. See, for example, Charles Taylor, "Aims of an Epoch."
42. Such a closure, however, would seem to be in tension with the equally modern idea of an asymptotic progress that is unlimited. I here agree with Blumenberg's view of the modern idea of progress advanced in Hans Blumenberg, *The Age Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1983).

43. Here we might distinguish between two kinds of makings, artistic and technical, which display two different kinds of purposiveness, immanent versus transcendent. On both models, the artifact achieves a kind of completion with the actualization of the structure projected by the idea of the maker, but we cannot properly speak of a teleological purposiveness in the case of the work of art. Technical production pursues a transcendent purpose in the sense that the purpose of the artifact lies outside of the artifact itself. A saw, for example, is good for the activity of sawing, and this is what determines whether a saw is a good saw. The rules for constructing a good saw are derived from this purpose external to the saw itself, that is, from activity of sawing. With artistic production, it is different. The purpose of a work of art is, according to an aesthetic approach, not definable in terms of an external purpose. According to Kant, the work of art has a "purposiveness without a purpose." The purpose of the work of art is also not commensurate with the intention of the artist. The work of art has an internal purposiveness, a completion that manifests itself in the unity and perfection of the work of art.

If the social artifact is understood to serve no transcendent goals, no end apart from the life of the whole, this means that it is understood very much like a work of art. If, on the other hand, society is understood to serve a purpose or purposes that are not immanent to the life of society as such, then it is conceived along the lines of a technical product. Presumably, the view that the political community serves a technical purpose, such as, for example, to safeguard individual rights, or to provide for the greatest economic well-being for the least advantaged groups in society, would place greater constraints upon the organization of society.

Both paradigms are to be found within the modern tradition. While Rousseau's idea of society is subject to different readings, his idea of the general will in the *Social Contract* is that of an end in itself, which constitutes the social order. For Rousseau, "the City is a moral person" that derives its unity from its own will. Hobbes, on the other hand, regards the state as a machine that is to serve the purpose of protecting the individual from the violence of his neighbors. Hobbes, of course, also regards the state as analogous to a person. Only he conceives of the human being as a machine and not as a self-determining being for the sake of this analogy with the state.

44. I here follow Taylor's distinction between "ontological" and "advocacy" issues in "Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate," in *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 181-3: "The ontological questions concern what you recognize as the factors you will invoke to account for social life. Or, put in the formal mode, they concern the terms you accept as ultimate in the order of explanation . . . Advocacy issues concern the morality or politics one adopts. . . . Taking an ontological position doesn't amount to advocating something; but at the same time, the ontological does help to define the options it is meaningful to support by advocacy. The latter connection explains how ontological theses can be far from innocent. Your ontological proposition, if true, can show that your neighbor's favorite social order is an impossibility or carries a price he or she did not count with."

45. In this context, see Isaiah Berlin, who explains liberalism's retreat from radical reconstruction, and its adoption of a conception of "human normalcy" against the background of the totalitarian threat implicit in the notion that society is an artifact. "Two Concepts of Liberty," in *Four Essays on Liberty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 165.

46. Charles Larmore, "Political Liberalism," in *The Morals of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 122. (Previously published in *Political Theory* 18, no. 3 [August 1990]: 339-60.) Larmore's insistence that "romantics can be liberals too" expresses the claim that liberalism can be neutral with regard to different ontologies.

47. Hobbes, for example, goes to great lengths in explaining to his readers that he is drawing on the individual man as a model for the construction of the Leviathan (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 9). Hobbes insists that he is only proceeding in accordance with common sense, but I would argue

that this is merely his rhetorical strategy for making an extraordinary set of new ideas palatable to his readers.

48. See, for example, Katerina Clarke, *Petersburg, the Crucible of Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), on the role of the avant-garde in the Russian revolution: "It is perhaps not surprising, then, that perceptual millenarianism in Russia coincided with a time of great interest in utopian fiction shading into science fiction fantasy literature. The possibility of seeing a new world *elsewhere*, which the prerevolutionary avant-garde erected into a radical epistemology, was, then, at that time far from their obsession alone" (pp. 46-7).

49. Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, trans. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby (1795; reprint, Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), 13.

50. *Ibid.*, 13.

51. Advocates of reform, such as Schiller, for example, shirk back from radical reconstruction precisely because they feel they have no idea of how the attempted changes will translate into the everyday structures of life.

52. Though Lefort gives an analysis that emphasizes the institution of power, his phenomenology of the totalitarian response is much the same as mine: "the reference to an empty place gives way to the unbearable image of a real vacuum. . . . In these extreme situations, representations which can supply an index of social unity and identity become invested with a fantastic power, and the totalitarian adventure is underway. . . . the similarity between the two [communism and fascism] is striking. Both attempt, in one way or another, to give power a substantial reality, to bring the principles of Law and Knowledge within its orbit, to deny social division in all its forms, and to give society a *body* once more." Lefort, *Democracy and Political Theory*, 233.

53. Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*. 2d ed. Edited by Robert C. Tucker (New York: Norton, 1978), 575.

54. *Ibid.*, 575.

55. Karl Marx, "Letter to Ruge," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*. 2d. ed. Edited by Robert C. Tucker, p. 12.

56. Neumann, *Permanent Revolution*, xviii.

57. See, for example, Hayek, *Road to Serfdom*, 159: "If one has not oneself experienced this process, it is difficult to appreciate the magnitude of this change of the meaning of words, the confusion which it causes, and the barriers to any rational discussion which it creates." See Clarke, *Petersburg*, chap. 9 "Promethean Linguistics," on Trotsky's theory of language. Interesting here is that Trotsky's approach to language seems to take up Wilhelm von Humboldt's conception of language as the "energeia," rather than the "ergon," of thought. Humboldt was the Prussian minister of education who initiated the liberal educational reforms, the institution of the modern German university that placed culture and philosophy at the center of education, and who instituted the German Gymnasium system.

58. Anthony Burgess, "Ingsoc Considered," in *George Orwell's 1984*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1987), 45.

59. See Gleason, *Totalitarianism*, 3 f., 83 ff., for a discussion of the tremendous significance and impact of Orwell's novel. "Nineteen Eighty-Four," writes Gleason, "was published simultaneously in the United States and the United Kingdom in June 1949. It has been constantly in print since its publication, translated into virtually every European and Asian language and must be one of the most widely read books in the history of the world."

60. An analysis of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that is in some ways similar to mine is given by Raymond Williams in *Culture and Society. 1880-1950* (New York: Harper, 1966). For a brilliant reading of Orwell's significance for the liberal imagination, also see Philip Rieff,

"George Orwell and the Post-Liberal Imagination," in *George Orwell's 1984*, ed. Bloom. Rieff's article first appeared in the *Kenyon Review* 19, no. 1 (winter 1954).

61. I therefore agree with what Claude Lefort, for example, says about the difference between a philosophical and a scientific approach to the social in "The Permanence of the Theologico-Political?" in his *Democracy and Political Theory*, 220-1: "The opposition between philosophy and science is one between two intellectual requirements. For science, knowledge finds its self-assurance by defining functional models; it operates in accordance with an ideal of objectivity which introduces a sovereign distance between the subject and the social. The externality of the knowing subject is of necessity combined with the idea that the social can stand outside itself. Conversely, any system of thought, which takes up the question of the institution of the social is simultaneously confronted with the question of its own institution. It cannot restrict itself to comparing structures and systems once it realizes that the elaboration of coexistence creates meaning, produces markers for distinguishing between true and false, just and unjust, and imaginary and real; and that it establishes the horizons of human beings' relations with one another and with the world. It attempts to explain itself and, at the same time, to explain its object."

62. This is not the same as saying that liberalism is in fact neutral in this respect.

63. By contrast, a humanist education, for example, is intended to communicate a shared standard of scientific and cultural knowledge achieved by society as a whole. Much hand-wringing goes on about educating citizens in liberal-democratic practice. But this is more a symptom of the liberal predicament rather than its solution.

64. cf. Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), chap. 1, on the modern "emancipation from meaning."

65. See, for example, John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 563: "The parties regard moral personality and not the capacity for pleasure and pain as the fundamental aspect of the self. They do not know what final aims persons have, and all dominant-end conceptions are rejected. . . . There is no more reason for the parties to agree to this criterion than to maximize any other particular objective. They think of themselves as beings who can and do choose their final ends."

66. See, for example, *ibid.*, 563: "The many associations of varying sizes and aims, being adjusted to one another by the public conception of justice, simplify decision by offering definite ideals and forms of life that have been developed and tested by innumerable individuals, sometimes for generations. Thus in drawing up our plan of life we do not start *de novo*; we are not required to choose from countless possibilities without given structure or fixed contours. . . . within the limits allowed by the principles of right, there need be no standard of correctness beyond that of deliberative rationality."

67. The view that totalitarianism represents a "nightmare" and a loss of reality is a persistent theme throughout the literature. George Kennan, for example, considers "the purest expression of the phenomenon . . . to have been rendered not in its physical reality but in its power as a dream, or a nightmare." Kennan regards "the fictional and symbolic images created by such people as Orwell or Kafka or Koestler" as representing totalitarianism more adequately than "the Soviet picture. . . [or] the Nazi picture as I have known them in the flesh." Quoted by Carl J. Friedrich, *Totalitarianism* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1954), 19-20. See also Gleason, *Totalitarianism*, 240, n. 13. As a longtime U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, Kennan was, of course, well placed to make such a judgment. In the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell refers constantly to the "nightmare" of totalitarianism: "What most afflicted him with the sense of nightmare was that he had never clearly understood *why* the huge imposture was undertaken." George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, in *George Orwell* (London: Secker and Warburg/Octopus, 1976), 789. And Robert Tucker wants to go so far as to discard the term "totalitarianism" altogether in favor

of "the nightmare state": "Although I will use the term 'totalitarianism' now and then, I'm not sure that it is a good one for scholarly purposes and I won't be bound by it. My real inclination is to drop Mussolini's neologism and use the phrase: 'the nightmare state.'" Robert Tucker, "Does Big Brother Really Exist?" in *1984 Revisited*, ed. Irving Howe (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), 90. This metaphorical construction of totalitarianism as a nightmare confirms that a reality-principle is at stake here: totalitarianism is thought to drag us into a certain groundlessness that is inherent in our own constitution.

68. What Philip Rieff says of Orwell in his brilliant essay, "George Orwell and the Post-Liberal Imagination," seems to me to apply to Larmore and the post-Kantian Rawls: "The tension of intelligence and morality has always described the liberal imagination. . . . [The] post-liberal imagination . . . not only proclaims the world meaningless but is very happy to do so" (p. 54). "George Orwell's active and compassionate rejection of this world that describes the old liberal imagination, coupled with his sympathetic analysis of the new temper of acceptance that describes the post-liberal imagination, make him the writer most worthy of attention at least for those imaginations still in process of transition" (pp. 46-7).

69. In his recent work, Rawls has abandoned this position and has moved in the direction advocated by Larmore. "I think of political liberalism as a doctrine that falls under the category of the political. It works entirely within that domain and does not rely on anything outside it." Rawls, "Reply to Habermas," in Rawls's *Political Liberalism* (1993; reprint, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 374. This is a striking passage, since it demands precisely the kind of disengagement of the political from its sources of meaning, which I take to be problematic. In the footnotes, Rawls refers to Larmore: "I do not know of any liberal writers of an earlier generation who have clearly put forward the doctrine of political liberalism. Yet it is not a novel doctrine. Two contemporaries who share with me this general view, if not all its parts, and who developed it entirely independently, are Charles Larmore . . . and the late Judith Shklar," p. 374.

70. "What is Neutrality?" in Larmore, *Patterns*, 47: "There remains one last but important observation that I must make about the liberal ideal of political neutrality," writes Larmore. "It would be misunderstood, if it were thought to minimize the significant role that public discussion (or "Öffentlichkeit") should play in a liberal political culture. In particular, the ideal of political neutrality does not deny that such discussion should encompass not only determining what are the probable consequences of alternative decisions and whether certain decisions can be neutrally justified, but also clarifying one's notion of the good life and trying to convince others of the superiority of various aspects of one's view of human flourishing. This ideal demands only that so long as some view about the good life remains undisputed, no decision of the state can be justified on the basis of its supposed intrinsic superiority or inferiority."

71. Larmore maintains that "Romantics can also be liberals." Larmore, "Political Liberalism," 146.

72. See Larmore, *Patterns of Moral Complexity*, chap. 1.

73. *Ibid.*, 17.

74. *Ibid.*, 40. The passage continues: "An investment banker will often be more interested in knowing precisely what the government's central bank will do about the money supply than in knowing merely that, whatever the government's decisions here, they will be morally correct." Though Larmore is sensitive to the commercialization of our life-world elsewhere, I would suggest that it is not insignificant that his example is drawn from economic practice where he cuts the distinction between the private and the political realm most sharply, excluding reflective judgment from the public and giving it greater scope in the private realm. For an alternative account of the distinctively Anglo-American idea of the rule of law which places a greater emphasis on incompletely theorized agreements and on casuistry or analogical reasoning, see Cass Sunstein, *Legal Reasoning and Political Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

Sunstein shows how the legal system avoids political conflict, not by reaching an "overlapping consensus" (Rawls) on the most abstract first principles such as the principles of autonomy or equality, but by "agreements on results and on low-level principles amid confusion or dissensus on large-scale theories." p. ix This occurs in the courts "at the point of application," just as Larmore takes it to occur in the case of moral, non-political judgments.

75. In this context, see also Larmore's remarks on Oakshott: "A failure to appreciate this point [the value of knowing in advance what government will do] seems to me to undermine Oakshott's praise of political elites who govern by uncoded know-how, by judgment and awareness of moral complexities, instead of public statutes." *Ibid.*, 41.

76. I am indebted to a conversation with Meili Steele for this insight into Larmore's use of history at this crucial juncture in his argument against the communitarians. See Steele's *Theorizing Textual Subjects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) for a powerful account of democratic storytelling that shows in detail how reflective judgment plays a crucial role in public conversation and in the formation of democratic identities. Steele examines the recent debate on liberal education "both as a theoretical [one] as well as an ethical/political conflict about the reproduction of the subjects of democracy." *Ibid.*, 204.

77. Larmore, "Political Liberalism," 144.

78. Claude Lefort, *The Political Forms of Modern Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), 2.

79. See note 69.

*Michael Halberstam is assistant professor of philosophy at the University of South Carolina. He is the author of The Meaning of Totalitarianism for the Modern Conception of Politics (Yale University Press, forthcoming), which takes its departure from Hannah Arendt's political thought. He is working on an edited volume, entitled Totalitarianism and Modernity, with contributors from different disciplines (comparative literature, history, philosophy, political science). His current interests are in the philosophical problem that political judgment presents and in the idea of culture as it emerges out of the German philosophical tradition since the late eighteenth century.*