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Introduction

The chief, if not only spur to human industry and action is *uneasiness* [of the mind].

—John Locke

The liberalism with which John Locke (1632–1704) is commonly identified has its origins in two widely shared and profoundly influential seventeenth-century assumptions: first, that human beings are by their nature free, rational, and equal; second, that they are therefore capable of murder, theft, and mayhem and are hence in mortal danger. Liberalism thus originates in ambivalence—in the need to order, if not limit, what it valorizes to be natural and emancipatory.

The commitment to constitutional government, with its authority limited by the sovereignty of the people, the emphasis on the rule of law as the means by which this authority is to be exercised, and, crucially, the identification of and protection from arbitrary abridgement of individual rights, including the right to property—these are the familiar responses, subsequently designated as liberal, to the hope and vexation that stem from these two epochal assumptions. In Locke, and more generally in the liberal tradition he has spawned, the intuitive justification for the institutions these responses define derives from the presumption that they establish determinate spheres of moral right which comport with the interests of free, rational, and equal individuals and in so doing avert the diabolical consequences immanent in the unregulated interactions of our natural condition. Liberal politi-

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cal institutions, one might say, are motivated and guided by the artifice of embedding the interactions among individuals within normative precincts and allowing individuals to be who they are within the constraints and possibilities of those precincts.

The defining problem of modern political philosophy, and of liberalism as a salient instance of that philosophy, is the justification of political authority and its various subsidiary institutions—an authority that is required for the stability of liberalism's normative precincts. This is so precisely because such institutions place constraints on what is taken as fundamental and natural, namely, the freedom of the individual. It is in response to this problem that the conflicts among individuals, that is, their capacity to murder and infringe on each other, are most commonly traduced as a justifying basis. Because we have interests and appetites and the acknowledged freedom to pursue such interests, and because in such pursuit we encounter others similarly motivated, and finally because such encounters can lead to violent and dire consequences, we agree, within constraints, to have our interests and freedom ordered and limited by an external authority. This is the archetypal narrative underlying the modern justification of political authority. It has a flexibility that allows it to take various forms. Interests, for instance, can be attached simply to individuals or to groups based on social and economic class, occupational commonalities, gender, ethnic associations, and various other combinations. Whatever their particular configuration, they are meant to vindicate the basic idea that a conflict of interests backed by appetites occasions the need for institutions that can ameliorate the diabolical effects of such encounters.

As a response to a historical predicament, this account captures many of the central political and social modalities of seventeenth-century England. The fact that Locke was deeply preoccupied with such sources of conflict and instability and that the political institutions he designed were meant at least in part as a redress to

them is beyond credible dispute. He was writing during and in the immediate aftermath of the most turbulent and fractious years of English history: it would have been almost impossible to have remained indifferent to or complacent about the varied interests that had all but shattered the society he lived in.

Passions of the Mind

Notwithstanding the significance and reach of interests and appetites as motivators and explanators of conflict (and cooperation), they do not come close to exhausting the sources of such behavior, or of human endeavor more generally. In this book I pursue this simple insight. In contrast to the common emphasis on interests and appetites as underlying the project of liberalism, I view this project, as Locke elaborated it, as a response to cognitive concerns and specifically to a concern with the effects of the imagination and other passions associated with the mind. The contrast between the consequences of interests and the consequences of cognitive considerations is ultimately a matter of emphasis. It is not my purpose to deny the role played by the former; I am more concerned with pointing to the largely ignored significance, presence, and political implications of the latter. This contrast in emphasis does, however, have far-reaching effects on the puzzles we construct and the questions we ask of Locke, of liberalism, and of the societies most of us live in. As a single instance of such an effect, the acknowledgment of cognitive anxieties and a concern with the implications of the imagination reveal the sense and extent to which Locke is concerned not merely with settling the boundaries *between* individuals, that is, questions of peace, order, and authority, but also, while being concerned with these very questions, with settling the internal boundaries *of* individuals. In the concluding chapter of this work, I suggest that the status we accord to what we do in

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private—the familiar focus of privacy rights—is itself inextricably related to the status we accord to the imagination and to the way we conceptualize the human capacity to fantasize.¹ Locke is concerned not merely with individuals' interests but also with their subjective identities. As such he is, even as a political thinker or rather perhaps because he is a political thinker, concerned with a broadly psychological issue.

Underlying individual actions are a wide range of motives and dispositions, including, of course, urges that stem from capacities we do not under many circumstances feel in full control of. The elaboration of such a claim may have its fullest expression in the psychoanalytical tradition, but the basic insight that informs it is, as Freud himself emphasized, as ancient as “the poets” and a familiar feature of ordinary experience.² One need not invoke concepts such as the “unconscious” or deeply repressed childhood fantasies to give credence to the thought that much of human action and many of the conflicts attending it derive from passions, impulses, and drives the effects of which are made more threatening by virtue of the intractable sources from which they spring. The human capacity to imagine, to fantasize, and to treat such fantasies as real have political associations that go back at least as far as Plato's banishment of the poets from his republic.

The seventeenth century is similarly replete with the minutiae of interiority, of feelings, of autobiography, of psychologically revealing self portraits, of lonely Protestant consciences rustling

¹ Recently much has been written about fantasy, especially by feminist scholars. See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), and “The Force of Fantasy: Feminism, Mapplethorpe, and Discursive Excess,” *Differences* 2 (Summer 1990), 105–25; Andrea Dworkin, *Pornography: Men Possessing Women* (New York: Seal, 1981); Jean Laplanche, “Formation of Fantasy,” in *Formation of Fantasy*, ed. Victor Burgin, James Donald, and Cora Kaplan (London: Methuen, 1986). Also, Jean-Paul Sartre's *The Psychology of the Imagination* (1940; London: Methuen, 1972), though not recent, remains a classic.

² Sigmund Freud, *An Autobiographical Sketch*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1952), p. 56.

with the absence of “superiors,” and, perhaps most telling, of private diaries usually, as with Locke, written in cypher. Of the diary during this period Christopher Hill has said, “[it] does not put before us a single rounded personality, but a broken bundle of mirrors.”³ It was, after all, a remarkable register or balance sheet into which were compressed the details of manifold internal struggles: of indolence and ascetic self-discipline, of spiritual deviation and rectitude, of passionate and voluptuous fantasies and literal collusions or chastisements, of work done and procrastinated, of emotions experienced and suppressed—and all this recorded and scrutinized in private. The status accorded the imagination in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reveals it as simultaneously informing the rich efflorescence of utopian and dissenting thought and being held liable by Milton, no less, for Eve’s fateful transgression.⁴ It is not surprising that in times when the political, theological, and scientific mold of the past millennium was being recast, the imagination would acquire almost unprecedented prestige. And yet, precisely because it was recognized for authoring these forceful effects, it was almost immediately condemned by the further potential it was assumed to embody. In England, at least, with the seventeenth century we approach and cross that cusp before which, in Michel Foucault’s words, “everyday individuality . . . remained below the threshold of description.”⁵

In emphasizing interests and appetites to the exclusion of other sources of human conflict and anxiety, we risk overlooking aspects of modern individuality that give it much of its richness

³ Christopher Hill, *Writing and Revolution in Seventeenth-Century England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985), 1:259.

⁴ “Assaying by his Devilish art to reach / The Organs of her Fancy, and with them forge / Illusions as he list, Phantasms and Dreams, / Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint / Th’ animal spirits that from pure blood arise / Like gentle breath from Rivers pure, thence raise / At least distemper’d, discontented thoughts, / Vain hopes, inordinate desires, / Blown up with high conceit engend’ring pride”; John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, IV: 801–9.

⁵ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 12.

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and specificity and through which it is itself formed. Similarly, by viewing the basis and justification of political institutions by reference to interests and appetites, we obscure, by not acknowledging, their complex relationship with the psychological desiderata of modern individuality. And perhaps most important, by emphasizing the role of interests to the exclusion of cognitive considerations, we distort and understate the constraining effects of liberal institutions on the very individuality to which these institutions are meant to give expression.

I attempt to redress this absence, first, by elaborating the significance of certain cognitive (i.e., nonappetitive) features of human nature by displaying their manifest importance in Locke's political thought, and, second, by revealing Locke's response to the presence of these features and in the process suggesting how in Locke the broad contours of what one takes to be the individual derive from this response. To summarize, my central claim is that for Locke the coherence and stability of his liberalism depend on its capacity to foster successfully a particular self-understanding in which individuals come to view themselves as individuals, and that such a self-understanding is heavily contingent on embedding individuals within liberal institutions, including, most centrally, liberal education. Locke's view of education, despite a plethora of mundane details, is principally a response to the volatile effects he associates with the untutored or natural imagination. Above all else, it is an attempt to rein in the imagination, to anchor it in the fixity of habits, to curb its potential extravagance and depth by imbuing it with an outlook of deference to authority and social norms—in a word, to discipline and hence standardize its potential effects. Modern political philosophy since Machiavelli has often been acknowledged as emphasizing, in contrast to the ancients, the theme of political artifice, *techné*, and construction generally. I suggest how, despite the language of human *nature*, the reach of this theme includes the artificing of a particular kind of individuality.

As the term itself suggests, individuality can take various forms, and the phenomenon to which it refers can similarly be variously described. One such account is found in Albert Hirschman's important and highly suggestive book *The Passions and the Interests*. Hirschman draws attention to the emergence and acknowledgment of self-interest as a socially salutary mode of behavior by a variety of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century authors.⁶ The moral and political endorsement of self-interested behavior was valorized through a contrast with the unpredictable and often violent consequences attached to the passions. Hirschman gives a fascinating account of how the old Christian association between avarice and sin was uncoupled to popularize and advocate the pursuit of self-interest. But to appreciate fully the originality of these advocates one must be clear about what they were opposing and the long-standing legacy they confronted. The preference for self-interest arose because it gave human actions a predictable and stable course in contrast to the passions, with their characteristically elusive underpinnings and volatile effects. Whereas the former encouraged a cautious attitude of calculation—balancing risks and benefits—the latter typically involved single-minded behavior with ruinous side effects. Similarly, whereas behavior governed by the interests was characteristically “cool and deliberate,” the passions were widely disparaged as leading to impulsive, heated, and irrational acts. Hirschman's focus is almost exclusively on the aristocratic and militaristic passion for glory, with its ideal of conquest and its bloody effects.⁷

Despite Hirschman's rather narrow focus on glory, the point he makes regarding the passions as the mark of a particularly

⁶ Albert Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

⁷ For an interesting critical discussion of Hirschman, see Stephen Holmes, “The Secret History of Self-Interest,” in *Beyond Self-Interest*, ed. Jane Mansbridge (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 267–86.

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subversive kind of behavior has a broader plausibility and an ancient association. Ancient and modern literature is replete with lists of specific passions such as anger, envy, and melancholy, the effects of which are singled out as conspicuous expressions of a special deformity with marked social consequences. Perhaps any generalization regarding the composition of such lists and their underlying justification is bound to be inadequate without considerable contextual support, although the salience of passions with an obvious cognitive component is revealing. Despite this important caveat, three features stand out which distinguish certain passions and explain the widespread antipathy and suspicion they have provoked at least, though not exclusively, since the seventeenth century.

There is above all the aspect of an absence of self-control. Our common parlance still captures the sense in which particular passions lead to outbursts or even moments of paralysis that are unified by the fact that they are understood to stem from an absence of deliberative intervention. Saint Augustine identifies precisely this feature in his interpretation of the fall from innocence when Adam and Eve cover their genitals. For Augustine, the shame ascribed to this moment is of secondary significance and is, in any case, explained by the fact that, having eaten from the forbidden fruit and thus splintered the unitary divine force that *informed* the world, Adam at least finds his genitals moving “on their own accord.” Because that original transgression releases a force that humans beings manifest but over which they have in fact only an illusionary and partial control, Adam and Eve’s disobedience expresses a hubris to which the piety and quietude of faith are the only redress. It is not surprising that sexuality and the passions associated with it should come to symbolize in the Western tradition what Foucault calls the “seismograph of . . . subjectivity.”⁸

Linked to this absence of self-control is a second feature that

⁸ M. Foucault, “Sexuality and Solitude,” in *On Signs*, ed. Marshall Blonsky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 368.

underlies the impugning of various passions. Passions have an air of mystery attached to them. Unlike interests, whose justifications as motivators of human actions can be gleaned from the surface because they are acknowledged as interests only when some plausible advantage can be said to accrue from them, the passions, even though they are named and as such have a denominational identity, often designate a person only as being under the governance of an inscrutable motive. In this, the madman, the neurotic, and the divine, or at any rate the religious enthusiast, are the objects of shared suspicion.

Finally, and again closely linked with an absence of self-control, is the aspect of misguided excess. We identify passion, as the term in its common usage itself suggests, with activities and impulses in which some presumed limit is transgressed and where, as it were, the destination of the activity is either unknown, insatiable, or willfully denied. This feature is perhaps best captured by the familiar expression “to be blinded by passion.”⁹

As becomes evident in Chapter 3, Locke identifies and impugns the imagination with all three of these threatening features. Still, a focus on the imagination and cognitive features more generally is largely absent in interpretations of Locke’s political thought, as is a recognition of the extent of his ambivalence about the human capacities he acknowledges as natural. It is as though we have read and accepted the term “natural” with a premodern solemnity associated with dispositions and attributes chiseled in granite. Yet, it is around the very terms “nature” and “naturalness” that the most creative artifices of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theorizing are constructed. In Bacon, Vico, Descartes, and, conspicuously, Hobbes, the term “nature” is deployed as an elaborate pun in which a concept resonant with ancient echoes of universality and necessity is serviced to promote a program replete with contingency and artifice.¹⁰

⁹The idea of passions as blinding has far-reaching importance for Hobbes. See Butler, “Force of Fantasy.”

¹⁰The theme of naturalness and artifice inaugurates Hobbes’s *Leviathan*:

It is the inculcation and consolidation of specific self-understandings, forged in response to Locke's recognition of particular features of the mind as fundamental to a stable order, that protect the determinate spheres and moral rights associated with liberalism. The profound and pervasive anxiety regarding these natural cognitive tendencies necessitates their reconstitution along with a specification of the possibilities for their expression. When Locke at the outset of the *Second Treatise* declares that we "must of necessity find out another rise of Government . . . [and] another Original of Political Power," he immediately follows this ambitious propaedeutic with the announcement that we must find "another way of designing and knowing the Persons" who are to have political power.¹¹ In light of Locke's anxieties and apprehensions pertaining to the mind, his remark regarding the need to *design* the persons who are to have political power can be seen as having literal importance.

This process of design or reconstitution is what in Chapter 4 I call the formation of individuality and it is in the course of this formation that I characterize Locke as trying to limit the acceptable forms individuality can take. At the center of Locke's theory of individuality is an emphasis on self-control and moderation, both of which are seen as derivative of the correct exercise of reason. These may very well be important virtues for individuals who, in the pursuit of their interests, run up against similar individuals. But, if the argument I am making is correct, Locke valorizes these virtues by reference to a wholly different anxiety or problematic, and they thus have a different set of effects and

"Nature (the Art whereby God hath made and governes the World) is by the *Art* of man, as in many other things, so in this also imitated, that it can make an Artificial Animal"; *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (New York: Penguin, 1968), p. 81.

¹¹ John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 2d ed., ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 286. Hereafter cited as *Preface*, *First Treatise*, or *Second Treatise*.

implications—a different normative status. They are urged on individuals in response to the natural consequences of their imaginations, and hence they should be seen as attempts to delimit and mold the particular expressions of the imagination. In this response to the imagination—this attempt to regiment it, to prescribe and standardize its content, to make it submit to conventional authority—Lockean liberalism, while forming the individual, compromises his or her full potential and thus betrays an underlying conservatism.

The argument I am making is not one in which individuality is tied to a libertine imagination, to unschooled instincts, or to rationally uncontrolled urges. Nor am I proposing a Sartrean view in which the world of action is wholly determined by the possibilities of a imagined universe.¹² It is not therefore an argument against reflective and deliberative intervention in behavior. Instead my point is to show how in Locke rationality and the means for its inculcation, such as his pedagogy, function to close off forms of individual self-expression, to raise barriers against the eccentric; they are deployed to construct, consolidate, and impose a norm of “normality.” In the face of motives that may be inscrutable, excessive, and singularly willful, and that may therefore issue in actions at odds with accepted and prevailing practices, Locke urges a transparency that all but requires adherence to a commonality of rather traditional norms and purposes.

What is ultimately revealing and disturbing in Locke’s treatment of the imagination is that it is spurred by an anxiety about

¹² What I have in mind in making this comment are such remarks as the following: “It is necessary to reverse the common opinion and acknowledge that it is not the harshness of a situation or the suffering it imposes that leads people to conceive of another state of affairs in which things would be better for everybody. *It is on the day that we are able to conceive of another state of affairs, that a new light is cast on our trouble and our suffering and we decide that they are unbearable*”; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1966), pp. 434–35, emphasis added.

rather than a confidence in the potential effects of an individual's inwardness. The imagination is the expression of such inwardness; it represents a reflexivity that resists and even challenges the control and disengagement or, to use Charles Taylor's wonderfully appropriate and evocative term, the "punctuality" Locke hopes to promote and affirm.¹³ This outlook underlies the puzzle of how a philosophy ostensibly committed to individual freedom and difference is transformed into an ideology of conformity with an anxious concern about individual conduct. In this book I attempt to draw out some of the implications that bear the enduring marks of the anxiety and temerity underlying Locke's affirmation of freedom and individuality.

It is a commonplace in studying Hobbes and Locke to refer to the naturalistic conceptions of human beings that underpin their political commitments. Often overlooked is the extent and manner in which these foundations have an ambivalent relation to the very political commitments they are meant to undergird. In Hobbes, the fear the sovereign inspires is an expression of both his power to coerce and his capacity to get individuals to restrain their own passions. Similarly in Locke, even though the mechanisms of restraint and the passions are different, institutions are meant to effect a change in what is taken to be the naturalistic core of human beings. In both Hobbes and Locke, and of course conspicuously in Rousseau and Hegel, political institutions fur-

¹³ Charles Taylor, "Locke's Punctual Self," in *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), pp. 159–76. Taylor identifies Locke with the culmination of a tradition of "inwardness" which had its greatest expression in St. Augustine. At the moment of this culmination, inwardness is transformed into a concern with disengagement and control. Taylor's chapter on Locke has several stunning and far-ranging insights, but it does, I believe, understate the extent to which Locke's thought is riddled with anxiety about those features of the mind that cannot be marshaled for purposes of control and responsibility, such as the imagination. Judith Shklar is, I think, right when she speaks of a underlying sadness in Locke's thought, a sadness linked with "a perpetual uneasiness"; see Judith Shklar's review of *Sources of the Self* in *Political Theory* 19 (February 1991), 105–9.

nish the conditions for a transformed self-understanding—a self-understanding that buttresses political institutions as credible expressions of moral norms. The rights associated with a stable Lockean liberalism, I am suggesting, require that individuals view themselves in a specifically Lockean manner.¹⁴ And this perspective is principally fashioned through Locke’s elaborate regime for the education of young children. In this context, I am urging that we give to Locke’s writings on education the same conceptual centrality that Rousseau’s writings on education have long since been accorded with respect to his political thought. It is in his educational writings, the political significance of which is all but explicitly acknowledged in the *Second Treatise*, that one sees not simply Locke’s ambivalence about our natural capacities and tendencies but also the degree to which these tendencies must be molded before the child is self-conscious. To put it differently, we see the extent to which the self-consciousness of the mature adult and citizen is the product of careful and detailed pedagogical crafting.

The claim that there are conditions for self-understanding must, however, in the context of Locke at least, be sharply distinguished from the postmodernist claim that there is no truth about selves independent of the way they understand themselves. Whatever tilt one gives this antiessentialism, whether in the direction of Richard Rorty’s spirited and eclectic pragmatism or in the way of Gilles Deleuze’s proto-Marxist affirmation of schizophrenia, it does not serve the prosaic task of interpreting Locke. John Dunn and numerous other scholars have amply confirmed that Locke’s thought, notwithstanding the various

¹⁴I am indebted to Joshua Cohen for this formulation. The issue of self-understanding and its relationship to political institutions is often discussed in terms of the social bases of self-respect, which Rawls featured as an important primary good. See Joshua Cohen, “Democratic Equality,” *Ethics* 99 (July 1989), 727–51; Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 61–63, 192–93; and Nancy Rosenblum, *Another Liberalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), especially pp. 153–86.

transitions it straddles, is firmly anchored by theological axioms that vitiate such postmodernist claims as credible interpretations.¹⁵

The claim that institutions have a transformative, and not merely regulative, character is a fairly commonplace one. The transformative character of political and social institutions has ancient associations. Max Weber refers to the magical significance attached to primitive contracts as instances of ancient political and even private institutions. Contracts were viewed as magical acts precisely because it was assumed that “the person would ‘become’ something different in quality (or status) from the quality he possessed before. Each party must thus make a new ‘soul’ enter his body.”¹⁶ Freud writes of “the nature of the mental change” effected in individuals by their association to a political leader, a change with transforming effects at both individual and group levels. He links this change, in an analysis suggestive both of Hobbes and of Weber’s discussion of charisma, with the fear of leaders and the memory this provokes of paternal domination.¹⁷ For Nietzsche, covenants and contracts, both ancient and modern, effect their significance in the violence and cruelty they inflict on the mind and the body—a violence registered in a deeply personal “guilt and suffering” the effects of which invariably endure beyond the terms of the covenants and contracts.¹⁸ This widespread acknowledgment of the transformative effects of political and social institutions underscores the

¹⁵ Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (New York: Verso, 1985), pp. 93–145.

¹⁶ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 2:672.

¹⁷ Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1959), pp. 49–50. Also see Anne Norton, *Reflections on Political Identity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), chaps. 3 and 4.

¹⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1969), pp. 61–65.

need for careful attention to precisely how and in virtue of what exigency such transformations are felt and directed. In Locke, I am suggesting, political and social institutions are marshaled because of an anxiety associated with the natural cognitive tendencies of the mind. Given the nature of this anxiety and the fact that it is attached to a view regarding the mind's *natural* tendencies, it is not surprising that Locke's efforts should be directed at the infant child.

Madness and the Imagination

From a broad range of modern perspectives, as a mode of theorizing and in terms of its normative ideals, there is something self-evidently appealing even beyond the attraction that familiarity breeds about the liberal political vision, with its focused attention on human nature and its attendant requirements. It acknowledges a broad diversity of beliefs, values, dispositions, and interests and an implied plurality of life plans. It features as a central human commitment an interest in freedom, and it professes to design and justify political institutions only to the extent that they satisfy the interests of individuals conceived as free, equal, and rational.

As the expression of a historical motive, liberalism redresses the millennium and a half of Christian neglect to such human imperatives. By giving clear expression to the domain of human concerns, it disentangles them from the obscuring web of "natural hierarchies" and providential plans. And despite the teleological traces that persist in the form of substantive political constraints, despite Nietzsche's charge that they are indicative of a "*will* to self-belittlement . . . since Copernicus,"¹⁹ this vision celebrates the triumph of human self-assertion. It brings into the

¹⁹Ibid., p. 68.

foreground a consideration of human will, capacities, preferences, and interests without resorting to the excessive philosophical paternalism and inequities of ancient Greek essentialism. In brief, it frees human beings, in great measure by conceiving of them as naturally free, from the medieval premise that the world has a particular order that fully prescribes the mode of their behavior in it.²⁰

John Locke has come to represent an archetype of such theorizing. His opposition to the political absolutism of his times and of some of his philosophical contemporaries, his endorsement of constitutional government, with the superintending assurances regarding the sovereignty of the people and the limits that such sovereignty places on the legitimate exercise of political authority, are all commonly viewed as having their basis in a view of individuals as equal, free, and rational. The familiar institutional arrangements with which he is identified all have their putative justification in “procuring, preserving and advancing” the interest people have in “life, liberty, health and indolence of body, and the possession of outward things.”²¹ Like Hobbes, Locke has come to stand for a style of theorizing that is driven by, and receives its inspiration from, the imperatives of human nature. The challenge of political institutions is to accommodate human beings as they are in their natural plenitude, subject to certain normative constraints and the securing of peace and social order.

Where political institutions emerge from and are designed to accommodate our interests in procurement and self-preservation, it is perhaps only to be expected that the other expressions of our freedom evince a decorous tenacity. There is a self-assurance to Locke’s “men,” with their natural rights, their

²⁰ See Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1983), pp. 181–85.

²¹ John Locke, *A Letter on Toleration* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1980), p. 12.

property, their natural interpretive and executive facility regarding their rights, their reason carefully trained on natural law which gives their world its moral moorings—and all this before they become citizens. Perhaps for such beings the need for political society has no greater urgency than the persistent irritant that stems from wandering into other people’s turf, of getting one’s interpretations of natural law entangled in juridical confusion, or the inconvenience of finding, among one’s midst, the occasional miscreant with excessively possessive appetites. Perhaps for this reason Locke’s political thought has so often tempted theorists and citizens with the fantasy that, with few modifications, it could be pressed into service to all but evacuate the need for any coercive regulative mechanism.²² On this reckoning, political society may very well be, as some of Locke’s formulations suggest, an elaborate procedure for defining a *primus inter pares* or, in Locke’s still more undramatic terms, a “common superior” with a power and authority to settle conflicts, make and interpret laws, and incarcerate those with excessively possessive appetites.

In trying to understand this political vision, with its sober assumptions regarding human nature, it may appear that one should eschew the categories of political philosophy and instead invoke the insights of a sociological tradition that has focused on the significance of the plethora of social details that underlie such a vision and give it its self-assurance. The sobriety of political society and the citizens who inhabit it may simply be the visible veneer that conceals a complex constellation of carefully crafted and rigorously enforced social codes, duties, and obligations. The challenge, therefore, of maintaining and reproducing liberal

²² The most distinguished modern exponents of this tradition are Friedrich Hayek and Robert Nozick. See Hayek, *Law, Legislation and Liberty*, vol. 1: *Rules and Order*, and *Law, Legislation and Liberty*, vol. 2: *The Mirage of Social Justice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973, 1978); and R. Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

societies is to be sought and understood through the cultural mores, the social conventions, the aesthetic sensibilities and, more broadly, the *habits* that quietly give such societies their stability and coherence.²³ Or perhaps in trying to understand the basis of Locke's liberalism and its political and institutional vision one should start by studying the novel, whose provenance is broadly coincident with the more philosophical and theoretical justifications of liberalism, and which, in Lionel Trilling's words, was "the most effective agent of the moral imagination" during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.²⁴ Perhaps what is implicitly presumed in a work such as Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* is the vast range of interdictions, disciplines, and restrictions to which Michel Foucault gave sustained and insightful attention. Perhaps what allows the formalisms of freedom, equality, and rationality to serve as the basis of such a complex social and political phenomenon of such enduring longevity is that these terms are merely the gloss, the caption, to a well-manicured set of latent cultural dispositions and sensibilities. Perhaps the absence of a more turbulent and contested domain to which political institutions are meant as a redress is puzzling simply because we have read Locke, literally, as a theorist and a philosopher whose pronouncements are thus presumed to have a generality, whereas in fact his thought was biographically anchored in the vision of an English gentleman with aristocratic affiliations, presuming on the accompanying assurances. Perhaps

²³ For a discussion of habits, see Norbert Elias, *The Court Society*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon, 1983), and *The Civilizing Process: Power and Civility*, vol. 2, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon, 1982); and Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 80–97, and *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984). Also see the brilliant essays "Fashion" and "Subordination and Personal Fulfillment" by Georg Simmel in *On Individuality and Social Forms*, ed. Donald N. Levine (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 294–323, 340–48.

²⁴ Lionel Trilling, *The Liberal Imagination* (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1950), p. 214.

we have simply exaggerated the distance between Locke and Burke.

Even though I do not, in the main, follow these suggestions, they are not meant rhetorically. Harold Laski's comment that it is, "indeed, one of the primary characteristics of the British mind to be interested in problems of conduct rather than of thought" has a particular resonance with Locke.²⁵ His stature and influence as a philosopher in the eighteenth century was matched, if not rivaled, by his stature and influence as a glorified Mr. Manners.²⁶ Certainly Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* has a better claim than most explicitly philosophical and political interpretations as the deepest reading of Locke's conception of the imagination and the self. No work, in my view, has elaborated, albeit humorously, the anxious implications that follow from Locke's doctrine of the free association of ideas and associationist psychology more generally than Sterne's novel.

And yet, for the most part, Locke's interpreters have not focused on or even drawn attention to an underlying preoccupation with cognitive and imaginary anxieties and to the political implications that follow from these. In a sense it is easy to understand this omission and the derivative omission of a perspective that takes issues of self-understanding and self-control as central. As I have indicated, the problematic with which Locke and the tradition he spawned are linked is one in which free, rational, and equal individuals, by virtue of these capacities, invade each other's turf or, more egregiously, murder and cause mayhem. The context of the civil war and revolution in seventeenth-century England, one might assume, gives historical support to this perspective. Individuals have possessive appetites and are partial to their own interests, and thus, with or without

²⁵ Harold Laski, *Political Thought in England: From Locke to Bentham* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 11.

²⁶ See Hans Aarsleff, "Locke's Reputation in Nineteenth Century England," *Monist* 55 (1971), 409.

provocation, they are liable to incite disorder. In the presence of such possibilities and with the memory of their occurrence, one might assume, as I believe most Locke interpreters have, that the principal motive informing Locke's thought is to obviate such eventualities. To put it differently, if the problem to which Locke is thought to be responding is that political disorder is consequent to human appetites and interests, then it appears almost natural to assume that political institutions are meant as a mechanism to police precisely these appetites and interests. Furthermore, the significance of these institutions is exhausted by the extent of their success or failure in policing these appetites and interests within certain normative constraints. On this view, Locke turns out to be responding to much the same concerns Hobbes is commonly taken to address, even though Locke's response need not, by virtue of the commonality of problems, be a disguised endorsement of Hobbes's conclusions.²⁷

The credibility of this general perspective turns on interests and appetites being the principal source of conflict and social disorder. It is these attributes that incline human beings to the partiality that unsettles the *society* of the state of nature and threatens to subvert it into a condition of war, thus occasioning the need for political society. Nothing beyond these attributes is implicated, and therefore one might plausibly say that the responses offered in terms of political institutions need not concern themselves with other aspects of the self. And, by implication, it

²⁷ I say "commonly" because the interpretations that see Hobbes as concerned exclusively with the conflict of human interests are, I believe, ultimately misguided themselves. Joshua Cohen offers a corrective to this view by emphasizing the centrality of certain passions, principally pride and honor, in "Autonomy, Security and Authority: Hobbes's Defense of Absolutism" (M.I.T.: Political Science Department). In a similar vein, William Connolly has offered an original interpretation that emphasizes the importance of cognitive considerations in Hobbes. To the best of my knowledge, he is the only scholar to recognize and feature Hobbes's discussion of madness as central to an understanding of his political thought; see William Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp. 16–40.

may be said that issues of self-understanding have, at best, only a limited relevance—limited by the extent to which they are involved with considerations of interests and appetites.

In offering an alternative view in which self-understanding of individuals is featured and the significance of education interpreted via the role it plays in forging such a self-understanding, I am claiming that the central locus of conflict and disorder for Locke lies at a cognitive level and not at the level of interests and appetites. At the interpretive center of this book (Chapter 3) is a discussion of the imagination and specifically of madness. In contrast to a millennium and a half of theorizing about madness that identified it as a lack of Christian virtue, a mark of satanic or divine influence, or simply a form of fundamental ontological alterity, Locke views it as nothing much more than a mundane and natural feature of the imagination. Madness “has its Original in very sober and rational minds;” indeed, Locke finds it “to spring from the very same Root, and to depend on the very same Cause” as reasonableness. If it is an affliction or a condition of weakness, it is “a Weakness to which all men are . . . liable [and] which . . . universally infects mankind.” As to its effects, it “is of so great [a] force to set us awry in our actions, as well Moral as Natural Passions, Reasonings, and Notions themselves, that, perhaps, there is not any one thing that deserves more to be looked after.”²⁸ Only a thin and barely impermeable membrane tenuously holds back the sober mind from slipping into a stupor of imaginative drunkenness—a drunkenness in which, moreover, the mind is intoxicated by nothing evil, nothing exogenous, indeed nothing particularly strange, just by the imagination. Precisely because this drunken madness “springs from the very same Root” as its sober counterpart, it cannot conveniently be confined in an English equivalent of the *Hopital General*. Nor

²⁸ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Niddich (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 395–97. Hereafter cited as *Essay*.

can Locke's madmen be chained in the dungeons of the eighteenth-century penitentiaries, for if they are criminals, their crime is one of which we are all guilty. And if madness is at all associated with the goblins and spirits that invade the canvas of Heironymus Bosch's *Temptation of St. Anthony*, it is only to chastise the "foolish Maid, who so often inculcates these [images] on the mind of a child" (*Essay*, p. 398). Madness, as the weakness to which all are susceptible and as the disease that universally afflicts us has become natural. It holds court at the mind's deepest core, where it challenges politics with the constant threat of an inner insurrection.

Locke invokes none of the familiar categories through which madness had been viewed. Regarding madness, he inherits, in his own view, an analogically bankrupt tradition. Despite the enormous differences in consequences attached to madness and to its opposite in terms of social order, the distinction between the two turns on nothing except cognitive self-control and its attachments. Locke's fixation—and it was that—with madness as a cognitive condition that revealed an essential kernel of liberal societies is suggested in Tocqueville's interpretation of early nineteenth-century America:

In France we are worried about the increasing rate of suicides; in America suicides are rare, but I am told madness is commoner than anywhere else. . . . Their will resists [suicide] but reason frequently gives way. In democratic times enjoyments are more lively than in times of aristocracy. . . . But, on the other hand, one must admit that hopes and desires are much more often disappointed, minds are more *anxious* and *on edge*, and trouble is felt more keenly.²⁹

Tocqueville's comment echoes Locke's concerns. The discussion of madness is a piece, perhaps the most illustrative piece, of a

²⁹ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. G. Lawrence (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), 2:538, emphasis added.

broader concern with the political centrality of the disorders of the mind. The acknowledgement of these disorders leads, I believe, to a reconsideration of other important features of Locke's thought. For instance, interpretations of Locke's views on natural law have centered around the question whether Locke believed in such laws, acknowledged their appropriately distinct and elevated status, and associated them with the traditional set of moral injunctions and restraints.³⁰ There is a strange scholasticism to these questions, and the contortions involved in giving them significance often belie the credibility of the responses. Locke's belief in natural laws and in such laws as constituting the moral moorings of the world strikes me as beyond credible dispute. For such laws to serve as credible moral norms, however, requires more than a belief in their existence. Clearly a belief in such laws is consistent with there being a large gap between the principles they articulate and the concrete situations in which they are to supply guidance. More important, from my perspective, the existence of such laws does not settle the issue of whether at a cognitive level human beings understand and are motivated by them. Locke believes that human beings have the *capacity* for understanding natural laws and for being motivated by such understanding and by the sanctions attached to the violation of such laws. But he is far less sanguine about human beings at a natural level actually exercising the "calm and measured" reason required for understanding and being motivated

³⁰ For discussions of natural law in Locke, see Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953); John Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke: An Historical Account of the Argument of the "Two Treatises of Government"* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 187–99; Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1960), pp. 286–351; John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980); Lloyd Weinreb, *Natural Law and Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987); Ian Shapiro, *The Evolution of Rights in Liberal Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), chap. 3; Thomas Pangle, *The Spirit of Modern Republicanism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), chap. 13.

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by natural laws. Issues pertaining to natural law in Locke are not settled at the ontological level, nor at the level of epistemic capacities; rather, I believe, their precise significance in Locke's political thought is vitiated at a cognitive level, that is, by human beings who do not stay the course even after reason has acknowledged it, and this because of the "unsteadiness" of reason. Given this fact, Locke's pedagogical project, with its focused attention on molding children's minds by making them acutely sensitive to matters of reputation and authority, has a direct bearing on the viability of natural law as a tenable normative order.

Below the Threshold: Liberals and Communitarians

In recent Anglo-American political theorizing, discussions of the self have assumed a special poignance. The critical interchange between liberals and communitarians often centers on the contrasting characterizations of the self, from which are drawn wider points of contrasts. This book was not conceived or written in light of these contemporary discussions among liberals and communitarians. It was meant, and ultimately this is all I claim for it, as an interpretive essay on Locke's political thought which selectively draws on most of Locke's major writings to illustrate a particular anxiety about the natural self that underlies them. Even within this arena, my aims are considerably narrower than many works that exclusively focus on one thinker. I do not systematically consider the progression in Locke's thought from his early *Essays on Natural Law* to his mature works, nor do I distinctly deal with his views on religion, revolution, toleration, money, language, epistemology, or metaphysics. I do not discuss the contentious issue of how best to interpret a thinker such as Locke: whether to locate him within the admittedly epochal context of seventeenth-century England as a peer to the great personages and intellectuals of his times, or as a

conspiratorial pamphleteer whose concerns were mainly those of a political strategist buffeted by local constraints, or as a philosopher who wrote *sub specie aeternitatis* in the great tradition that includes Plato, Kant, and Hegel. On this latter issue, a resolute methodological indifference commits me to say nothing in advance. In any case, there is no denying that by now Locke has become an icon who sustains a polytheistic church.

Notwithstanding these denials, my argument does, I believe, in a limited manner offer a distinct perspective on the liberal-communitarian debate. Isaiah Berlin's famous "Two Concepts of Liberty" supplies a helpful way to characterize many of the issues involved in this debate. Berlin distinguishes two conceptions of liberty, negative and positive. The former, which Berlin indicates is an expressly "political liberty," defines "the area within which a man can act unobstructed by others." Echoing the argument of Mill's *On Liberty*, Berlin's principle proscribes a deliberate interference from and toward others and is hence not for the most part limited by personal capacities and talents. In contrast, the positive conception of liberty consists in being "conscious of myself as a thinking, willing, active being, bearing responsibility for my choices and able to explain them by reference to my own ideas and purposes"; in brief, it requires self-mastery and self-control, and therefore its existence or failure turns on internal grounds.³¹

The qualification in the previous paragraph—"for the most part"—is important to interpret correctly both Berlin and the liberal-communitarian debate he helps elucidate. Negative, or political, liberty is not wholly independent of human capacities and attributes. Its normative ascription is not therefore unrelated to a specification of certain human talents, even though these specifications are meant to define a minimum rather than a

³¹ Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 122, 131.

higher threshold. Thus, even for negative liberty Berlin specifies certain minimum conditions of rationality and deliberative competence that must be met before someone is considered politically free. Insanity, delirium, and hypnotic trance are all conditions that explicitly disqualify an agent from this freedom.³² Put differently, even political liberty does not merely turn on the possession of certain capacities but on the actual and competent exercise of these capacities.³³

Berlin is explicit that positive liberty requires a more richly developed set of talents and virtues, which in turn are the basis of more valuable ends, including for instance a sense of social solidarity. His point is to distinguish political freedom from a freedom that is the basis of various other valuable goods that require a higher threshold of rationality and self-control. It is the conflation of these two freedoms that Berlin is objecting to—and not to the fact that positive liberty does bring with it perhaps a richer set of ends. But both liberties are contingent and hence not absolute, they are contingent on different sets of talents requiring at a minimum a certain level of rationality. Between the talents requisite for negative freedom and those for wholly deliberative and autonomous action associated with Kant, the range is considerable and the political visions associated with this range similarly extensive.

Berlin's liberalism, like Mill's and Rawls's, and like Locke's on

³² Isaiah Berlin, "Rationality of Value Judgments," in *Nomos*, vol. 7: *Rational Decision*, ed. C. J. Friedrich (New York: New York University Press, 1964), pp. 221–23. Berlin's argument is strongly influenced by Mill, who acknowledges similar constraints on the principle of liberty. His principle applies only to "human beings in the maturity of their faculties" and to societies in which "mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion"; John Stuart Mill, "On Liberty," in *Three Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 15–16.

³³ Berlin's classic essay has generated enormous critical commentary. A recent, good discussion of positive freedom which has several insights on the complex link between positive freedom and insanity, psychosis, and mental illness is Richard Flathman, *The Philosophy and Politics of Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), especially chap. 4.

the common interpretation, is a liberalism in which the threshold of substantive conditions, including rationality, is not set so high as to be excessively exclusionary. It presumes that individuals satisfy the conditions requisite for negative liberty without demanding or expecting them not to develop the talents and life plans self-control makes possible. The challenge to this vision from communitarians such as Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Michael Walzer, and Charles Taylor, notwithstanding various important contrasts among them, is ultimately linked to a dissatisfaction with the conception of the self that is alleged to underlie this vision. This conception is variously characterized as “thin,” “anomic,” “detached,” and even “devoid of character.” At the root of these characterizations is an odd mix of ambivalence, rejection, and confusion about Berlin’s two liberties and the liberalism he and others set out. Communitarians range between denying that the persons associated with Berlin’s negative liberty are in any sense free and claiming that there exists, presumably in all or most of us, a true self that evinces the self-control and mastery associated with Berlin’s positive freedom.

Taylor, for instance, accuses such liberals as Berlin of overlooking the various ways in which even the conditions for negative liberty can be obstructed by those who are neither mad, delirious, nor hypnotized. Human beings can be beset by desires they do not really identify with (desires that run contrary to their life plans and projects); they can have “inauthentic desires” and they can respond to relatively insignificant desires. For Taylor, in responding to such desires, human beings are not free: “We can experience some desires as fetters because we can experience them as not our’s. . . . Desires may frustrate our deeper purposes and may be inner obstacles to freedom.” Taylor’s communitarianism and his critique of Berlin is an attempt to overcome “the metaphysic . . . of a higher and lower self” associated with Berlin’s two liberties.³⁴ To this end Taylor offers what curiously

³⁴ Charles Taylor, “What’s Wrong with Negative Liberty?” in *Philosophy and*

amounts to a metaphysic of the authentic self that has, as an underlying core, an implausible degree of internal equanimity, self-knowledge, and other cognitive assets. Free action is ultimately the action of this already empowered self.

Taylor's communitarianism is that of autonomous individuals unburdened by the hindrances of narrow, unreflective, silly, or shallow pleasures. Even when these pleasures are experienced as moments of freedom, they do not vindicate the self, a self Taylor wants to identify with actors who manifest an unerring self-reflective authenticity. There is a strange mix of psychological naivete and political ambivalence in Taylor's communitarian project. His "self," to whom the adjective "true" is appropriately added, is free not only of transient desires, facile needs, uncontrolled urges but also of spontaneity.³⁵ Indeed, spontaneity, which is valorized by theorists of individuality such as Nietzsche and Emerson, is seen by Taylor as the mark of a fundamental absence of self-control, discipline, and deliberation.³⁶ The profile of this individual appears sculpted by the hyperrationalism of a philosopher's experience. As for his political ambivalence, on the one hand Taylor denies people the right to lead what he calls truncated lives; we cannot "sensibly claim the morality of a truncated form of life for people on the grounds of defending their rights."³⁷ On the other hand, he does not, at least not explicitly, permit the highly interventionist measures that on his own account would be required to overcome the plethora of

the Human Sciences: Philosophic Papers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 2:225–26, 216.

³⁵ Stephen Macedo, *Liberal Virtues* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), chap. 6. I have benefited enormously from the lucid discussion of this debate in Macedo's book. See also Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, and Rosenblum, *Another Liberalism*.

³⁶ See George Kateb, "Democratic Individuality and the Claims of Politics," *Political Theory* 14 (August 1984), 331–60. I am indebted to Bonnie Honig for suggesting this point.

³⁷ Taylor, "Atomism," in *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, 2:199; also quoted in Macedo, *Liberal Virtues*.

internal obstacles that stand in the way of the self-realization of the true self.

For Sandel, the objections to liberalism derive from the gulf it opens between persons and their ends, goals, and commitments to others. It is a gulf that has its basis in the deontological presumption of individual identity that is free from the aims and attachments of individuals. For such liberals, “identity is unproblematically assured.”³⁸ All the attributes of such identity stand at a distance from it and hence have the character of possessions.³⁹ In contrast to this possessive self, which stands at a distance from its attributes because it holds them as mere possessions, Sandel offers a self constituted by commitments, attachments and situations. This situated self draws its identity from the commitments and associations with which it is, in an almost literal sense, infused. In contrast to the impersonality that liberalism, according to Sandel, encourages and the distances between and within individuals it engenders, the situated self seeks its identity from “those aims and attachments from which it cannot stand apart.” These constitutive attachments “become more and more *me* and less *mine*.”⁴⁰

Sandel’s offers this critique to diminish the distance liberalism creates between the self and its goals and ends. In valorizing constitutive attachments, Sandel would have us discover who we are by acknowledging the attachments that make us who we are. Instead of viewing these attachments with the impersonality that needs to possess them as “mine,” they are to be seen as constitutive of “me.” Sandel’s is a truly non-Lockean world, but it is so not so much because of what it proposes but rather what it

³⁸ Michael Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 179.

³⁹ It is worth considering whether this view corresponds more closely to Rawls’s view, as Sandel would have it, or rather to Taylor’s “true self.”

⁴⁰ Sandel, *Liberalism and Limits*, pp. 182, 56. See Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, for a sustained critique of the idea that one cannot stand critically apart from the allegedly constitutive attachments of the self.

presupposes—and in the critical potential it denies. Locke's individuals, one assumes, would also cherish these well-agglutinated identities that are confirmed by the knowledge of one's constitutive attachments, of one's kinship bonds and shared sentiments. But Locke's individuals, like us, though being informed and supported by these prenatal horizons, could stand apart from them, critically evaluate them, and, despite the inevitable pain and struggle involved in estranging oneself from one's inheritance, also therefore ultimately reject them.

Locke has a ubiquitous presence in the debate between liberals and communitarians. He is taken to exemplify, in its original and hence decisive form, arguments in favor of negative liberty and the detachment and impersonality ascribed to liberalism by the communitarians. My purpose here is not to challenge or defend the interpretations of Locke on the basis of which these commending and condemnatory ascriptions are made. As I have mentioned, I neither conceived nor wrote this book with this debate as its principal focus. Instead, I want to very briefly suggest the implications of my argument for the positions being debated among the liberals and communitarians and for Locke's place in this debate.

If I am correct in claiming that anxieties about cognitive disorder and madness are critical to Locke's institutional design, then clearly from the standpoint of this interpretation the idea of negative liberty understates what is involved in meeting the threshold for such liberty; if madness and delirium in the manner that Locke understands them are pervasive and mundane features of the human condition, then one needs to take more seriously than Berlin does the problem of how human beings can be made to satisfy the contingent requirements implicit for political freedom. For Locke, I believe, the correspondence between negative and positive liberty, and between political freedom and self-mastery, is ultimately untenable because self-mastery or self-control is required as a condition for negative liberty itself—

and this precisely because, at a natural level, Locke discovers a pervasive cognitive libertinage. The binary between the mad and the insane, the situated and the unsituated, the negative and the positive freedom that underlies this debate is, in Locke's work itself, a site of contestation, pedagogy, habituation, and more generally construction. This is not to deny that Locke's conception of natural freedom corresponds very closely with Berlin's negative liberty. As with Berlin, so too with Locke—natural freedom designates a specifically political freedom, and for Locke such freedom exists despite the plethora of natural obligations. I suggest, however, that there is an ambivalence in Locke's own conception of natural freedom—an ambivalence signaled by the extent and intensity of cognitive disorders Locke associates with the natural human being. A different way to put this is to suggest that the very arguments Locke offers for keeping children in a condition of tutelage before they actually become free (i.e., when they come to have reason) apply for the same reasons to adults. In making this point, I must emphasize that I am not criticizing Berlin's notion of negative liberty; rather, I am criticizing both the use of that notion as an interpretation of Locke's conception of natural freedom and also the set of curiously impoverished binary positions Berlin's initially subtle, even if problematic, distinction has given rise to.

Obscured Beginnings

Finally, I offer a word about the origins of this book. Despite the variety of current scholarly traditions that concern themselves with the self, this work was not largely inspired by them. The conscious origins of this book lie in an extravagant, perhaps naively extravagant, set of questions: could the liberal citizen be gainfully identified and understood as the neurotic of whose psychological biography Freud wrote so compellingly? Could

these renunciatory demands of modern liberal citizenship bear an explanatory kinship to the repressive economy of the individual consciousness? Could these renunciatory demands perhaps have induced the repressive processes and their effects as evinced in the neurotic? And finally, if they did, what might this indicate about the normative ideals of liberalism?

Although these and related questions are tied to the conception of this work, their presence is only dimly evident in it. If these questions configure the trajectory of this book, they do so by having triggered a secondary set of concerns with which the final product is more manifestly linked. But such processes of succession are seldom neat and complete. Succession invariably leaves behind a residue, and this residue, by being left behind, does not always recede into inert inconsequence. Indeed, intellectual residues, perhaps not unlike relegated desires, often have a special poignance in establishing the coherence of their refracted and recalcitrant consequences. Origins, after all, are not merely starting blocks placed on a line; rather, as the metaphor suggests, they designate a path with a specific end and a gathered set of intentions. It is because these residual intentions, which have informed this book and yet whose presence is largely concealed in it, may ultimately be the source of this work's coherence that I begin by recounting them. As the original source of what gave this enterprise this pertinence, they may persist as the final ground of its meaning despite their obviation by a more immediate set of motives.

In suggesting that the original intentions informing this book involved exploring the possible links between Freud's understanding of neurotic behavior and the demands of liberal citizenship, I am aware of the danger of being gulled into an exercise of, at best, polemical potential. One would scarcely imagine a figure more at odds with Freud's exhilarating transgressiveness than Locke. Carlyle's famous characterization of Mill as "wire-drawn," "colorless," and "aqueous" could be taken to apply with

emphasis to aspects of Locke himself. Such attributes are not likely to be elucidated under the gaze of Freud's conceptual vision. The emphatic rigidity with which Locke and much of subsequent liberal thought displaces or denies the realm of interiority, not to mention the realm of the unconscious, might be taken as a denial of the very conditions that could make a gainful bridge with Freud possible. The subtle but nevertheless strident manner in which Locke undermines conscience as a politically pertinent category similarly vitiates the credibility of a psychoanalytical reading.

These and other considerations were in fact linked to the change in the work's original plan. In the face of such widely disparate vocabularies, it was difficult to sustain the anticipated focus on a close reading of Locke's text. The interpretive concerns of a psychoanalytical approach to the individual and, more important, the intellectual idiom and style in which such concerns are expressed were liable to lead me to sidestep important matters of textual detail. Finally, there is the obvious and significant issue of the distinction between the ostensive purposes of psychoanalysis and Lockean liberalism. At the broadest level and stated rather roughly, Freud is concerned with the question of who we are and how we come to be who we are through the refracted and often oblique confrontation between desires and reality. Similarly stated, Locke and the contractarian tradition presupposes that human beings are by nature free, equal, and rational, and in light of this supposition it considers which norms and political institutions are consistent with this view of who we are. Presented as such, the two enterprises mark out and move along unmistakably distinct intellectual orbits. In fact, their distinctiveness is almost part of the mold of what we designate as the liberal contractarian tradition. With rare exceptions, notably Rousseau and more recently Rawls, the proponents of this tradition have shown a remarkably naive neglect of questions of will formation and more generally of complex and nuanced analyses

of motivation. It is no exaggeration to say that an important tradition of critics of liberal contractarianism, from Nietzsche to Foucault, has been spurred by the task of compensating this neglect. Much of the fiery antipathy Nietzsche expresses toward this tradition can be gleaned from the subtitle of his book *Ecce Homo*, "How One Comes to Be Who One Is." Nevertheless, the theoretical thrust of the question how we come to be who we are is distinct from the question what institutional norms are consistent with the particular conception of who we are or who we take ourselves to be. And though these distinct enterprises can be made to serve each other, without a substantially more ambitious project they are liable to draw in differing directions.

Despite the force of these reasons, and in this case their decisive impact in reorienting this work, the conceptual connection between the understanding of neuroses and the demands of liberal citizenship have, as I have mentioned, an original priority. At the most elementary level, the connection can be presented in the following way. Liberalism is commonly accepted, starting at least with Locke, to be predicated on and committed to the rigid sequestering of the private from the political realm. The viability of this distinction underscores Locke's critique of Filmer and absolutism more generally. When Locke, at the beginning of the *Second Treatise*, sets down his conception of political power by sharply distinguishing it from "that of a *father* over his children, a *master* over his servant, a *husband* over his wife, and a *lord* over his slave," he is not merely distinguishing terms the conflation of which is essential to Filmer's patriarchal project. From the perspective of his positive enterprise, what is much more important about this initial delimitation is that it puts in place some of the necessary fences on which depends the requisite level of clarity Locke wants to ascribe to the realm of the political. It is this rigidly quarantined demarcation of political space that becomes an important basis for limiting the legitimate exercise of political power.

Implied, or at least implicit, in this process of demarcation is a particular understanding of the individual as an entity whose essential integrity is not violated by such fences and who therefore can be presumed to be able to block the spillover of certain private concerns into a realm where their presence would be deemed illegitimate.

It is precisely this process of anthropological sequestering that Freud takes to be riddled with individual and social subterfuge. In challenging the viability of the external fences that for liberalism mark out the distinct precincts of human endeavor, Freud challenges the understanding of the individual that is being presupposed. The marking of distinct theoretical and anthropological provinces may, in the end, be necessary for any normative enterprise. They certainly appear so for liberalism. But it is this necessity—or if not that, at least the centrality of theorizing on the presumption of such demarcations—that Freud contests.

Finally, the Lockean contract, in the language in which it is presented, is a momentous renunciatory event. One cannot but be struck by its psychological gravity. A group of individuals, marked by a muscularity of subjective capacities, equipped by their nature with executive and interpretive plenitude and the auspicious assurance of being part of an omnipotent benefactor's plan, "give up," "quit," "resign" all that is private to fashion the security that will come from political society—and all this for the sake of interests that remain, we are told, unerringly private. It is not surprising that that great psychologist of the eighteenth century, Rousseau, should have found in this celebratory moment of unity something deeply inauthentic and ultimately even deceptive. Individuals giving up what is theirs and yet not giving it up because it remains theirs to secure what is theirs: momentous differences, momentous identities. It is not the logic of these turgid transactions that Freud would question but the implications they conceal.

Locke and the tradition he spawned have often been accused

of being antihistorical in their neglect of alternative ways of organizing political life. There is perhaps another sense to this charge. Lockean individuals are consigned to forget what they gave up, to exclude the residue of their origins, to view it as a passive loss with no mnemonic trace. The unsettling effect that Rousseau, Nietzsche, and Freud have on this tradition is to remind it of the lurking proximity of the wild and obscene within it. They bring home the fact that the content of our desires, passions, and emotions are inextricably intertwined with the conditions of our self-conceptions, and these themselves implicated with our social arrangements. When Freud, with lament, speaks of the understanding of civilization and progress as required in the renunciation of instinctual urgencies, he is not endorsing libertine carnage and chaos. Instead, I believe, he is reminding us of two things: one, that even at the deepest level the content of private interests are not simply given, but rather are saturated by the most intricate and apparently illusive terms of human interdependence; the second, that such interdependence can, in the absence of extreme and daunting vigilance, quite easily constrain the instinctual energies of individual lives and, in the process, exact a price paid in individual and collective neuroses.