

THE MOVER AND  
THE ADJUSTER

The influence of man on man is exercised sometimes to assemble a group of individuals moved toward common action, sometimes to remedy the antagonisms which naturally result from the conflict of human wills. These two situations give rise to two forms of authority<sup>1</sup> which are seldom found in the same person, since one form is essentially exciting and the other essentially calming. The contrast between them can be illustrated by the two images of the bridge of Arcole and the oak of Vincennes.

*The Bridge of Arcole and the Oak of Vincennes*

The print which shows Bonaparte hurling himself at the enemy and urging his soldiers to follow sums up in a single scene all the influence toward action he had exercised on them since he had taken command. He had found troops low in morale and without any disposition to take the offensive; he breathed his own fire into them; his famous proclamation tended to imbue them with his own ambition, and united them as par-

1. We mean by *authority* any moral influence capable of weighing as a cause on the actions of others. This influence may be inherent in the individual or drawn from the prestige of the institution he represents.

ticipants in his plan. By a remarkable feat of transference, impatient because he was without glory, he made them realize that they were without shoes, and he materialized for them his own vast dreams in the visible form of "the fertile plains of Lombardy."

Out of a collection of inactive factors, Bonaparte made a moving whole; he himself, the leader, appears to us standing and rushing forward. St. Louis, on the contrary, appears to us seated under an oak. Through accidental circumstances which accentuate the contrast, the scene of the bridge of Arcole was popularized in the form of a violently colored print and that of the oak of Vincennes in a lithograph. Like Bonaparte, St. Louis changes the attitude of the people around him, but in the opposite direction: the parties at odds with each other arrive at a pace hastened by the ardor of the dispute, and return calmed. Like a hot furnace, the prince of action accelerates the movement of the social atoms to give them a power of collective expansion; like a cold spring, the prince of peace slows up this movement to soften the shock of collisions among them.

This furnace, principle of movement, and this cold spring, source of order, constitute the two poles of social existence, the changes wrought by the one being incorporated into the other to establish a new equilibrium.

#### *A Fixed Framework*

Naming is the first social activity that the child is taught. What he learns to name are the phenomena which make up his universe. As this universe broadens, the proper names multiply: the child is already several years old before he learns that his mother has another name than "Mama," and still older when a certain river becomes for him "the Seine."

A vocabulary above all else is a social thing. Its acquisition gives a common frame of reference to the members of a group. The Avenue Joseph Stalin may awaken different emotional reactions among the inhabitants of St. Denis; but for all of them it is the same fact, which can be referred to for purposes of finding their way around. A man who makes a mistake about a habitual word, who thinks the Piraeus is a man, admits he is a stranger to the group. A man's place in society may be revealed by his vocabulary. A Canadian may have the same stock of common names as a Frenchman, but he will not have the same stock of proper names. The man to whom a learned word is meaningless does not belong to a certain cultural group, and one for whom a certain Christian name does not denote a specific individual does not belong to a certain circle of society.

Thus a small or large social group is characterized by the continual

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reference to a number of common landmarks. These are shared securities, guideposts of all relations, of all communication. But these guideposts can play their role only because they are fixed. To that end, an individual judgment of fact must be continually corrected by the judgment of others. This river, which continues the Saône, seems to me to be the Saône, but I must call it the Rhône, or else there will be a misunderstanding. The obstinacy of certain individuals in continuing to call Louis XVIII "Capet" after he came to the throne was at once a sign and a cause of trouble. But this accommodation of factual judgments to the social perspective is only one of the conditions necessary for utilizing the guideposts. It is even more important that the objects which serve as guideposts keep their original essence and do not continually change.

If I have promised a spade to my neighbor, and in his hands it turns into a serpent—whether in his eyes alone or in those of witnesses—social life becomes impossible. In fact, the continual alteration of objects, without any comprehensible law or possibility of prediction, constitutes the typical atmosphere of the nightmare, and man cannot live in the anguish it induces. The solidity of environmental factors is necessary for our existence. It is significant that human thought first took wings through the contemplation of the stars and the discovery of celestial orbits—in other words, through what is most constant, changes most slowly, in the universe perceptible to man. Man probably could not have thought or even lived in a world where all rhythms except his own were greatly accelerated. Suppose that, keeping his own timetable, he had to descend into the kinetic world of gases where configurations are continually altered by unpredictable collisions. No intelligent action would be possible.

Man has always felt the need of fixity in his environment. Indeed, it constitutes the very condition of his efforts to act on this environment; the routine of things permits the innovations of man. Now the human environment is not made up of objects, but of phenomena in which the part of man (the social) and the non-human part (the natural) are not easy to discern. The ego demands that the non-ego be kept in its place so that the ego can act upon it. This inertia is its Archimedes' fulcrum: the revolutionary himself relies on inertia, even in those he excites, for once they have received the movement with which he endows them, they should, in his opinion, continue to move in the direction he has assigned to them. This extreme example points up the role of the inertia of the non-ego in human calculations.

Hence the position held in all human societies by the concept of "main-

tenance." Man today reckons on the maintenance of everything he calls part of the natural order through the operation of what he calls the laws of nature, and he counts on the same degree of regularity in human actions—a regularity induced by custom and upheld by law. The great difference between these two sorts of regularities has often been noted. It is clear that so-called primitive societies distinguished very badly between the natural and the human factor in the surprises administered by their environment, their tendency having been to seek for a single guarantor against all these surprises. The systematic analysis of mythologies, either those which belong to the remote past of civilized peoples or those which belong to the very recent past of peoples who form the subject of ethnological studies, shows almost everywhere the existence of cults devoted to holding in place, and human beings who were held responsible for this maintenance.

### *The Crown*

Everything now known about societies which are backward by our criteria bears witness to the extreme diversity of human groups, which gradually lessened: the idea that all primitive societies were cast in a single mould is today abandoned. It is very possible that traits which seem to us extraordinarily widespread in the societies we have studied may have been entirely absent from those which have disappeared—perhaps for lack of these very traits. Among the societies which have survived, well or badly, up to our time, the government appears in various aspects and sometimes seems entirely absent; but there is one factor which is met almost everywhere, except in people whose fate is particularly miserable, like the Eskimos. This factor is the presence of a stabilizing authority, a gauge of all regularities.

Maintaining what? Often, not only the social order, but also the cosmic order, from which the social order is not distinguished. A favorable world, bringing no disappointments, without drought or disappearance of game, without epidemic or famine is wanted, and disturbances which occur in the social group are often viewed in the same way as troubles of the natural order. The *mana* that makes the rain fall likewise directs the arrow to its target, and a movement against order may unleash either the elements or the anger of a neighbor. Rituals or ceremonies are forms of insurance against risks, whose diversity is not analyzed, in order to bring about a favorable outcome of human operations—*fortuna* in general.

One of the fundamental ideas of humanity is that structures are images of one another, witness the enthusiasm with which late nineteenth cen-

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ture physicists pounced on the concept that the atom repeated the planetary system. These images may be almost unrecognizable, through transformation (in the mathematical sense), but a knowledge of the mysteries reveals their correspondence. Hence all the magic action which is exercised on a representation in order to influence the thing represented—as when a pantomime representing fecundation induces fecundity.

Older than discursive thought, the symbol guided the former before illustrating it. The circumference suggests irresistibly the idea of order, equilibrium, perfect arrangement. It is a figure into which no deformations can be introduced without the eye's attempt to rectify them, as numerous experiments prove.<sup>2</sup> The crown, in its simplest form of a circular thread, is thus the image of a hoped-for good. In all ages, crowns have been offered to the gods to express gratitude for the order they maintain and to beg them to conserve that order. In the same way, the crowns or funeral wreaths which accompany the dead, or with which images of the dead are decked, symbolize the wish that they may benefit from this cosmic order. Sappho and many others bear witness to the belief that sacrifice to the gods was not efficacious unless the sacrificer was crowned. The same thing is still true of the priest: the tonsure is the definitive incorporation of the crown into his person, without which he could not celebrate the sacrifice of the mass, and which consecrates him to this celebration. In Greece, priests were called "wearers of the crown."<sup>3</sup> The reception of the crown, the coronation, is a consecration to the mission of seeking balance—a halter which attaches the crowned person to his destiny, to his aim, and arms him for supplications to the forces of order. All this is very clear. It is perhaps audacious, but tempting, to apply the same concept to the victor's crown, seeing in it an exorcism, a consecration to order of the force which has been evoked, preventing destructive uses of the *potentia irascibilis* employed against the enemy.<sup>4</sup>

2. Our tendency to see perfection in the imperfect figures we are shown is well demonstrated by Koffka. Cf. Kurt Koffka: *Principles of Gestalt Psychology* (New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1935).

3. Cf. R. B. Onians: *The Origins of European Thought about the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time and Fate* (Cambridge, University Press, 1951), pp. 454-462.

4. Temporal victory demands an excitement on the part of the fighter which must be made to disappear afterward, for fear of the effects it may exercise on domestic order. This idea is admirably developed in *Horace et les Curiaces*, by Georges Dumézil, to whom our debt is immense. See especially how the necessary cooling off is symbolized by the three tubs into which the Irish hero Cuchulainn is plunged after his victory and to the water of which he gives up his excess heat. Furthermore, we know through historic texts how attentive the Romans were to make victorious warriors come back to order: the example of Cincinnatus was emphasized deliberately.

The crown, in a word, denotes essentially consecration to the maintenance of order, and not at all, as has often been believed, power over men. The sign of power is the scepter, which is a stick, an embryonic form of both the weapon and the tool. One has only to note how in our day the crown and the scepter are separated—the crown on the head of the priest, the stick, or baton, in the hand of the marshal, who commands and leads men.<sup>5</sup> The union of the crown and the scepter, one below the other, is not at all necessary; it belongs to a mode of thought already touched by positivism, in which an executive power is recognized as indispensable for controlling disorders of human origin. In truth, there is another form of the stick which is more fundamentally related to the crown. It is the diviner's rod on which Oedipus leans when he guesses the Sphinx's riddles. It is also the staff of the pilgrim (the traveler in quest of God), and seems to have inspired the idea of the bishop's crozier.

“*Rex et Augur*”

These considerations lead us to regard as the keystone of a society an authority which guarantees the stability of the environment, and does so principally by interceding with the gods (the *virtus* of the *rex* is therefore essential), and by announcing (thanks to the consultation of omens) what is *fas* or *nefas*, what lines of conduct, what actions will be *fortunate* or *unfortunate*. Thus is justified the association of the *rex et augur*, which is found in Virgil.<sup>6</sup> It is clear, furthermore, that in announcing the *fas* and the *nefas*, the king exercises a power of opinion over actions, and that, even in a society where the harm done by man to man does not call for public punishment (and many examples of such societies are known), the individual act which is liable to trouble the cosmic order and to call down misfortune on the community must, once it is recognized as such by the *rex*, call the punishment of the people on the impious one.

In this respect, a passage from Aristotle<sup>7</sup> throws an illuminating light on an essential characteristic of the authority charged with upholding

5. See this note of Paulin Paris: “*Bailli* (the bailiff) is here the regent, the one who governs in the absence or during the minority of the natural ruler. From *bajulus* (stick), was derived *bailli*, the one who holds the scepter, the stick. The *bail* and the *baillie* are the government, the power.” Paulin Paris: *Les Romains de la Table ronde*, T. IV, p. 361 note to p. 135. The note on the celebrated scholar is all the more interesting because here the man with the commander's stick is clearly distinguished from the sovereign.

6. Aeneid IX, 327: cited and commented on by Dumézil in *L'Héritage indo-européen à Rome* (Paris, Gallimard, 1949), pp. 205–206.

7. Aristotle: *The Constitution of Athens*, chapter 57.

order. Speaking of the constitution of Athens in his time, Aristotle notes the role of the king, who continues to exist: "Indictments for impiety come before him, or any disputes between parties concerning sacred rites for the ancient families and the priests. All actions for homicide come before him, and it is he that makes the proclamation requiring polluted persons to keep away from sacred ceremonies. . . . The King and the tribekings also hear the cases in which the guilt rests on inanimate objects and the lower animals."

He appears clearly as intervening when questions arise concerning religious cults or impieties. In this very lay stage of Athenian civilization, these affairs no longer have the importance they had earlier. It is significant that the king is still responsible for them, and one may conclude that in the earliest times they were already his essential concern.

Also instructive in Aristotle's text is the description of the functions of the *archon*, who in very ancient times appeared as the double of the king. "As soon as the Archon enters office, he begins by issuing a proclamation that whatever any one possessed before he entered into office, that he shall possess and hold until the end of his term."<sup>8</sup> How can one fail to see here the reflection, on the specifically social plane, of the guarantee of solidity, of stability of the universe, given by the *rex*? Whoever analyzes the vows taken in historic times by sovereigns on their coronation will often find some analogous formula of consolidation of acquired rights.

It is true that the mediating and oracular functions of the *rex* put him in a position to present as pleasing to the gods what is simply pleasing to himself, and to metamorphose a stabilizing authority into an arbitrary power: Africa and Asia offer examples of this metamorphosis. The Greeks and Romans, on the contrary, soon limited the *rex* to a very abstract stabilizing function, while the historic peoples of Europe adopted an intermediate solution. Although they recognized in their king the concrete powers necessary for the maintenance of the established social order—the *law* conceived as immutable—the power of innovation in legislative matters did not historically belong to the sovereign: it was a conquest of the 16th and 17th centuries—and, we may note, it prepared the fall of the monarchy.

Since the mission of the *rex* was essentially to conserve, to consolidate the known order, and since he did this in the beginning much more through the mysterious operation of his *virtus* than through concrete processes, the mystery of hereditary transmission of the crown becomes easy to explain. It is in the prime interest of society that every stock of

8. *Constitution of Athens*, chapter 56.

rights or powers which loses its possessor (notably through his death) must immediately receive a new one, designated without any possibility of contestation, rather than being permitted to become a prey for appetites. A positive advantage for France, for instance, was the immediate knowledge of who became king on the death of a monarch. But this advantage is not enjoyed unless uncertainty is entirely excluded, as happens with the system of primogeniture in the male line, which was adopted only slowly and painfully.

Positively disadvantageous, on the contrary, is the system of undefined family inheritance, according to which any member of the family of the deceased may become his successor. For the choice of the successor is limited to the family (a fact which rules out capable candidates who might otherwise be available) and yet the certainty which would obviate quarrels is lacking. This system appears to be the worst of all, yet it seems to have been almost universally practiced and to have been an inexhaustible source of civil war. This quasi-universality is easy to explain on the hypothesis that the benefits spread by the *rex* were essentially the consequence of a *benediction* common to all the *stirps regia*, and that it was impossible to know in advance in which member of the perpetuating family it was the most concentrated.

Among the Franks, all the princes of the blood, distinguished by their long hair entwined with ornaments, had an equal right to the throne and were often collectively called *reges criniti*. The right was not lost unless the hair was shaved—a humiliation to which a Merovingian queen is said to have preferred death for her grandsons. The princes born while their father was on the throne (“born to the purple”) were thought to have a better right than those born before the coronation, but bastards had no less a right than legitimate sons. Perhaps one should not speak of “right” in this connection, but rather of the probability, felt by the subjects, of the presence of the *mana*. One or another seemed to be preferable, as having the best chance to be the bearer of *fortuna*.<sup>9</sup>

There is a striking resemblance here with what Roscoe reports about the Baganda, among whom the princes born of a king during his reign, “princes of the drums,” are preferred to the others, called “peasant princes.” On the death of the king, the mayor of the palace (Katikoro) has the princes called together by their head guardian (Kasuju) and these two dignitaries, before an immense crowd, review the princes and finally,

9. Fritz Kern: *Kingship and Law in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 12–27.



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after apparent hesitation, call one of them out of the line. In his name, a challenge is thrown to the others, and if it is not taken up, they are told: "You are all peasants," and are led off to eat a Gargantuan meal while the chosen one is escorted to his father's body, which he piously covers with bark.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the various precautions taken by different peoples to disqualify definitively unsuccessful competitors for the throne, the notion that they are bearers of *mana* means that they remain a danger. Thus may be explained the massacres of princes so frequently seen in history.

These examples make it seem that one should not speak of a *right to command*—a very late invention, taken over by democracy from absolute monarchy—but rather of the people's interest in providing themselves with the best lightning rod, with the most "fortunate" among the "fortunate," the most likely, through mysterious faculties, to consolidate the framework of life and to keep up the regular flow of the forces of fecundity.

### *The Lesson of Bathsheba*

There is, however, no occasion to maintain order until order is established. Every people has its legend of foundation, in which a violent hero conquers the forces of chaos. It should be noted that he is rarely free from crime: thus Theseus, founder of Athens, betrays Ariadne and causes the death of his father, Aegaeus. Romulus, founder of Rome, murders his brother. By a brilliant stroke of intuition, Rousseau recognized the intentional and didactic character of the contrast between Romulus and Numa, the feverish creator and the peaceful stabilizer<sup>11</sup>—a contrast which is powerfully developed in the admirable works of Dumézil.<sup>12</sup>

But the Bible itself presents this diptych: David and Solomon. David the warrior born, who triumphs over Goliath in his first test, and "slays his ten thousands" is the real founder of the kingdom of Israel. He is a leader, as those who come to find him after the death of Saul point out: "And moreover in time past, even when Saul was king, thou was he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel." Already others had come to join him as he fled the wrath of the king; once he has been made king in his turn,

10. John Roscoe: *The Baganda* (London, 1911).

11. *Du Contrat Social*, Bk IV, ch. 4.

12. Notably in *Mitra-Varuna, Essai sur Deux Représentations de la Souveraineté* (Paris, Gallimard, 1940), a work of capital importance for political science, which has not yet incorporated or even measured the immense and valuable contribution of this master.

he assembles, he takes a census—this, by the way, is charged to him as a sin—and he rounds up strangers and a host of materials to build the house of God.<sup>13</sup>

However, even though he has prepared everything for the construction of the Temple, David does not undertake it. He calls his son Solomon, and speaks to him thus:

“My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house unto the name of the Lord my God.

“But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

“Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from his enemies round about; for his name shall be Solomon, and I shall give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.

“He shall build a house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.

“Now, my son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he hath said of thee.

“Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel.”<sup>14</sup>

All the words are revealing: Solomon, a man of peace, will give rest to Israel. He will be wise, and will keep the Law; his throne will be strengthened; he is really the stabilizer. He will not have to improvise or to fight. One thing should be noticed: when Solomon takes a census, there is no question of his action being considered as a sin.

The distribution of roles between David and Solomon is as clear as can be. The choice of Solomon, among all the sons of David, to give peaceful happiness to the people of Israel will appear remarkable if one stops to think that Solomon is the son of Bathsheba. David sinned in possessing Bathsheba, wife of Uriah the Hittite, and he sinned even more violently by sending this particularly devoted follower<sup>15</sup> to a dangerous post, where his companions, by order of the king, were to abandon him “that he may be smitten, and die.” Though the first-born of the union thus

13. I Chronicles, XXII: “And David prepared iron in abundance. . . . Also cedar trees in abundance. . . .”

14. I Chronicles, XXII.

15. Cf. II Samuel, XI: Uriah, recalled from the army, does not go to his own house but sleeps at the door of the king's house.

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assured dies at an early age, Solomon is its next fruit. It is not irrelevant that the same Nathan the prophet, who reproached David with his crime and predicted to him the death of Bathsheba's first-born, is the one who, in the face of the presumption of Adonijah, comes to ask David to name "the one who must be seated on the throne of the King my Lord after him"; and that Nathan does not protest when David names Solomon, the son of Bathsheba, but on the contrary is among those who cause Solomon to ride upon the king's mule to go to Gihon, where they anoint him king of Israel.<sup>16</sup>

In thinking over the episodes centered around Bathsheba, one wonders if their lesson is not that violence and stain are inherent to the foundation of temporal power. There is nothing uglier in David's life than the ambush into which he makes Uriah fall; and without it, Solomon would not have existed. Solomon crowns the work, but David was its promoter. Here we touch on the dangerous secret of natural rhythms.

### *The Stabilizer*

Let us look now at the function of the stabilizer, the pacifier. We have advanced the opinion that the crown symbolized the vocation and the end of the upholding authority, the stable equilibrium of cosmic and social arrangements, considered as a whole. One may find a symbol of the way in which this equilibrium is maintained in the shield which, according to Roman tradition, fell from the sky under the reign of Numa, the *flamen* and consolidating *rex*. The shield protects: it is by means of the protection fallen from the sky that the *rex* interceptor shelters his people from unhappy events. It will be noted also that the shields given by the gods often have the form of the world, like the shield given by Zeus to Achilles. The order of the world is guaranteed to the one who is loved by the gods and he, in turn, guarantees it.

According to peoples and their disposition, and according to the period, the vagaries of Fortune will appear to be due more or less exclusively to the actions of the gods, or, in a growing proportion, to the actions of men. If everything happens through the action of the gods, there is no recourse except through changing the *rex*, who was not able to win their favor. But as soon as it is admitted that misfortune may be caused by the impiety of one member of the people, or of the people as a whole, then a certain causality is attributed to human action. The logical deduction from this is,

16. I Kings, I.

if not a repressive power of the *rex* directed at impious acts (for it seems that the existence of specialized repressive agents came about extremely late), at least a function of the *rex* as denouncer of the one who is guilty of impiety, leads the people to punish him as the cause of the collective misfortune.

In any case, it was impossible for men not to perceive that their misfortunes were often immediately caused by human agents. Without pretending to state a general rule, it appears that these injuries were first avenged by the injured person or his relatives, and not, as we say, by society or its representative. Nevertheless, as these vendettas were a source of trouble, it seemed necessary to suppress them. The maintenance of equilibrium thus demanded the intervention of authority, not as judge, but as mediator.

A society can subsist only so long as its members refrain from infringing on one another's domain (*Dius Terminus*), respect their given word (*Dius Fidius*), act with reciprocity (*Do ut des*, commutative justice) and as a general rule do what the others expect of them. The failure to do as expected destroys the social bond. Consequently, the authority, as such (that which increases confidence) must necessarily watch out for aberrant conduct and bring things back into their proper channel. This temporal role may be exercised by the *rex* himself or by his double. One gets the impression, in studying the development of power, that it develops by a sort of parthenogenesis: often the man who acts as guarantor where the gods are concerned has his double, i.e., the one who reestablishes order insofar as it is disturbed by men. Elsewhere, action on the gods becomes the affair of a *sacerdos* and the *rex* applies himself exclusively to human affairs.

Through whatever person this role may be exercised, there is, in any case, a guarantee of respect for usages, since a disordered usage propagates waves of trouble. For example: in a people where inheritance is from the maternal uncle to the nephew, as frequently happens, a father wishes to transmit his heritage to his son. But if he does this, the dispossessed nephew has cause for complaint. He may react violently against the son or he may in turn demand the heritage of his own father, which dispossesses the latter's nephew. The disorder spreads. Let us take another example: in a people divided into two exogamous classes, which may also be found, women are purchased, for example, with cows. But a Romeo elopes with his Juliet. Because of this, the family of Juliet is deprived of some extra cows which were necessary so that the men of Juliet's group might in their turn acquire girls from Romeo's family. Juliet's group may react by

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punishing Romeo's act or imitating it. If they imitate it, a different practice becomes general; the story of the rape of the Sabines might perhaps be based on the memory of such a change of practice.

The two possible reactions to a change show that the stabilizing authority may act in two ways. It may repress all changes by incessant vigilance, or it may also consecrate a change which happened once and tends to become generalized—make of it a new usage. But whether it does the one or the other, its role is always to ensure repetition. For the stabilizing power ensures certainties which can come only as a result of regularities.

One sees immediately that in a very complex, evolved society like ours, the role of the upholding authority is both essential and very delicate. It is essential because, the more men depend on one another, the more regularity on the part of their fellows is indispensable to them. A civilized man's whole day depends entirely on the presence of others at their social posts. Though our society appears to us very mobile, in truth it is far more completely modeled on routines than are societies which we call inferior. The upholding of the innumerable pillars on which our existence is founded is not, of course, caused by authority: authority is only the guarantor, and, as such, it must intervene to bolster up the pillars that totter. But at the same time, the progress of a civilized society depends on the action of leaders (or movers) who, in different parts of the social body, are a principle of innovation. To let these innovations, or some of them, pass, while continually adjusting the general equilibrium, or at least watching over its adjustment is what makes the task delicate. Authority is no longer simply maintaining, it is adjusting.

While putting this aspect of the problem in its proper light, one must not forget that the essence of the task is to conserve. In a society the portion of change must be small and the portion of regularity very large. The individual can digest change only in small doses. It does not matter that the Avenue Henri Martin is now called the Avenue Georges Mandel. But if all the streets of Paris changed their names every week there would be general confusion. That which does not change conditions that which does change: if the Avenue Georges Mandel is the one which begins at the Trocadero and ends at La Muette, all is well—but not if Trocadero and Muette receive other names too. What is true of names is far more true of modes of behavior.

The upholding authority appears, then, to us as the essential social authority. Without it everything falls to pieces. But clearly, too, it can immobilize a society. And this is not difficult, for initiative is not born every-

where and leaders are not numerous. Consequently, all that is necessary is a certain vigilance toward the change-mongers, whether this vigilance is enforced by deep beliefs or by repressive means, to stamp out every principle of change. And even as initiative is contagious, so is inertia; it can happen that the surge of initiative and movement can become extinguished in a people. Different causes can lead to the same effect: either the absence of initiative, or the disorder of peripheral initiative which the central power can neither destroy nor adjust, can equally call to the central post of authority a leader who will awaken initiative (in this case he will often come from outside) or coordinate it. Thus the leader, the *dux*, has his hour. Nevertheless, it seems that human societies cannot tolerate for long a situation in which the central power is continually a *dux*. The upholding authority presides over society, the movers deploy themselves in society, and the mover is only intermittently at the head of society.

### *A Principle of Classification*

The principles stated above may perhaps facilitate a classification of the attitudes of the public power—that is to say, of those who exercise it. If the public power is obsessed by its function as the guarantor of regularities, of responsibility for the behavior of all others, of upholder of an order known with certainty, it will be worried over everything which introduces a disturbance; it will want to hamper not only every deviation of individual behavior, but especially any call to unaccustomed acts, and therefore it will try to silence all leaders who show themselves within the social body. It will then be a protector of routines, an enemy of initiative, conservative to the point of social immobilization.

The central authority will be called liberal, on the contrary, if it looks with a favorable eye on leaders arising here and there in the universe over which it presides. But it should not be forgotten that each birth of a new form of behavior permitted by the authority disturbs the certainty of the people; and to fulfill its task as a social guarantor the public power must continually remedy the uncertainty which results for some from the innovations brought about by others. If the authority fails in this adjusting function, the innovations will cause increasing trouble, and without being exactly conscious of it, the members of the society will call upon a public power capable of restoring certainty, no matter of what kind.

Still a third attitude is possible on the part of the public power. Instead of authorizing broadly the innovations born outside itself in the social body, it may reserve to itself the monopoly of movement. Instead of con-

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servicing the society in its existing state, as in the first case, instead of letting it evolve as in the second, it can attempt to cause and determine its evolution. Those who exercise the public power may reason in the following fashion: change is good, but the adjustment of a number of autonomous changes is very difficult; it is much easier for these changes to achieve harmony among themselves if they are all decided by the same mind.

Whether or not experience justifies this reasoning, it appears to be founded on logic. It will be noted that the public power which thus decides to assume the function of moving will necessarily take toward private movers arising here and there in society an attitude just as negative, just as repressive, as the most narrowly conservative power. Indeed, if the conservative authority cannot tolerate what disturbs the existing order, the moving authority cannot tolerate what disturbs the dynamic order whose progress it directs. Both are opposed to the authority which permits changes.

The moving authority poses the really interesting problems. It must of necessity sift more or less finely the innovations in modes of behavior, the novelties; it must also, of necessity, take care to compensate for the uncertainty which has been introduced. It is in this sifting, this compensation, and the unceasing correction of balance, that the question of the Political Good is most frequently posed.