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The Rise and Fall of the "Private" as Part of Western Political Socialization

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Abstract:

The private is a sphere of activity that is not subject to the regulations, control, and management by a sovereign, institutional power. This work will seek to identify some of the major historical factors affecting the balance between the public and the private in Western culture. We will examine the material conditions that gave rise to the primacy of collective power in medieval thought, through the rise of liberalism and capitalism as historical phenomena that generated support for the notion of the private, and modern liberal political culture reconstructed the notion of human subjectivity in a form that reflected the necessities of the new institutional practices as will be illustrated by the ideas of John Locke and Adam Smith. Then we will identify three forces that are eroding the liberal notion of privacy in the contemporary age: the growth of religious fundamentalism, the rise of the national security state, and the technological transformation of social, economic, life.

Keywords: Private sphere – public sphere – identity – liberal ideology – capitalism

Introduction

Embedded within the political culture of modernity is the notion of the "private." Simply stated, the political definition of privacy involves a commitment to a sphere of thought and action that is outside the accepted domain of collective power. While often thought of as the realm of the individual, it could also apply to actions of groups. However, the general definition still applies. The private is a sphere of activity that is not subject to the regulations, control, and management by a sovereign, institutional power.

Also implied in the political discussion of the private is the contrast with its perceived opposite, the "public." Therefore, the political discourse surrounding a discussion of the private always addresses, directly or indirectly, the domain of the public. Political discourse about the private is about the balance between the rights of self-regulation embedded within the private sphere, and the rights of a collective power to assert dominance over a domain of publicly regulated behavior.

However, in discussing the public and the private an important assumption often lies lurking under the surface. This is the matter of where the idea of the private has its ori-

gins. While this is a broader epistemological issue, as it relates to the subject of the private, two general approaches are generally found. The first suggests that the private is part of an evolutionary process of thinking about politics. Thus, it is assumed that as a result of our natural political and cultural development, the notion of the private emerged in Western thought. As we became more conscious of politics, the idea occurred to us that there is a sphere of human action that needs to be outside the domain of collective power and dominance. In this context, the protection of the private is synonymous with the idea of personal freedom. We are defined as freedom seeking creatures at our ontological core and the history of Western civilization is viewed as a struggle to realize this essence. Therefore, every age has the task to reapply this principle to the changing social and technological contexts developed with evolution of science, technology, and the economic order.

The other position views the rise of the private from a different perspective. This suggests that the notion of the private was developed out of a unique set of circumstances that arose in the West with the development of capitalism, industrialization, and the attending liberal narrative that supported this structural transformation. From this perspective, the content of the notion of privacy is tied to the material conditions out of which it developed. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that there is a continuous development and application of a central, core principle of privacy. There may be new material conditions that emerge, altering the environment that makes privacy appear "rational" within a larger social context. From this view, a transformation of the conditions that gave rise to privacy will lead to an alteration of the content of the private or, possibly, erode the notion of the private all together.

Our analysis will be premised on the second of these two positions. It is our contention that the private is a manifestation of historical conditions and is, therefore, affected by the transformations in the conditions out of which it arose. We will argue that the political space for private action is being eroded in the contemporary dynamic. Further, in the political space that remains for private action the meaning of the private is being transformed in a way that is compatible with the evolving necessities of social institutions.

This work will seek to identify some of the major historical factors affecting the balance between the public and the private in Western culture. We will begin by examining the material conditions that gave rise to the primacy of collective power in medieval thought. From there we will examine the rise of liberalism and capitalism as historical phenomena that generated support for the notion of the private. Modern liberal political culture reconstructed the notion of human subjectivity in a form that reflected the necessities of the new institutional practices. This will be illustrated by examining the ideas of John Locke and Adam Smith, and their importance in articulating the logic of the private sphere.

After developing the historical conditions giving support to the rise of privacy in the West, our attention will turn to the contemporary setting. We will identify three forces that are eroding the liberal notion of privacy in the contemporary age: the growth of religious fundamentalism, the rise of the national security state, and the technological transformation of social, economic, life.

We will then discuss the effects of these changes on the construction of subjectivity and identity within this changing context. We will argue that these material changes are

undermining the logic that gave rise to the distinction between public and private that emerged during the early days of the Enlightenment. As a result, the construction of human identity in the twenty-first century is less likely to include the space for the "private" that has been afforded since the Enlightenment. The work will conclude with some comments about the future direction of privacy based on our analysis.

I. The Centrality of the "Public" in the Middle Ages.

In order to fully grasp the centrality of the material conditions causing an erosion of the private in the contemporary world, it is necessary to understand the historical condition that gave rise to the private. The notion of the private emerged out of the liberal ideology in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It constituted a fundamental break with the idea that gave primacy to the collective in the exercise of power.

After the breakup of the Roman Empire, smaller territorial units emerged within Europe. These were agriculturally based economic units that produced for self-sufficiency rather than trade or profit. This model of production generated an internally interdependent community, in which each produced a commodity that assisted in the maintenance of the whole. This interconnectedness of community function provided the material basis for the "organic" conception of community.

The concept of the organic community treats the various functions of material and social life as constituting a living structure in which each part or function serves the interests of the whole. In the temporal activity of existence, this meant that society was organized as an integrated set of functions in which the individual acts of the community's members gained significance only in their relation to the entire set of processes for the functioning of the collective. Whether a farmer, a baker, or a leader, the significance and worth of activity was measured by the standard of *collective well being*. Even the monarch was measured against the standard, with the expectation of maintaining the community and security of its members as the prime function of power.

One can see this concern for the community and its functioning born out in the writings of the time. Church documents stress the notion of community values and standards, mirroring the ideological stance of the secular institutions. Further, the church's position articulated the justification for the collective nature of identity and asserted the legitimacy of sanctions when such collective identity was violated.

In the *Confessions*, Saint Augustine asserts the first of two critical points in the formation of the organic nature of institutions. Augustine claims that there is logic in God's plan, as articulated in the bible, for the creation of a single community on earth. All men are the offspring of one original creation in order that all are bound together (Augustine cited in Cantor, 1969, p. 77). Hence, the community of Christian believers is the primary order of society, even as it is presented as a task rather than a reality.

The other significant feature of Augustine's thought for the centrality of community comes from his articulation of a natural hierarchy in society and its relation to the presentation of truth. Since it is possible that humans error in their individual interpretations of God's meaning in the scriptures, all must submit to the hierarchy of the church. There

can be no peace until all submit to a head (Augustine, 1957, p. 12). It is the community that has priority over the individual.

Within this framework, the place for the engaging private space, or conscience, has little practical meaning. Society is to be hierarchically organized, with all thought and action part of the public sphere. The notion of private activity would appear as an illogical construct in a community organized around the interlocking production processes guided by self-sufficiency. Further, viewed from perspective of an organic union, assertions of the private, whether in production or in thought, must be eliminated from the collective body. This is expressed in Augustine's discussion of heretical nature of alternative beliefs. Heretics and nonbelievers have no rights to either property or their thoughts (Augustine cited in Cantor, 1969, pp. 37-38). All must be put into service for the collective identity of the organic whole. In this context, there can be only public space and public activity.

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries a number of developments occurred that began to alter the conditions of life and the medieval form of economic relations. The population of Europe was increasing, along with increases in food production. The crusades renewed contact with the Middle East and resulted in increased trade and commerce. This activity led to the rise of cities and towns along trading routes.

Towns became centers of commerce and this transformed the dynamics of social production. Feudal estates had produced use-value, commodities that were consumed for the immediate needs of the population. The emerging economy produced goods for exchange, generating a new class of urban merchants and traders that amassed wealth, but were not tied to the structure of the landed aristocracy that had controlled the institutions of power during the feudal era. While the rise of the merchant class would ultimately mean the undoing of the privilege of the aristocratic class, the monarchs also made alliances with them as a result of their new-found wealth (Jensen, 1981, p. 12).

In the long run, such alliances could not be maintained. The necessities of trade and commerce, the production for exchange, and the legal structures necessary for the maintenance of a dual economic model could not hold. The emerging capitalist economy required a set of social and political institutions that were incompatible with the model of self-sufficient agriculture that characterized the feudal estate. Exchange was a local process, a calculation among participants for the maximization of their private reward. Interference by the monarchs was disruptive to the process.

Reinforcing the private nature of the exchange process was the emergence of the contract. The contract was an arrangement between two participants in which binding agreement is made for the exchange of a good or service. A capitalist economy requires that these transactions concerning property be free from the capricious or arbitrary interference from a central state agency (Miskimin, 1975, p. 15). Capitalism is an economic model based on exchange. Only in an economic system in which there is stability and regularity in the exchange process, can the capitalist form of economic relations flourish.

Hence, right from the inception of this new form of economic arrangement there was tension between the old order and the emerging system. The capitalist economy had needs for an institutional structure that could not be accommodated by the feudal system. Further, the collective concept of the social order that informed the construction of the subject also needed to be transformed. Therefore, in order for capitalism to expand it needed to overturn the existing institutional structures and manifest a new historical construction

of subjectivity more compatible with its functioning. In doing so, it created a new social and political order in which the notion of the private had a central role. Two figures were preeminent in describing this new order: John Locke and Adam Smith.

II. The Rise of the "Private": John Locke and Adam Smith

Both Locke and Smith described a new set of economic and social conditions and were seeking to address the tension between this evolving order and the old structures and institutions. Production for exchange, the rise of an urban middle class, and the role of the "contract" in economic life required the construction of a new human identity that made the evolving social and economic practices "rational." Within this new situation there was an expanded place for the idea of private thought and activity. In fact, the notion of the private was essential for the emergence of the new economic models they defended and the political structures necessary to support those practices.

A. John Locke

Surveying the impact of the economic and social changes taking place in the society in which he lived, John Locke stressed the importance of the private sphere in the consideration of politics. In his *First Treatise of Government*, Locke undercuts the political legitimacy of the landed aristocracy. This is only possible by making the assumptions that human beings possess the power of reason, and that such reason is the ontological possession of individuals rather than groups.

In the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke established the conditions that justify the notion of the private in ontological terms. Locke states directly that consciousness is unique to the individual (Locke cited in Epstein & Kennedy, 1967, p. 421). The importance of this statement for the development of the *private* cannot be overstated. If consciousness, represented as intellect, will, and reason, is contained within a body, and the bodies found in society are physically separate beings, then it follows that the essence of that human being is found as its unique presence in the world (Locke cited in Epstein & Kennedy, 1967, pp. 414-421). Each individual is a physical presence that is both spirit and body, with each having a unique and separate existence in the world. We are all ontologically separate beings, each possessing a will of its own.

Locke's ontological position explains why the character of life and property and so closely associated in his writings. The essence of life is found in its private character. Property is part of the private sphere. Both are extension of the personal nature of experience, our separateness in the world. Government's role is to protect that which, as an extension of that separateness, is part of our essential unique and individual presence in the world.

With our essence defined by private and personal space, Locke considered the nature of government. In doing so, he operationalized his assumptions. The legitimacy of the institutional structure can only be created by the agreement, or contract, with each of the participants. People are born into society. They enter into government by agreement. The

peaceful origin of government is from the consent of the individual thinking entities that exist within a given territory. The government must be bound to what the majority voice expresses in that political community (Locke, 1965, p. 375).

Government was treated by Locke as an artificial contrivance to protect that which is unique and private; life and property. Locke (1965, p. 330) asserted that there is a difference between goods that are public and goods that are private, and government's main function is to protect that private space from the intrusion of injustice and threat of usurpation. Property is transformed from its commonality into private holdings as a result of individual labor (Locke, 1965, p. 331). Labor is a possession of the body, and by the bodily expression of labor we take what is in nature and make it our private possession.

The private is so essential to Locke's conception of society and the individual that he follows up his discussion of the private by assigning the individual rights to act against any agent, personal or collective, that threatens the private sphere. Locke (1965, p. 320) grants the possessor of life and property the right to kill a thief who threatens property because such a person puts our private sphere under their illegitimate domination. Individuals also possess the right to resist a government that breaks its compact and puts our private sphere, life and property, under threat (Locke, 1965, p. 460).

Thus, in Locke's writings, and later in Jefferson's, there is a strong sense that the government's founding documents should enumerate powers that protect the private from the intrusion of the collective power of the government. The Bill of Rights in the American context is a document attached to the Constitution with that end in mind. It protects the private sphere against the encroachment of the public sphere, limiting the power of the government to intrude into the life, liberty, and property of private citizens.

B. Adam Smith

The notion that the public sphere should have priority lasts well into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Accommodation to the developing exchange economy initially manifests itself in the economic model of mercantilism, an economic practice that allows for the emergence of exchange, but couples this development with the idea of centralized management and control over economic matters. Within mercantilism, the economy is to be managed for the aggrandizement of state power.

Smith's *Wealth of Nations* can be seen as an attempt to remove the last vestiges of a system of centralized domination over the economy that was still present in the early modern period. Smith criticized the mercantilist perspective along a number of different fronts. In economic terms, mercantilism mistakenly assumes that real wealth in a society comes from the states amassing great quantities of gold and silver. To this end, governments seek to regulate commerce, control imports, and direct social production.

However, Smith presents a different logic. Real wealth is measured in the aggregate of social exchange that takes place in the economy (Smith, 1961, p. 166). According to Smith (1961, p. 164), every individual is continually exerting energy to find the most advantageous employment of the capital the person commands. The individual seeks to maximize the return on the investment of capital (Smith, 1961, p. 166). In doing so, the individual increases the total value of commodities exchanged in a given society, in-

creasing the total wealth generated. The acts of private individuals serve to produce a public good.

Smith points to two problems with respect to centralized control over economic matters. First, the complexity of an exchange economy is simply too intricate to be managed by an individual or group with the intention of increasing the most efficient use of capital. There are too many calculations for such a method to maximize social production. Second, centralized decision making is prone to the "folly and fancy" of rulers who might have personal or other objectives in the management of the society's resources (Smith, 1961, p. 167). Both of these lead him to the conclusion that the economy is best left in private hands.

The public sector has only a limited task. It should protect the citizens from foreign invasion, provide for domestic justice, and provide a limited number of activities that enhance commerce (Smith, 1961, pp. 251-267). Even in education Smith (1961, p. 266) sees the private sector as more efficient, as he claimed that teachers directly dependent on fees from students are likely to work harder than those that are not.

Smith's economic model would have been inconceivable a few centuries earlier. This is the case because it is predicated on the transformation of structure of human identity that dominated the institutional order. An exchange economy depends upon the *rational* acts of discrete individuals. It is also based on an exchange of private commodities rather than public goods. People will only make the commitment if the products of their labor are theirs, their private property. At the time of Smith, the private is displacing the public as the central locus of human activity and identity.

Viewed from the perspective of history, this construction of human identity, one that asserts the essence of the private, was connected to the rise of a private exchange economy. With many people engaged as the owners of private production and all able to participate in the exchange process, the material conditions for the rise of the private identity were manifest. Such a development also transformed the political sphere, with the assertion of the private and the protection of the private now asserted as political claims and the assigned responsibilities of the political order.

III. The Transformation of Material Conditions in the Twentieth Century

The liberal ideology that emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had its origin in a set of material conditions that have been breaking down in the last fifty years. This statement means that we do not regard the liberal ideology as a truth of human history discovered by Western society in the modern era. Rather, liberal ideology is recognized as a social phenomenon that evolved to explain a unique set of conditions that emerged at a specific point in history. Presently, liberal ideology is being undermined by a variety of social and historical forces.

A. Religious Fundamentalism

Religious fundamentalism is not a new social occurrence, nor should it be viewed as originating in the Middle East among militant Islamists. Christian fundamentalism in the United States, Hindu fundamentalism in South Asia, and Jewish fundamentalism in Israel are but a few examples of the religious revival that is occurring in various parts of the world. Religious fundamentalisms are similar in form and epistemological assumptions; they presume and assert the sacred and truth-disseminating nature of some religious text (Koch, 2005, Chapter 3). Once the truth is determined, it becomes obligatory that God's will be imposed on all the individuals in a given society.

Religious fundamentalism transforms the epistemological conditions of modernity. Rather than generating new knowledge, it is organized around the application of the transcendental truths of its doctrine. In this model of knowledge, a broad truth claim is applied to specific instances. Religious text is asserted as the ultimate source of knowledge and truth in the world, and is therefore not subject to challenges to its authority. Furthermore, the knowledge constructed in this model takes place in a closed system that is not subject to falsification or criticism from any source, including empirical reality. Religious fundamentalism does not allow for the toleration of challenges to its claims to knowledge (Koch). In the case of Christian fundamentalism, the teachings of the Bible are "expressed in finite forms, remain infallible, inerrant, and entirely true today" (Sweeney, 2005, p. 161).

Therefore, private activities, expressions, and even matters of conscience within a public domain are foreign to such a conception of social life. In the framework of religious fundamentalism, the public, communal sphere is given priority over the private, individual sphere. The notion of individual choice is replaced with the concept of living in accordance to a divine "truth," as imposed by a public agency of enforcement. The sphere for a private decision regarding lifestyle, clothing, or conscience exists only behind closed doors. The tolerance of individual choice within the public sphere is non-existent.

Such a position is not the exclusive domain of the countries of Iran and Saudi Arabia. Such sentiment regarding privacy issues has been a major political force in the United States since the 1980s. Even in the 2008 presidential campaign the republican candidate Mike Huckabee, a former Baptist pastor, was quoted in Warren, Michigan on January 14, 2008, stating:

I have opponents in this race who do not want to change the Constitution. But I believe it's a lot easier to change the Constitution than it would be to change the word of the living God. And that's what we need to do is amend the Constitution so it's in God's standards rather than trying to change God's standards so it lines up with some contemporary view of how we treat each other and how we treat the family (Montanaro 2008).

In terms of content, Huckabee's sentiment is one that would take the Western world back to the imposition of a medieval standard in social and political life. Christianity is a closed text upon which the daily practices of the community are to be constructed. As he put it, "God's standards," should govern the whole society.

In term of structure, this religious understanding of a community of believers requires the movement away from an individualistic understanding of government and its institutions. The Christian community is an organic collection of believers. From this perspec-

tive the responsibilities of the state are no longer to protect the private sphere, but are to enforce the doctrine within the community of believers. Secularism and individualism are to be replaced with public, state mandates for the organic whole.

This is precisely the doctrine that was replaced by notion of privacy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Today it is not the dominant doctrine in the West, but accommodation has been made to its position, especially in the United States. Such accommodation reflects a force that erodes the notion of the private.

B. Nationalism

Nationalism emerged as a mass ideology in the nineteenth century. Its mass appeal paralleled the rise of mass literacy, as the identity of nationhood served as the content of much of the schooling that took place in Europe and the United States. Today, despite globalization, the growth of transnational corporations, and an expanding global culture, nationalism is still a pervasive and incredibly influential social force (White, 2004, p. 1). In fact, many do not foresee any end to the nation-state system or nationalism. As Benedict Anderson (1991, p. 3) puts it, "Indeed, nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time."

The notion of the private sphere embedded within modern liberalism is dependent on the belief that the individual is of utmost importance, and by extension individual rights are inalienable from each human body (White, 2004, p. 3). Thus, within classical liberal doctrine, the notion of individualism is tied to the idea of private activity. Further, within liberal doctrine the private sphere is the place in which our individuality manifests itself. In the absence of transcendental conditions of human identity, the private sphere is the place in which our essential self is manifest.

Nation-states are generally defined as political units that possess collective political organizations and have distinct territorial boundaries. But nationalism is a "state of mind" that revolves around a "group consciousness" (Kohn, 1944, pp. 1-11). Individuals within nation-states have undergone a process of integration such that they identify themselves with others in the nation-state. They have a constructed common identity. The "unified population" is only unified in that they *believe* that they share a common identity. This common identity cannot help but conflict with the idea of a private life.

Therefore, the nation-state is a force that, at its core, is contrary to the logic that supports the private sphere because it is based on the principle that the existence of the state takes priority over all other conditions of social life. The private sphere reaches its limits as it collides with the conditions necessary for the growth and maintenance of the state. As the conditions for state maintenance become more complex, requiring greater management, the penetration of the state into the private sphere takes ever greater intensity.

Further, in managing the aggregate of their populations the modern nation-state creates administrative structures that penetrate the domain of the private. Bureaucracies are formed as a means to manage, govern, and oversee human beings as a collective whole, encouraging the massification of human societies. Thus, the collective logic of the ideology of nationalism conflicts with the liberal notion of individuality. The notion of the private is eroded by the incursion of state power into areas of private conscience and activities.

It should be noted that democratic institutions do not inhibit this process, as democratic procedures have evolved along with the growth of the nation-state and the ideology of nationalism. In fact, democratic processes legitimate the extension of the public into the private. The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 and the Sedition Act of 1918 were both used to curb the expression of individuals. Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus, and the recent Military Commissions Act of 2006 both extend the power of the state over human bodies. The Patriot Acts of 2005 and 2006 generate the penetration of the nation-state into the domain of the private, as they authorize the state's claims to penetrate the private domain of citizens in the name of national security. Each of these activities took place within the framework of democratic institutions.

From this dynamic, several points can be asserted. If the content of liberal practice is tied to a broader set of practices in the economic and social environment, the construction of the private subject is not tied to the existence of the state. The state actually exists in some tension with the content of an individualistic ideology. Further, democratic practice does not necessarily protect the private in actual practice. Democracy serves an integrating role for the citizenry, increasing the legitimacy of institutional practice, but is not necessarily wedded to any particular individualistic content (Koch & Zeddy, 2009). For these reasons, strong centralized state practices erode the individualistic ethos of the liberal model of subjectivity.

C. The Rise of Global Communications Technologies

Multiple texts on social and political practices are being created and disseminated through various media in modern society, and have aided the growth of scientific thought and intellectual life more generally. The increase in information has created a "marketplace of ideas" in many developed societies. The mass nature of printing, the internet, and telecommunications has allowed for individuals to spread their own ideas, compare them to others, and communicate the results to a wider audience (Eisenstein, 2000, p. 71).

While these are generally celebrated as achievements of the modern world, one also has to take account of the transformative effect these technological changes have for the construction of political culture and human identity. The conditions of material and social existence developed by these new technologies have an effect on the context in which the public/private distinction is manifest. In this regard, three areas stand out: the economics of standardization, the public nature of connectivity, and the use of technology for the purposes of state sponsored surveillance.

As we have claimed, the idea of the private arose along with capitalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Emerging as a political principle to protect property, the private had the effect of creating the modern notion of individuality. It was in the private space that the individual had the formative experiences that created uniqueness and difference. The power of the state was not to intervene in the formation of the individual, as it was formed in the domain of the private.

With the coming of mass production, mass communication, and the mass standardization of economic and cultural existence that is generated by the new technologies the culture and material conditions for the maintenance of the private are eroding. In the

mass, the notion of individuality is lost, and its purpose seems less significant. Standardized production, mass forms of consumption, and mass media create the bland form of social existence described by Benjamin Barber (1996) as, "McWorld." In this standardized and massified existence the space for the private is diminished.

Another technological trend eroding the significance of the private in the contemporary world is the trend toward the creation of a public persona in the high tech world. The internet creates a technological possibility for everyone to become both publisher and publicist. While that generates a certain "democratic" influence, one should not confuse the democratization of culture with the promotion of the private. The availability of personal information via the internet transforms areas that were traditionally associated with the private, such as medical records, criminal records, and personal finance, into the domain of the public. User domains such as Youtube and Facebook further this trend as the users post elements of their private lives into the public domain. As a society we have not only adapted to this, but have become willing participants in erosion of privacy. The popularity of websites such as Youtube.com ("broadcast yourself"), Facebook.com, personal blogs, and other text and web-video sites provides evidence that people are embracing this trend. They *desire* to be seen by others, to display their seemingly private and personal information in the public domain of the internet.

Finally, there is the use of information technology, broadly speaking, for the enhancement of the surveillance capacities of the modern state. The security apparatus at the disposal of state governments is extensive. In London there are surveillance cameras through much of the city. In many European states cameras are used to monitor traffic laws, with citation being issued based on the evidence from the high-tech monitoring devices. This trend is now emerging in the United States.

As an effect of this trend, the political and social *expectation* of privacy is being eroded. In its place is a doctrine that implicitly asserts that our lives are the domain of the public, and are thereby subject to public scrutiny. In total, this creates a climate in which the public is more accepting of the state wielding political power over the masses through the use of "devices of intrusion," forcing a populace into surveillance interactions with the state that are non-consensual. The state uses surveillance devices in order to intrude on the privacy of its people for the purpose of controlling and dominating their interactions (Einstadter, 1992, p. 285). Continual surveillance, online personal data, and other information is collected by the state and made available to public and private agencies that request it.

The spread of high technology, and the creation of a culture in which its use is the norm, erodes the resistance to the broader application of technology in the creation of the security state. Through technological advances, information processing and propagation becomes faster and easier over vast expanses of geographic distances (Diebold, 1962, p. 38). Legislation in the United States congress will require every citizen to obtain what has been termed a "real ID card." This card serves as a driver's license, but also contains other personal information. This program, executed through the Department of Homeland Security, links the REAL ID card to national databases. It is, in effect, a national identification card.

Whether viewed as desirable or not the effects of such developments on the notion of private space seem clear. The state has intruded into the personal realm of its citizens to

the point of requiring them to carry a device that serves as a quick and easy reference to detailed documented aspects of an individual's life. Whereas the private sphere was once considered a constitutionally protected arena, encoded into common law, such principles are now rapidly being transformed into antiquated relics of the past.

IV. Subjectivity and Policy in the Emerging Public Sphere

From the time of ancient Greece until the Renaissance, the idea of a private sphere was absent from the Western political lexicon. For the Greeks, economics was viewed as a component of collective life. During the Middle Ages, the public arena was characterized by a collective process of production, distribution, and consumption, along with a centralized system of ownership in which private accumulation was limited to the personal possession of the household. In this context, the notion of a sphere of private activity did not have the fertile soil in which to grow.

It was with the rise of capitalism, the emergence of a private economy, private property, and private wealth that the concept of the private sphere emerged. The private sphere was a significant force in undoing both the monarchical bonds of feudal aristocracy and the stranglehold of religious doctrines over intellectual life. Without the development of a private space for conscience, creative thought and exploration, the scientific advancements of the modern period would not have been possible.

All of these historical events exert pressure in the same direction. They produced a more individualistic view of the human identity in which the space for a private life was part of the ontological construction of the modern individual. Merchants and traders were not dependent on the authority of kings or member of the church hierarchy for the production of their livelihood. This required the generation of a new understanding of the self in order to make the new social process appear rational. Such a development made space for the notion of the private.

The emergence of the private created a notion of identity in which the formal freedoms accorded to the newly formed individual were fixed in the social contract. The emerging process of production required a labor force that can move to where the jobs are. They must be free to enter into contracts. They must be assumed to have the reason necessary to perform these tasks. The individual must be rational and independent as a necessary condition for the growth of capitalism. In order to explore new ways of expanding the productivity of labor, and thereby increase profits, people must have the formal freedom to explore the regular patterns of nature. The products of that exploration, as science and technology, can then be applied to the production process.

All of these changes generate a new understanding of the self with a greater emphasis on the private than had been seen in previous generations. Scientific rationality displaced the theological claims to knowledge. Eventually, the tradition system of hierarchical political power was replaced with a political apparatus with some level of input from the middle and lower classes. These political and social changes would not be possible without the notion of the private as being considered essential to the realization of our natures.

Today, the conditions in which subjectivity is being constructed have been transformed. The rise of religious fundamentalism in its various forms has pushed at the do-

main of the private across the globe. Even where there is not direct control by religious institutions over policy matters, like the United States, there has been considerable accommodation to religious doctrine within policy debates. The result is that policy discussions take on the tone of religious debates. Matters of abortion, the criminalization of drug use, stem cell research, and the technology of cloning have all been part of a discourse in which there has been the intrusion of religious norms and values into the domain of policy outcomes. The community of believers has, in some cases, overridden the interests of individuals and scientific investigators. As a matter of process, religious fundamentalism allows no space for the private. All matters of conscience are considered public matters.

In the state, the liberal doctrine that emerged to protect the individual's private sphere is being eroded in the name of security. The logic of the security state is undeniable, the more the entire population is under the surveillance by a national security apparatus, the less likely that the order of society will be disrupted by unanticipated events. As a result, the more the public is fearful of these disruptions the more they are likely to willingly accommodate the attrition of privately directed actions.

Liberalism, as the ideological adjustment to the changing material and cultural conditions in the early modern period, was based on the protection of the life, liberty, and property of individuals. Thus, the public sphere's major role was the protection of the private. This was carried out by constructing a balance in which the absolute liberty of the individual was exchanged for the protection and convenience of a government. However, the object to be protected was the private, the life, liberty, and property that were in the domain of individual, private existence.

However, the security state that is emerging protects life and property with the sacrifice of liberty, as the intrusion of the state into every greater areas of life undermines the individuality that is at the center of the liberal notion of liberty. Security is carried out as a mass activity, a bureaucratic enterprise in which all that is private becomes subject to public scrutiny. The private sphere contracts under such conditions.

Finally, with the emergence of high technology communications and data storage we increasingly find our identity transformed. The cultural ethos of the present age requires that everyone be plugged in to the media and the mass communications technologies. As a result the public takes on the character of what Jean Baudrillard (1983, p. 127) calls "sending and receiving satellites." Where all are connected, what circulates within that domain takes on the force of truth.

But such a development within the culture cannot enhance the notion of the private. It is a mass form of activity in which individuality and private space give way to the demands for more information and more public access into the private domain of everyday people. The result is an expansion of the public arena, in which all matters become the fodder of public discourse. In the culture, the expectation emerges that identity is a public matter. The impact of this change is shrinking space for the private sphere.

Conclusion

If it were our contention that social and political conditions were the result of an evolution of transcendent human will, then it would be possible to formulate a conclusion that suggested that erosion of the private in society can be offset by the determination of the human spirit. Once we are aware of the problem, we can reinvigorate our protections of the private from the encroachment of collective power, both corporate and public. However, as was stated in the Introduction, such a claim does not represent our view.

If identity is formulated in a fashion that accommodates the transformative changes taking place in the broader social, economic, and cultural environment, then another conclusion is warranted. It is our view that the historical conditions that have emerged with the growth of heavy industrial production, high tech communications, the push of religious fundamentalism, and the security focus of the nation-state are all creating a climate in which the construction of human identity and the ideological formulations of the private are being transformed.

The conditions that gave rise to the growth of a private sphere as a central component in modern liberal ideology were products of unique historical conditions which are now being eclipsed by a new age. We should expect the new ideological formulation to be more accommodating to the idea of personal data becoming more available in the public domain. Corporations seek medical and financial records from the citizenry. In the name of security, governments seek access to increasing amounts of information regarding the private thoughts and actions of the citizens within their territories. Liberal ideology will be transformed to accommodate these changes.

These developments provide an interesting challenge for democracy. Democracy emerged to protect the private sphere from encroachment by institutional power. However, today as the sphere of the private is shrinking, the foundational supports for democratic practice must also be transformed. Democratic procedures become less suitable for assuring the protection of the private sphere and become adapted to provide a legitimating mechanism for expanding the centralized power of administration. The substantive values embedded within the liberal logic are transformed to instrumental ones, with social order and the efficiency of production become the hallmarks of the evolving political order.

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