Meditations on Hierarchy, Equality, and Their Dynamic Interaction

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Early Developments

Different levels of resource availability, mobility, and population give rise to the two basic systems for the sharing of resources, hierarchy and equality.[1] Societies confronting mixed sets of circumstances often utilize both by stratifying them or grafting features of one onto the other. The present analysis will compare the values of hierarchical societies and those of egalitarian societies to clarify the dynamics of each and the relations of the two.

Egalitarian societies, common with low population density and mobility, arise where resources allow a small-scale society with nuclear families to maintain itself through the collection or processing of resources by cooperating individuals. They prize skill, keen observation, exploration of new territory, willingness to cooperate, persuasion, and sharing. The nominal, elected head makes decisions together with a council. Conflict is resolved by the splitting and distancing of the factions.[2] While "stateless, food-gathering" societies"[3] extend full equality only to men, they often recognize women's economic contributions, which include collecting and preparing food and creating and repairing tools, by according them a significant civic role as advisors. Women possess much control over their reproductive and marital behavior, often marrying men who wish to join their family working group. Mobility and the lack of inheritable goods discourage offspring. Monumentality is invested in skill sets and their communication to the next generation, mapping and other observations, and oral repositories of wisdom. The deity may be a wide-ranging, amorphous one or may be found in multiple natural phenomena.

Herding, the husbandry of a domesticated resource that is moved through space by a skilled group with a leader, bridges the two forms of organization.

Hierarchy arises when resources are scarce or difficult enough of access or production to threaten survival, usually when a society is attached to a territory, or in an abundance allowing great accumulations. One or a small number of individuals gains control of the resources and the workforce required to produce or process and accumulate them (Hodder, 37-42, 294-97; de Waal 1982). The result is celebrated in monumental buildings for resources (granaries, warehouses), the government distributing them (palaces), their defense (fortresses, castles), and the all-powerful deity granting them (temples, churches). Leisure denotes the power to delegate work, epitomized in the throne's seated position manifesting the king's authority over the entire society.[4] The top leader (or rank) is sustained by lieutenants, who if excellent might replace him and if mediocre might weaken the hierarchy. With loyalty acknowledged through ritualized behaviors and utterances as the chief criterion, the leadership parcels out the resources to those lower down. They are called upon in turn for work and defense details. Polygyny is common, each woman monopolized by a high-ranked male signifying his power to give or deny her to those below him.

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[1] Their characteristics are succinctly depicted in Pirandello's *La giara* (The Jar); for discussion, see Carroll 2018.

[2] For here and below, see esp. Smuts; Meeker, Barlow and Lipset; Murphy and Murphy, esp. pp. 59-79; Collier and Rosaldo.

[3] The term has generally substituted 'hunter-gatherer'.

[4] For authority vs. power, see de Waal 1987, 423-24; cf. Carroll 1989b.

In the West, hierarchy took hold in North Africa, South Central Europe, and the Near East with the rise of agriculture, especially in fluvial plains requiring water control in addition to plowing and planting (Hodder, 44-71; Kramer). Women's gathering and processing of crops was centralized in a *domus*; as vegetation and the *domus* gained power, female symbols were created to embody it (Hodder, 61-70; Meeker et al., 23). Myths of strong goddesses arose; however, their power was appropriated or suppressed by the myths' male figures (Stone, esp. 118, 127-28, 286-87, 296). Female images also expressed matrilineal inheritance of agricultural property based on the certainty of maternal identification. This was not Johann Jacob Bachofen's 'matriarchy' but matrilineality and/or matrilocality (Vidal-Naquet; Divale, 1-8) and was soon disrupted by the male hierarchy's limiting inheritance to the legitimate sons of a given male (Mair; Leach 1966a; Leach 1966b). The wife was restricted to raising children and maintaining family bonds, with transgressions of the marital bond harshly punished (Cantarella, 229-44; Ruggiero, 45-69). Hierarchy's functioning was symbolized in the story of Lucifer. Originally an interpretation of the planet Venus's movements, it was recast by Sumerians and others as that of a male being whose attempt to rise above the supreme deity ends with his being cast into the deepest netherworld. The Book of Genesis similarly recounts the casting out of the Garden of Eden of Adam and Eve for wishing to rival God.

Medieval and Renaissance Italy

The Roman Empire's decamping to Byzantium opened a period of rapidly evolving variations on hierarchical and egalitarian forms of government in northern Italy. Padua, an important commercial and military center, was destroyed after centuries of war in the early seventh century by the Lombards (Ventura 1989, 17-23). Its inhabitants fled to the Venetian lagoon, completing the shift of activity there catalyzed by the wars. A local military leader, the *dux*, was established on islands with a high bank, a *rivo alto*. The lagoon and the fortification of the town's seaward side with a citadel and churches exempted it from conquest by the Lombards, Hungarians, and Carolingians in the sixth through ninth centuries (Lane 1973, 2-18; Agazzi, 13-20, 23). In the hinterland, jurisdiction was fragmented among Byzantium, the Lombard and later Carolingian rulership, local lords, and the bishopric of Padua. Reestablished in the eighth century, the bishopric possessed great swaths of urban and agricultural land and the favor of the Holy Roman Empire. The variety of landlords and freeholdings allowed peasants and villages to govern themselves through the *vicinanza* (village council of heads of families), which elected magistrates and a representative to the local lord and formed federations with other villages. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the peasants' position was further improved by the competition for their labor spurred by an increasing population's requirement of food.

In Venice's earliest days, its inhabitants reconciled features of egalitarianism with features of hierarchy in their government. The popular assembly or *arengo* chose the doge and approved laws which, together with their city's sovereignty, demonstrated their commitment to the ascending theory locating authority in the populace. On the other hand, their belief in the divine origin of governing power showed acceptance of the descending theory (Lane 1973, 90). Venetian governance subsequently evolved through several phases. From the ninth through the twelfth centuries, the *dux* was "a monarch of unlimited powers" residing in the fortress, which had become attached to the basilica and housed government meeting halls. Ducal families' attempts to create dynasties triggered revolts by rivals wishing equal access to power. The assembly's violence toward the doge in adversity reached assassination. Such extremes resulted in reforms curtailing

the powers both of the doge and of the assembly through councils and committees (Lane 1973, 89-99, quotation 90; Madden, 54-57). To resolve continued conflicts generated by a growing populace in a small space, the Venetians invented means to distribute offices and a sequence of committees to elect the doge (Lane 1973, 109-11), resisting the trend among Italian republics to turn to strongmen to control the crises provoked by the period's wars. They ruthlessly suppressed the one significant patrician plot to overthrow a doge, creating the Council of Ten to punish its participants, which then assumed internal policing of the patriciate to maintain equality among its members (Lane 1973, 114-17).

The mainland cities were growing and developing trade through proto-manufacturing. By the thirteenth century, Padua founded its *comune*. Supplanting the bishopric, it aimed at controlling the rural nobility and freeing itself from the Holy Roman Empire. A ring of walls protected the cathedral and the Palazzo della Ragione uniting government and market (Checchini, 151-53; Ventura 1989, 25-26). Among the largest civic buildings of its age, the Palazzo reified the period's dual tendencies to centralization and sharing of governance. Similarly, the astrological frescoes decorating its meeting hall, ideated by the Averroist Pietro d'Abano, reconciled the quiddity of earthly beings with influences from on high (Mor et al.; Barzon, 17-18). The same years saw the rise of the university and the preaching of St. Anthony, to preserve whose body the basilica was constructed.

As the century advanced, the strongman Ezzelino da Romano took Padua over with the assistance of the Empire. At mid-century, the city freed itself and returned to communal governance. Its body politic, composed largely of the professional class that in urban societies fulfills the role of hunter-gatherers--notaries, judges, and professors--set the Roman Republic as its model and worked for independence from both the Empire and the Church. However, the alternation between egalitarian and hierarchical governance asserted itself in 1318 when internal conflict and external war opened the way to the strongman Jacopo da Carrara, whose family consolidated its ruling position over the next twenty years (Kohl, 39-67; Ventura 1964, 5-21, 36-37). Yet counterpoise was not lacking. During that period, Marsilius of Padua completed the *Defensor pacis* theorizing, for the first time in Christian Europe, the independence of the civil state from ecclesiastical authority (Ventura 1989, 26-27; Marsilius of Padua). By 1405, the extensive state created by the Carrara was taken over by Venice, which had already superceded Padua as a port.

International commerce was integral to the hybridization of hierarchical and egalitarian forms characterizing the republics of Venice, Genoa, and (with some complications) Florence, turned outward to the sea by difficult topography. Venice, for example, developed regular commercial galley routes throughout the Mediterranean and to England and the Low Countries (Ventura 1989, 27-31; Lane 1973, 118-52 and map 9). The need to pull together in developing and maintaining long-distance trade fostered the *fraterna* or brothers' common ownership of the patrimony (Lane 1966a). Lengthy absences on long journeys of uncertain outcome also allowed a relatively large role for women, including marital community property and bilateral inheritance (Genoa) or the wife/widow's possession of her dowry (Venice), from which a merchant husband (or his family) could borrow (Hughes 1975; Mueller, 104-5, 395; Sanuto, e.g. 12: 16; 29: 542, 567; Venice, Archivio di Stato, *Archivio Gradenigo Rio Marin*, busta 60, fasc. 1). On the other hand, coordination of multiple family members and agents in a far-flung network that cycled profits into new ventures and loans was best conducted by the patriarch or a brother to whom the operation was delegated (Lane 1966b, 56-68; de Roover, 1-4, 108-41). Complicated finances called for reliable patrilineal inheritance to preserve the patrimony against women's tendency to disperse

their legacies (Hughes 1975, 13-16). The increased demand of international commerce created hierarchy-producing pressures on crafts such as woolworking. Earlier conducted on a small scale for local consumption by family members in the home, they developed into proto-industrial operations conducted by employees in a workshop. Men were thus divided into the few who became important entrepreneurs and the many who became wage earners, while women were excluded (Howell, 9-43; Molà, 3-14). Local exceptions could arise: the cultivation of silkworms improved the financial condition of peasant women (Carroll 2014, 176).

Merchant families in a patrician class with egalitarian internal relations governed the republic's populace in hierarchical fashion through their assembly and its committees and a relatively weak head. The Venetian Republic fixed its patriciate in 1297, recorded in the Golden Book. It carefully limited committee membership by the obligation to serve when elected, the exclusion of close relatives from contemporaneous service, a time limit on service, and a waiting period prior to re-election to the same office. It excluded those with close relatives in the clergy from decisions involving the Church. Decision-making was at times restricted to executive committees or even their heads. However, as limited as the number might be, it was always a multiple. No individual was allowed to decide for the republic. And no individual patrician was exempt from its decisions (Labalme, Sanguineti White, and Carroll, Chapter Three). Aggregation, the inclusion of a marginalized group in a role supportive of the established group (Fox), solved the question of youth entering governance. To young patricians was allotted the committee on maritime commerce because its decisions were even more important to their fortunes than to senior men's. However, it reported to the Senate.

Especially illuminative of the republics' hybridization is the provision of grain, with Genoa's permanent and Venice's early lack of grain-growing hinterland and Florence's small and soon outstripped one. The state relied on private merchants, often patricians, to import it; initially they stored it in the warehouses in their homes. With "attractive, guaranteed prices" set by a government commission, Venice made itself a central market for grain (Lane 1973, 58-60, quotation 59), with storage at Rialto and near Piazza San Marco. When Florence, which early on could satisfy its grain needs from the contado, faced shortages in the late thirteenth century population boom, a church in the heart of the city, Orsanmichele, was converted into a granary. In times of severe shortages, Florence imported grain from Sicily. Thus grain provisioning intercut public and private, central and scattered, profit and welfare, religious and civic.

As the city-states developed into regional states in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the patrician class sought a governance model in the Roman interlocking of republic and empire, imposing an increasingly centralized, hierarchical structure on the hinterland state that also had implications for the capital (King). Venice's Council of Ten, for example, imposed a hierarchical structure on the mainland justice system to preserve Venice's honor (read: superiority) vis à vis the formerly independent entities, soon applying its increased power to the patriciate's functioning (Ventura 1964, 39-46, 51-55; Viggiano, 179-274). Unease with the decrease of freedom may have augmented the appeal of Lucretius's falsely scientific claim of the random action of the *inclinamen* ('swerve') in his *De rerum natura*, re-discovered in the fifteenth century. It provided both the dominant and the subjugated with a rationale for the "freedom to rule flexibly" at a time when the Medici "were flexibly adjusting the laws to increase their power" (Brown, 28 and cf. 37). Humanism's emphasis on men and masculinity corresponded with the move toward patrilineality. Hierarchalization also marked the functioning of the Church. In the wake of the Council of Cardinals' assertion of its authority over the contending claims to the papacy, the pope it elected initiated a trend to top-down papal power (Oakley). International in scope yet based in Italy and

with a head who was elected yet held great power while in office, the Church offered lucrative benefices, a centralized system, and moral authority useful in compelling behavior (Hallman).

Four challenges further disrupted the fragile counterpoise of equality and hierarchy. The Turks' military expansion westward, beginning with the 1454 conquest of Byzantium, harassed Europe's eastern edge and produced major losses (Lane 1973, 234-49, 355-74). The Habsburgs and Valois invaded the Italian peninsula in wars for control of it, Charles VIII reaching Naples in 1494 and Louis XII in 1499 conquering Milan. A vast demographic increase reversed the depopulation of the Black Death (Herlihy), creating competition for resources. The Portuguese circumnavigation of Africa captured the commerce in Asian luxury goods previously carried by Italian and especially Venetian merchants. In Venice, the loss of income, combined with war expenses, resulted in numerous bankruptcies (Lane 1987). Nonetheless, Venice continued to press outward against other states on the mainland. The warrior pope Julius II organized them and the nation-states into the League of Cambrai, whose defeat of Venice in 1509 at Agnadello caused it to abandon the mainland state. Through years of war, Venice would regain most of it but would expand no further.

Under such pressures, even the Venetian patriciate gave way to hierarchicalization. Warfare concentrated decision-making in several councils including the Council of Ten and even its three Heads (Gilbert, 1-3, 16-17, 26-29). With patrician men pressed into marriages to well-dowered non-patrician brides, the Ten added requirements to the entry of sons into the Golden Book including proof of the parents' marriage and of the mother's patrician status (Crescenzi, 6, 15, 26, 110, 191-92, 198-202, 241, 254). A loan to the state became required for candidacy for office (Labalme, Sanguineti White, and Carroll, 265-74; Sanuto, 33: 162, 258, 260-61; 36: 609, 613-14; 41: 78). One of the few sources of wealth was the grain trade; merchants who had made fortunes in it took advantage of hierarchicalization, including Nicolò Tron and Andrea Gritti. Both were elected doge and both utilized monumental architecture to flaunt their high status, Tron with an enormous tomb and Gritti with architecture in the Roman style (Olivieri; Schulz, 44-64; Tafuri). As Venice regained its mainland dominion under Gritti's direction, the Ten assumed permanent control of the mainland's justice system, marginalizing the State's Attorneys Office that had provided less wealthy patricians with an important role (Viggiano, 275-318). The Republic, needing to ally with the papacy after Agnadello, called upon affluent patricians' contacts in the Church, where their families had attained high offices from the fifteenth century (Gilbert, 103-10).

In the private sphere, patrician youth developed festive *compagnie della calza*, their outfit with its distinctive stocking colorfully imitating military garb. They gave elaborate parties for weddings and Carnival and hosted foreign dignitaries, with the permission of government bodies (Venturi, 3-157, 21, 33-35, 55-63; Casini). While most were limited to patricians, some saw the wisdom of aggregation and included a few *popolani*, mainland nobles serving in Venice's army, and even a Roman Jewish papal banker (Venturi, 137-38; Carroll 2000). Some leveraged their unity to propel a member onto the maritime commerce committee (Carroll 2016, 107-46). They commonly married one another's relatives, one of the ways in which dowries were manipulated to assign a greater share of wealth to males. Others included fathers' decreasing the portion of the patrimony allotted to dowries, excluding land or entailing it to the woman's male heirs, and pressuring daughters to enter the convent or even to remain single at home (Carroll 2017, 103-6, 112-13; Hughes 1996, 14, 19-20). Sons too were subject to restrictions, as increasingly only one brother was allowed to marry (Davis) and to a woman chosen for lineage reasons. But both married and single men could form extra-marital relationships and families with underclass women

(Carroll 2017, 103, 109). Patrician women who attempted the same were severely punished (Ruggiero, 63).

Conversely, the lowerclass freedom to form relationships based on emotion traveled up to the aristocracy in the cult of love that developed in the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries, as Ruggiero has shown (33-36, 65-67, 155-58). The trope that love is an all-powerful god whose commands cannot be denied lent itself handily to a justification of personal choice against the grain of a command from a higher-ranked authority. Thus in the make-believe world of comedy, from Ariosto's *Suppositi* through Giovan Maria Cecchi's *La stiava*, young aristocrats bent their elders to their choice of spouse by consumating the relationship, which required marriage to repair family honor. In the real world, aristocratic women's choice of spouse for (apparently) emotional reasons occurred sparingly and in the absence of male relatives or in a second marriage (Carroll 2017, 109-11).

With the 1529 Peace of Bologna extending the Holy Roman Empire's control over the peninsula except the Venetian Republic and the Papal States, hierarchicalization and stratification took permanent shape. Venice tightened its control of the mainland cities and their commerce, urban aristocracies distanced themselves from commerce and took fixed form, city was privileged over country, and the justice system--except the feudal administration of justice attached to mainland properties that wealthy patricians purchased--became centralized (Ventura 1964; Zamperetti). Peasants' efforts to utilize the *visinanza* and the *territorio* (a legal, governing entity comprising the region around a town) to protest unfair treatment by the Republic and powerful families were rebuffed and the rural governance bodies were ignored or suppressed (Favaretto; Beolco 2009; Archivio di Stato, Padua, *Archivio Notarile*, busta 1118, fols. 282r-v, 302r; busta 1335, fols. 305r-v, 312r-15r, 339r; busta 1336, fols. 154r-v, 317r-v, 478r-80r; busta 2727, fols. 36r-v, 236r-37v; busta 2732, fols. 45r-46r; busta 2734, fols. 373r-75v; busta 2736, fols. 388r-90r; busta 4834, fol. 400v). Added to Venice's fragmentation and hierarchicalization of peasant labor and communities, this reduced the peasant class to a passive dependence preventing the violent uprisings of other regions (Viggiano, 242-43). In 1525, German and Austrian peasants rose up to claim the evangelical equality preached by the Reform movement (Blickle; Rebel, 3-7, 22-24, 30-32, 37-39, 126, 130, 146-47, 163). Defeated by force of arms, they took their revenge two years later when, as foot soldiers in the imperial army, they pillaged Rome. Paduan peasants' consonant appeal was brought to Cardinal Francesco Cornaro in 1528 by the Paduan playwright Angelo Beolco who, as his peasant character Ruzante, prodded the aristocracy to recognize a universal human equality also serving his interests as the illegitimate son of an urban patrician and domestic servant. He promises that if the peasants make a law as the city people have, it will be "derta e giusta e gualiva" (right and just and equal) and there will be peace and they will not again sack Rome because "a' sarón una cosa miesma" (we will all be one same thing) (Beolco 1967e, 1217, 1219).

Venice dealt with Padua's noble and higher popular classes more severely to control the risks posed by their earlier independence. It imprisoned the leaders of the 1509 revolt in cages in the central granary previously filled with grain grown in their territory and hanged the most important in St. Mark's Square. Beolco and his troupe, invited to perform in Venice from 1520 to 1526, did not return after the Republic's alignment with France in the latter year. Sources of wealth were removed. Venetian patricians acquired much of their rich agricultural land from the old Paduan nobility, strapped for cash. Manufacturing was centralized in the capital, depriving Padua (and other mainland towns) of an artisanal class and entrepreneurial proprietors. Rules limiting professorships to Paduans were relaxed, resulting in the appointment of foreigners such as Galileo.

While maritime Venice remained a republic, Florence and Milan, more tied to the land, evolved toward princely states in the fifteenth century and became dependencies of the Holy Roman Empire in the sixteenth. The primary banking family of Florence, the Medici, achieved the papacy twice in this period and placed a daughter in the French royal line. Mantua and Ferrara, largely lacking in commerce, had never emerged from the earlier feudal state. Their princes joined the race to hierarchy, appropriating nobles' properties and reducing them to courtier or even buffoon status, the princes being overcome by more powerful rulers so quickly that warrior fathers (Gianfrancesco Gonzaga and Alfonso I d'Este) were succeeded by art patron sons (Federico II Gonzaga, Ercole II d'Este).

A final burst of egalitarianism occurred at the transition from the sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries as hierarchy was hardening. Galileo with his followers espoused Ruzante's peasants as unblinkered testifiers to the accuracy of his telescope's revelations of the heavens (Carroll, unpublished) but was punished by the Church for undermining the Biblical authority on which its hierarchy was based. His friend and colleague Paolo Sarpi revived the Marsilius-conciliarist position in his defense of the Venetian Republic's independence from the authority of the Church, subsequently surviving a Church-inspired assassination attempt (Bouwsma 1968). Sarpi's important treatise on the Council of Trent decrying Church strategies for controlling secular governments was too dangerous to be published in Venice but was in London, where it inspired many political thinkers (Cozzi 1956, 1978; Riverso).

Renaissance England

Equality and hierarchy were interlaced in northern Europe in the same periods. The Welsh Tudors, taking over the English throne in 1485, marginalized the established nobility while advancing lower-ranked men of talent (Gunn 2016). One, Thomas More, while on a trade mission to the duchy of Burgundy, imagined a society layering an enlightened class of austere equality and self-government with a crude underclass that fought their wars for them and a distant overlord (Carroll 2012). Burgundy, inherited by Charles (later emperor), was peppered with port cities that had traded for generations with the Italian republics and were beginning to share in Asian commerce through the Fugger bankers' copper (Mathew, 5-6, 15-16). Apparently made known to Beolco by the son of the Venetian ambassador to England who was a friend of More's, *Utopia* seems to have inspired his vision of the Paduan countryside and its peasants as a rural utopia where a common human nature makes all equal (Carroll 1989a). In dueling treatises on free will of the 1520s reprising the theological geography of the British Pelagius's espousal of free will versus the Egyptian Augustine's of predestination, Erasmus of Rotterdam accepted the Catholic Church's combination of egalitarian free will with hierarchical structure, while Martin Luther chose the flip side with predestination and the priesthood of the believer. Henry VIII, coping with both an eldest brother whose importance as crown prince was bolstered by the Welsh myth of Arthur and an elder sister, asserted his topping of the hierarchy by ridding himself of the pope, his wives, and his councillors.

A contemporary of Galileo and Sarpi, whose grandfather was a farmer and whose father a wool trader (Fallow), grew up in a rural town and later moved to London. He began a dual authorial life as a poet with the earl of Southampton as patron and an actor in a troupe performing for audiences joining aristocratic and popular components. Later he became part-owner of an important theater under royal patronage. While Shakespeare's works display an appreciation for

both equality and hierarchy, the former was greater in the early plays.[5] They drew on folk tales and, laughing more with than at them, involved lively rustics played by the clown-actor Will Kemp, who knew Continental comedy and likely even Ruzante (Artese, 4-14, 29-50, 79-117; Pazzaglia; Duncan-Jones). Their aristocratic young men look for access to the male hierarchy, which they privilege over women except those who, with a relationship read as love, provide it through male relatives. The senior males, in turn, look to virtuous young men to solidify their status and provide a descent line, as Messer Nicia did with Callimaco in Machiavelli's *Mandragola*. The plays conclude by reconciling egalitarian justice with hierarchical authority by correlating level of virtue with level of achieved status conferred by an authority.

In *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Valentine on his own initiative seeks his fortune in Milan, where he and Silvia, the daughter of the duke, fall in love. The duke having pledged her to a weak and compliant favorite, they plan a self-authorized marriage through elopement. Valentine's friend Proteus, who stays home for his love Julia, is sent by his father to Milan where he attempts to gain both Silvia and the duke's favor by revealing the elopement to him. The duke exiles Valentine for countering his authority over his daughter, in the mentality of the time a hologram for his authority over the state (Carroll 1989b). Valentine lives his exile in Mantua, where love-inspired violations of hierarchy have turned other gentlemen into outlaws (as actors without patrons had been in England). When Silvia, by traveling to meet him, exposes herself to Proteus's attempt to violate her, Valentine regains the duke's favor and her hand by saving her, generously leveraging his success to pardon for the other exiles and forgiving a repentant Proteus. Valentine's virtues, recognized by fellow outlaws who elect him their leader, are acknowledged by the duke, the established head of state, who aggregates him into Milan's hierarchy as his heir-apparent, while Valentine aggregates his companions into his own embryonic subhierarchy.

In *Taming of the Shrew*, Baptista Minola generates the conflict between hierarchy and merit by insisting that his elder (but ill-tempered) daughter Kate be married before his younger (lovely and apparently docile) daughter Bianca. Baptista then resolves it and maintains male authority by imposing upon Kate a husband with an even more aggressive attitude, who achieves his own ambition of wealth through a wife by granting the wish of Baptista, who provides both his daughter's dowry and tacit permission to treat her as roughly as he wishes. Bianca attracts the meritorious Lucentio, but, having attained the status of married woman, shows a temperament similar to Kate's. Kate regains a position of personal power by aligning herself with the patriarchy in enforcing wifely submission in other wives, presumably including Bianca.

Shakespeare's choice of Italian cities may suggest additional tributes to hierarchical authority. All had been or were princely states dependent upon the empire. His reference to the emperor's court in Milan calls upon the complexities of Milan's history. An imperial feud, it had as its last Italian dukes the Sforza, with Charles V allowing Francesco Maria to retain his title even after defeating him in the wars of the 1520s, only at his death in 1535 appointing a governor. The Gonzaga of Mantua, raised from marquises to dukes by Charles V, maintained their small state's independence through its strategic location (Rodriguez-Salgado), because of which it also harbored many exiles from Milan and the Venetian Republic, including the Veronese Valentine. Verona, a former imperial feud and a major princely state under the Scala, was the last of the rebel cities to be retaken by Venice in the Cambrai wars and its gentlemanly class largely still held imperial titles. *Taming*'s Padua, also in origin an imperial feud, had seen its communal government taken over by the Carrara lords. *Taming*'s women, however, might have found closer antecedents in England. Kate, like Katherine of Aragon, had had a forceful husband imposed on her, while

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Bianca (Blanche or White), like the Virgin Queen Elizabeth, attracted many suitors. The plays' somewhat dated Italian references point to various sources, possibly woolsellers including his father and Englishmen who had studied in Padua (Jeffrey; Woolfson). When the Wriothesleys became earls of Southampton, the town was a northern terminus of the Venetian galleys whose merchants brought luxury imports and purchased English wool (Rowse, 1-2, 68, 199; Carroll 2000, 2016, 107-46). The appeal of the empire may have reflected the golden prospect of Mary Tudor's Spanish marriage alliance.

Hostility to the remaining Italian republic emerges in *The Merchant of Venice*, whose patrician Antonio, while genteelly attentive to friendship, makes ruinous judgments about commerce and finance. He is saved by a mainland woman whom fortune has made an only child and thus heiress and by fortune's saving his ships. The fantastic ending barely masks the recent vanquishing of this commercial and manufacturing rival by the English who, by Shakespeare's time, had taken over not only Venetians' northern commerce but even their Mediterranean commerce (Tosi; Brown; Fusaro, 39-64, 289-91). The English were also developing ventures in the American territories that they had employed the Venetian navigator Giovanni Cabotto to explore, in which Wriothsley invested, and gaining strength in wool cloth production and publishing, as Sarpi's text shows. In *Henry IV, Part 1*, Shakespeare's valedictory to his early interests and fellows, Falstaff boasts of his prowess (2.4.174-200), increasing the number of miscreants he has beaten from two to eleven, apparently an inversion of Ruzante's false claim of 100 adversaries to justify his failure to fight with which Beolco closed his widely-published *Parlamento* (Beolco 1967b, 539-41; Baldini). While the Paduan multiplies the number of adversaries who have beaten him, the Englishman multiplies the number of adversaries he has beaten.

With his ownership stake in the Globe, Kemp's substitution by the fool-actor Robert Armin, and royal patronage of the playwright's troupe, Shakespeare's comedy shifts to (self-)punishment underpinned by an acceptance of the injustices generated by hierarchy including the marginalization of the voice speaking truth to power or the stigmatization of the speaker as crazy (Gurr, 85-119; Van Es 2013, esp. 230, 2015).

Othello's opening scenes (1.2.93-99) backlight both a republic's weakness in its divided authority and an absolute commander's excess or abuse in imposing hierarchy (Drakakis). "[T]hree great ones of the city" (the three Heads of the Ten?) have failed to convince the autocratic foreigner Othello, whom their own inability to lead their forces has required them to hire, to reverse his placement of the poorly qualified Cassio over the senior Iago (1.1.8, 16-31). But Othello himself has betrayed faith and state in entering Venetian service. Did he do so to escape the absolute authority of Moslem rulers or to assume it himself sooner than in his home state or in a larger foreign state? He enacts it in giving Cassio undeserved rank and marrying Desdemona without Brabanzio's consent. Iago attempts to avenge his betrayal by leveraging Brabanzio's, but the call to defend Cyprus intervenes to reinforce the male hierarchy and deflect revenge onto the woman. As Othello departs, Brabanzio's warning to him of Desdemona's possible future betrayal communicates that her betrayal of his paternal authority has freed him from a duty to defend her should Othello punish her (1.3.290). Brabanzio's membership in the Senate illuminates the metaphor of woman and especially wife as hologram of the body politic: the lack of government control over Othello as a general repeats Brabanzio's lack of paternal control over his daughter, who passes to the absolute authority of her husband as Cyprus passed to Moslem rule.

Details of Venetian history pixilate the text. Brabanzio's name echoes the duchy of Brabant in the Burgundian Netherlands, Venice's trade with it now lost and its role as a founding feud of

the Habsburgs being lost through its adherence to the rebelling United Provinces. The Barbary coast (*Othello* 1.1.109, 4.3.25, 32), where Venetians developed a now-abandoned lucrative trade as their northern commerce was declining, was celebrated in a popular song quoted in Beolco's best-known play, *Anconitana* (Beolco 1967d, 814-15, 2.4.54-55). References to the Frezzeria ('arrow market', Englished as Sagittary [Jeffrey]), astutely play on Venice's centralized government functions by choosing this street off St. Mark's Square with its emphasis on war over the factual Ducal Palace and Rialto offices. Iago's Spanish name connects him with Venice's most important ally in the defense of the Mediterranean from Turkish aggression; he craftily assumed effective control of the situation despite his lower status as the Spanish commanded the fleet at Lepanto despite contributing only half the number of ships as the Venetians who had earlier dominated the region. Turkish troops, though not a general, had been hired by the Senate after Agnadello. Headquartered in Padua, they fought for the reconquest of the rich farmland near Padua and Verona (Sanuto, 11: 355, 504, 511, 519, 636). Their civilian overseer was the great Polo Capello, himself under the general overseer Andrea Gritti, both of whose families had extensive holdings near Verona. The Turkish soldiers' prowess was so great that they were praised by the pope, while the king of France boasted of them to Henry VIII; they grew rich and arrogant, one even wearing a robe with ducal sleeves (Sanuto, 10: 560, 582; 11: 146, 273, 355, 504, 572, 730). Their *condottiere* (military head) was a Christian and a leader of a small but strategic Venetian town on the Dalmatian coast bounding Turkish-held territory among whose officials he had relatives (Sanuto, 3: 1377). Prior to Agnadello, the Ten had imprisoned him in Verona, probably as a rebel and, once released, he instigated his town's threat to rebel from Venetian rule, which caused Venice to banish him and to send a governor, Alvise Capello, chosen by the Heads of the Ten (Sanuto, 4: 442, 7: 634, 8: 19, 30, 161). After Agnadello, however, his recruitment of Turkish troops led the Ten to hire and even knight him and give him a patrician robe of cloth of gold (Sanuto, 9: 124, 425, 507). But his and his men's arrogance and aggression led to complaints and episodes of violence (Sanuto, 10: 560; 11: 134, 146). Returning to Dalmatia to recruit further Turkish cavalry, he killed the Turkish governor of a nearby fortress town and himself was then killed, by the victim's nephew or his town's populace (Sanuto, 12: 263, 517; 13: 364, 402, 416). His story could have made its way to England with Carlo Capello, the last sixteenth-century Venetian ambassador to the Crown, one of whose final acts was to send word of Elizabeth's birth (Sanuto, 58: 738-39).

    Hamlet is scaffolded with issues of hierarchy. The palimpsest to the play's dynamic lies in the fraternal sharing of noble titles in northern Europe together with the elective nature of the Danish monarchy: while Hamlet *père* and his brother Claudius were equal as princes, Hamlet achieved higher status by winning the election to the throne. That unspoken victory was the overture to Hamlet *père*'s winning of the war pact into which he was goaded by the king of Norway (1.1), increasing his territory and further raising his status. Claudius, subsequent to this reminder of his own loss, murders his brother, takes over his throne, and marries his widow. This self-authorized expansion of the fraternal sharing of titles, at odds with the Danish evolution toward a hereditary monarchy through the election of the deceased monarch's eldest son, leaves Hamlet *fils* in an ambiguous position. Related ambiguities swirled around Elizabeth's cousin James, married to Anne of Denmark, as he aimed to expand his territory beyond baronial Scotland and of whom, in his success, the English would metaphorically become 'children'. With women's loyalty to men cast as both a marker and a constituent of male status, Hamlet's fixation on it is emblematic of his own ambiguous status with regard to the kingship. His cruel treatment of Ophelia asserts his superior status at least to her who, as a woman in love, is defenseless and whose male relatives

lack the status to punish or promote him. Ironically, his killing of her father gains her brother popular support for the kingship (4.2, vv. 98-108). Hamlet's sole route to higher status passes through Claudius, either with his favor or with Hamlet's ridding the throne of him, a conflict similar to that of James with Elizabeth, executioner of his mother. Ambiguity is resolved by death's leveling of hierarchical distinctions: the fool is put in the same condition as the king, Alexander is turned to soil that may be used to stop a bunghole (5.1). Felling the Danes (5.2), death clears the way for the nephew of the erstwhile king of Norway to close in triumph the play that his uncle had opened in defeat, beginning a new cycle.

In the segment probably written by Shakespeare, the co-authored *Thomas More* implicitly and shockingly juxtaposes More's speech convincing the crowd that loyalty to the king will save them with More's later execution by that same king, Henry VIII, for refusing loyalty to him in favor of his conscience.

The English expanded their American settlements into colonies whose inhabitants developed their own governing institutions and depended heavily on international commerce. Tired of the loss of their English rights, they attempted to persuade Parliament and Crown to restore them (Pincus, esp. 8-9, 43-44). Their assertions having fallen on deaf ears, in a magnificent gesture of self-authorization that Thomas Jefferson rooted in the Western history of universal rights and self-governance (Carroll unpublished), the colonials granted those rights to themselves. The American Revolution, exemplifying Emmanuel Leroy Ladurie's theory that those recently demoted or removed from the hierarchy are most likely to revolt (1979), also reveals the conflict at its heart. As brilliantly articulated by Maurizio Valsania, Jefferson cast nature in conflicting modes: in his body it did not obstruct liberation or modernization, while in others such as Native Americans and African Americans, it did (Valsania, 4, 5, 147-51). With modernization vital to maintaining high status, Jefferson's views led to the permanent location below himself of those deemed incapable of modernizing, an intellectualized take on views of slaveholders and other groups whose status depends upon the appropriation of the labor or the land of another. It also characterized the attitude toward women, exemplified in Jefferson's private taking of a young mulatto slave as his concubine.

Liminal to Liminoid

Instances of hierarchy and equality in interaction and transition illuminate and are illuminated by the theories of Victor Turner and Ernest Gellner. Turner observed that agriculture's necessary repetition of an annual cycle of functions corresponds with an annual, collective, ritual cycle permitting only a brief period of openness with a special role for the performative arts at a prescribed time such as Carnival; he termed such rites 'liminal'. He observed that when the economy shifts to production and commerce, the creative process is freed to become continuous, diffuse, and individual, terming this phase 'liminoid'. He locates the onset of both "in Western Europe in nascent capitalist societies, with the beginnings of industrialization and mechanization, the transformation of labor into a commodity, and the appearance of real classes," occurring in late sixteenth-century England together with the beginnings of empire (Turner, 53). It began in Italy slightly earlier with the rise of trade, emphasized by Gellner, who describes how agriculture's economic limits require a hierarchy based on power for resource distribution that suppresses curiosity, knowledge, and innovation. Conversely, trade requires information and fosters the creativity and expertise involved in producing items for commerce. Thus the rise of trade may be read as returning a society to hunter-gatherer functioning and values.

Joy Potter applied Turner's insights to Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, finding it still within the liminal phase. The present author considered that the first major creative artist exhibiting liminoid characteristics was Beolco, especially in his rewriting of Boccaccian texts, his proposal of new rules of equality in the *Prima oratione* (First Oration) and *Seconda oratione* (Second Oration), and the conclusion of his *Bilora* (Weasel) with the murder of an urban entrepreneur by a peasant pronouncing the elemental social compact (Beolco 2009, 94-101; 1967e, 1208-21; Carroll 1987; 1990, *s.v.*). But in light of Gellner's analysis, all three seem bivalent in proposing a new society without providing the requisite new bases, reflecting the return to agriculture then occurring in Italy. In the orations, the counterpoise to the (liminoid) equality proposed is the peasants' agricultural and military contribution to the Venetian state. In *Bilora* the individual responsibility for justice is counterpoised by the victim's identity (a rich Venetian broker) and the peasant's motivation (his rights over his wife, who has abandoned his violent treatment to be the broker's mistress). But a purely liminoid and egalitarian work may be found in *Betia*, involving solely peasants. The well-to-do bride chooses two husbands, generating a conflict between the men that is solved by a pact of equal spouse-swapping then upset by the lover that the other wife took when her husband pretended to be dead, who swears that "e sí a' sarón i cinque" (and we *will* be five) (Beolco 1967a, 509). He will share equally despite his lack of an equal contribution.

While toying with the liminoid, Shakespeare's works reveal their liminal character as an apparent open-ended expanse turns out to be a higher rung on the hierarchy. While Valentine extends his ambit to Milan and marriage to the duke's daughter, he is still subordinate to the emperor. Proteus, like Andreuccio da Perugia of Boccaccio's *Decameron* 2.5, returns from the journey his father sent him on with an appurtenance of equal value to the one he left with, for Andreuccio money replaced by a jewel, for Proteus Julia who still loves him. *Taming*'s main play concludes within the liminal by placing both daughters under husbandly authority. The Induction, a joke raising the drunken artisan Christopher Sly to the apparent status of lord, presents a subtler case. The absence of the further and final segments of the near-contemporary *Taming of A Shrew* offers the possibility that Shakespeare's Induction is liminoid in not returning Sly to his previous condition. However, as the overture to the main play it is subordinated to the latter's conclusion. Moreover, the lord that Sly becomes is subordinate to the Crown, his identity destabilized by the Tudors' marginalization of the old nobility and raising up and discarding of new men. *Merchant*'s Antonio is saved through Portia's legal manoeuver and the return of his argosies. But any lasting effect is undermined by his heedless generosity, his eschewal of the Venetian practice of shared commercial investment to diffuse losses, and the ships' trade routes as ones then run by Spain (to the New World, the Indies, and to Tripoli, a stop removed from Venice's Barbary galley route when Charles conquered it [Sanuto, 27: 23-25]) and England. In *Othello*, such lack of judgment emerges as the central feature of the Venetian patrician officials and their hired Moorish general, England's rivals and enemies in that expansion. Hierarchy's cycle of self-generation followed by self-destruction stalks *Hamlet*, while the executioner's axe casts its shadow over *Thomas More*.

Present and Future

American society has undergone hierarchicalization in the last forty years catalyzed by the end of the post-war economic and baby booms. The vast expansion of higher education in the 1950s and 1960s came to an abrupt halt but the faculty serving it, recruited young to full-time positions with tenure, remained in place, limiting the number of positions open to new graduates. A hierarchy based on power arose to distribute both those positions and the publishing venues

guaranteeing them. Topics dominating journals and books migrated from revolutions to kings, from conflict to unity, from reality to ritual, from innovation to confirmation. Professional associations evolved from groups of individuals to groups of followers of leaders. Teaching became the work of faculty day laborers, dependent on the whims of the administrators appointing them and the student-customers evaluating them. The drop-off of public funding for higher education in the wake of the 2008 recession brought setbacks just as the demographic situation offered relief. Reacting against excessive control (cf. Pincus, 8-9) and developing academia's perennial quest for new knowledge and insights, a counter movement is arising from joint labor actions, the development of new fields of cultural and scientific study and publishing venues, and the (re)discovery of the value to education of a continuous relationship between teacher and student and the acquisition of skills.

A question for emerging generations is how to influence the interaction between the limitations imposed by the dwindling of the earth's resources compounded by population growth with the drive for new information and understandings and the openness that such developments require to flourish.

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