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The mechanisms of cultural reproduction

Explaining the puzzle of persistence

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One of the most challenging problems in the sociology of culture has been steadfastly neglected by the discipline—the puzzle of persistence. This may in part be explained by the discipline's preoccupation with change, its understandable disdain for cultural determinism, the well-based suspicion of essentialism, and the laudable need to acknowledge the role of meaning-making and agency in cultural analysis. These are all concerns that reflect the errors of an earlier generation of scholars, but they are erroneously associated with the question of cultural reproduction and persistence. Whatever the reasons, it is unfortunate that an understanding of the most fundamental feature of culture—that it is the prime source of the predictability and stability without which human society is impossible—is now largely left to other disciplines such as psychology (Nisbett and Cohen 1996), evolutionary studies (Boyd and Richerson 2005), cognitive anthropology (Cole 1996), and even economics (Barro and McCleary 2006)

It is not my objective to underplay the role of change in the understanding of culture. Indeed, my approach is processual and I see change as an inherent aspect of all cultural activity. The problem is to understand how persistence is possible in the face of such dynamism, and to account for the mechanisms that allow for this reconciliation.

A perdurantist view of cultural processes

Before examining how culture is persistently reproduced, one must first be clear about what it is. Culture is the production, reproduction, and transmission of relatively stable informational processes and their public representations, which are variously distributed in groups or social networks. The information is declarative and procedural, pertaining to ideas, beliefs, values, skills, and routinized practices as well as information about the transmission process. The transmission occurs both between and within generations; moreover, processes are shared unevenly, may be spread across non-localized groups, and may not be integrated.

Cultural processes allow for incremental changes that result from transmission errors and unwitting or deliberate alterations by learners. A perdurantist approach resolves the

apparent paradox of how something can change incrementally—and over the long run quite substantially—yet maintain its identity. As philosopher Sally Haslanger (2003) explains, the persisting object does not undergo alteration by "gaining" or "losing" properties; instead, it changes like a lighted candle. That is, "contradiction is avoided by modifying the proper subject condition: the persisting thing (the composite) is not the proper subject of the properties 'gained' and 'lost' (the stages are), but the proper subjects of the properties are at least parts of the persisting thing" (Haslanger 2003: 318). Lévi-Strauss's (1963) treatment of a myth as the totality of all pre-existing and current versions is a classic example of this approach.

Culture is both internalized and externally represented in social relations, material structures, symbolic media, and other artifacts (Sperber 1996: 34). Although all structured behaviors and artifacts have a cultural dimension, many areas of culture—calculus, jazz, cricket, Hamlet—are delinked from their originating structures and can be limitlessly reproduced in varied contexts. A critical feature of all stable cultural processes is that their identities are collectively imputed, regardless of criterial properties—this being true of what W.V. Quine calls "time-extended objects."

There is a substantial literature on reproduction in sociology, but nearly all of it is devoted to the problem of structural and organizational stability rather than cultural reproduction (e.g. DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Social reproduction, which will not concern us here, refers to the means by which structural features of a society—class, gender, race, segregation, and other patterns of differentiation and organization—are maintained (see Hall et al. 2003: 1–15). When cultural reproduction is considered, most sociologists view it as social learning or socialization via family, schooling, and peers. Bourdieu, the most widely cited sociologist on the subject, is typical. His habitus concept does double duty, directly explaining cultural reproduction, which, in turn, explains "the reproduction of structures" (Bourdieu 1973: 71). Adopting a now dated view of social learning, circa 1950–75 (see Schonpflug 2009b: 11–14), Bourdieu goes no further in exploring the mechanisms of the reproductive process itself other than opaquely referring to an "internal law" by which external necessities are "constantly exerted" (1990: 278).

Drawing on the work of others, as well as my own, here I distinguish seven broad mechanisms of reproduction: enculturation, institutional, structural, frequency dependent, communication based, reinterpretive, and embedded.

The mechanisms of persistence

Enculturation or social learning

As indicated above, this is the most familiar mechanism of cultural reproduction. Often referred to as socialization, it is transmission through social learning and imitation both within and between generations. However, beyond stating the obvious—that people internalize culture through imitation and learning—we need to know why only some processes persist, while others change or disappear, and to identify what agents are more likely, and what less likely, to transfer different kinds of cultural processes.

In their seminal work, Cavalli-Sforza and his associates tackle the problem by modeling "who transmits what to whom, the number of transmitters per receiver, their ages and other relations between them" (Cavalli-Sforza et al. 1982: 19–20). Two distinctions undergird their model—the number of transmitters per recipient and the direction

of transmission. Thus there can be many-to-one transmissions (for example a class or caste's influence on the naïve recipient), or one-to-many (such as a teacher's transmission to a class), and intermediate one-to-one or one-to-few transmissions (the last of which generate moderate rates of cultural change). The other distinction is that between vertical (parents and children), oblique (between non-parental adults and children), and horizontal (between peers). The authors argue that the rate of cultural reproduction (measured in terms of the rate of trait frequencies and variations over time), as well as the content of reproduction, will depend on the interaction of these two variables along with additional mediating factors such as age and transmitter–recipient gender differences. Among their more important findings is the fact that certain kinds of transmissions tend to be trait-specific; for example, among Americans, political and religious attitudes and sports preferences are strongly vertically transmitted, which largely explains their stability. Mothers and fathers account for the transmission of different cultural processes and, significantly, there is little interaction effect (Cavalli-Sforza et al. 1982: 218).

Researchers have theoretically developed and specified the precise psychological processes involved in the transmission process. Thus, in their review of psychological studies of socialization, Putallaz et al. conclude that the "enabling materials of transmission" include primarily

> the proximity between caretaker and offspring, the quality of the emotional and interactional bond between them, the quality of the caretaker's life-long social relationship experiences, the translation of these experiences into schematized forms (such as memories), the presence of conflict among significant interaction partners in the family context, and the gender of both caretaker and child.
>
> (Putallaz et al. 1998)

Many studies have also documented the inter-generational transmission of parenting strategies (van Ijzendoorn 1992; Chen and Kaplan 2001). This research shows, unexpectedly, that familial socio-economic status fails to predict the parenting strategies of adult children. It has also been shown that: intergenerational transmission is bi-directional, although the degree to which children influence parents varies with context (Kuczynski 2003); parent–offspring cultural similarity is strong only in some domains (Schonpflug and Bilz 2009: 212–39); and the degree of corroboration varies with class, region, immigrant status, the motivation of parents, and sibling position (Trommsdorff 2009).

Institutional reproduction: hegemonic and counter-hegemonic

Cultural institutions—ranging from simple salutations to complex formal rites—can be defined as routinized processes that have become normative. The main force of reproduction and persistence is simply the fact that the process in question has become a part of the taken-for-granted, normative social world. They are part of the shared definition of a reality that is experienced as objectively and externally real. Hence "each actor fundamentally perceives and describes social reality by enacting it and, in this way, transmits it to other actors in the social system" (Zucker 1977: 728). A general principle is that the more institutionalized and complex a routine or belief, the less the reliance on childhood socialization or internalization, which, indeed, may not even be possible where the process is confined to adulthood and involves complex practices. Institutions are

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not strictly learned; they are enacted or performed. Their meanings may be accessible to only a few specialists. Thus, for over a thousand years, the single most important institutional rite in the Western world, the Catholic mass, was conducted in a language that the vast majority of participants did not understand.

How exactly do values and practices become institutionalized? "The key to institutionalizing a value," Stinchcombe (1968: 108–12) wrote in a seminal work, "is to concentrate power in the hands of those who believe in that value." Succeeding generations of power holders foster institutional self-reproduction "by selection, socialization, and controlling conditions of incumbency and hero worship." The powerful select those who share their values and other cultural preferences, and they control the processes of socialization. They also act as ego-ideals, as role models for ambitious younger persons, ensuring that the cultural processes they favor will be disproportionately imitated and re-enacted. And by arranging the institutional conditions under which later generations come to power, they ensure that there are independent forces that will keep potential deviants in line with their values. Power-backed beliefs and values also have a much greater chance of being popularly adopted, due to general admiration for the powerful and their proponents' greater access to communicative channels.

Stinchcombe's is really a well-argued theory of hegemony. However, it neglects the subaltern origins and replication of values (Spivak 1988). Though lacking legal, economic, and political power, some individuals are still able to exercise great influence and sometimes charismatic authority in the production and reproduction of subaltern cultures. African-American religious history provides a clear example of how a dominated group not only is able to resist cultural hegemony but can sometimes appropriate and transform the dominant creed to match their own likings and interests (Raboteau 1978; Genovese 1976). Levine (1970: part 6) documents the powerful role of charismatic counter-heroes—Stagalee, John Henry—in the rise of African-American folk and modern culture. In the extreme, the subaltern can turn the tables on elites and greatly influence the cultural beliefs and practices of dominant groups, as is best illustrated by the outsized influence of African-Americans on contemporary American popular culture. The same holds for Jamaica, where dancehall, Rastafarianism, Creole speech, and other areas of the previously denigrated Afro-Jamaican life-style now dominate popular culture (Thomas 2004).

Another powerful way that institutionalized processes are reproduced, especially over long periods, is through their mediation by deeply imbued culture-specific cognitive processes. Nisbett and his collaborators (2001) have found profound differences in tacit epistemologies and modes of thinking between Americans and Chinese, which the authors attribute to enduring institutional differences in the two societies. Social practices and cognitive ones, they argue, mutually maintain each other in very long-term equilibrium.

Structural reproduction

This mechanism refers to the process whereby a persisting structural condition continuously re-creates the cultural pattern in question even in the absence of cultural institutionalization. In America the intergenerational transmission of impoverished contexts, in which Blacks live in the same ghetto environment for generations, results not only in greatly reduced life chances (Sharkey 2008) but in persisting patterns of violence and victimization and impaired cognitive and educational functioning

(Sampson *et al.* 1997; Sampson 2008), as well as distinct speech communities (Labov and Harris 1986). In Jamaica, as elsewhere, chronic unemployment and extremely low wages often lead to a persistent pattern of seeming disdain for work, preference for hustling, and, especially in rural areas, a response to marginal increases in wages with less work (Patterson 1975). Many forms of property crime and prostitution may also be so reproduced. The non-institutionalized nature of many such cultural outcomes is evinced by their erosion in the face of changed structural environments. Thus Jamaicans recruited to work as farm laborers in America are noted for their work ethic. And the long tradition of prostitution in pre-revolutionary Havana disappeared for thirty years right after the revolution, then promptly returned after 1991 with the re-emergence of economic insecurity during the *periodo especial* following the collapse of Soviet aid (Clancy 2002).

The culture of honor in Mediterranean societies and the US South is perhaps the best-studied case of a long-term continuity of this kind. In the honorific cultural process, individuals (especially men) are extremely sensitive to real or perceived insults, and are inclined to react violently toward such perceptions. The culture is accompanied by a strong sense of shame, especially when people are unable to defend their honor. Scholars have found this cultural process primarily in herding or agri-pastoral societies, large-scale slave systems, conditions where centralized authority and law enforcement are weak, and especially where these conditions reinforce each other (Peristiany 1966; Wyatt-Brown 1982; Patterson 1982a: 77–101; Patterson 1984; Nisbett and Cohen 1996). The persistence of the process in modern Greece is one of the most durable cultural traditions on record, with scholars finding clear parallels between the tradition today and Homeric times twenty-seven centuries ago (Walcot 1996). In the deep South of the US, a durable honor culture accounts for, among other things, the region's much higher rate of violent crime (Nisbett and Cohen 1996).

An important aspect of the structural mechanism is that after a sustained period of reproduction, a given process may well become institutionalized and reproduced by both means in a pattern of mutual reinforcement, or independently of the structural context that originally generated it. Thus Sampson (2008) has found the persistence of neighborhood-induced reading impairment long after affected individuals have left the neighborhoods that generated it. And Nisbett has demonstrated in psychological experiments that students of Southern background living in the North are far more inclined to react honorifically to perceived threats to their manhood (Nisbett and Cohen 1996: 53). It is possible that a similar shift in the mechanism of reproduction from the structural to the institutional may have occurred in the honorific violence of inner-city African-American youth (Courtwright 1996: 225–46; Papachristos 2009) and in the familial patterns of poor Jamaicans (Patterson 1982b).

Frequency-dependent reproduction

Frequency-dependent reproduction occurs when individuals *disproportionately* select a variant of a cultural process either because it is the most or the least frequent. It is very important to distinguish this propensity from the more common situation where the most popular variant in a *population* is selected. Nature provides interesting examples of frequency-dependent choices. Predators, for example, prefer prey exhibiting the most common phenotypic trait, giving an advantage to conspecifics with a more rare phenotype, hence maintaining genetic polymorphism. Alternately, females in some polymorphic species disproportionately mate with males with more rare markings.

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The models of Boyd and Richerson (1985: 227–40) indicate that, in spatially varying environments, conformist transmission provides individuals with a useful rule for acquiring the most locally adaptive behaviors. Applied to human populations, their line of analysis suggests one way of solving the puzzle of human cooperation. Thus, the sociologist Noah Mark (2002) argued that people disproportionately exposed to cooperative and exploitative behavior are more likely to replicate such behaviors, which in turn makes the cooperators more influential as role models (and those exposed to exploitation less influential), thereby creating an evolutionary cultural force toward cooperation (cf. Christakis and Fowler 2009: 217–23). Although the argument is suggestive, Mark's model is of limited generality and has been sharply criticized (Bienenstock and McBride 2004).

Frequency-dependent transmission has been more fruitfully, and empirically, applied to other areas of cultural reproduction. The most thorough analysis is Lieberson's (2003) study of naming practices among Americans and Europeans. Since the second half of the nineteenth century there have been two striking changes in Western naming practices—a growing turnover and diversity in names given children and a significant, though less pronounced, shift in the concentration of names. For centuries up to the early nineteenth century, half of all boys and girls were given one of the three most popular names, whereas today the most popular names are given to only a small minority of the population. This change cannot be explained by structural forces such as urbanization and growing ethnic diversity, nor by the rate of name turnover. Instead, Lieberson shows that the most likely explanation is what he calls "popularity as taste," in which there is a distribution of name choices made largely on the basis of their relative popularity, with some people choosing names mainly because they are popular, others because they are unpopular, and still others making choices in between. This results in a distinctive distribution in the reproduction of names that is consistent with the dynamics of frequency-dependent choices. Lieberson has suggested that this pattern characterizes the reproduction of other kinds of tastes such as music, the arts, and political ideas.

Path-dependent processes constitute yet another form of this mechanism. Sometimes, after originating in a specific period from a set of often quite adventitious initiating conditions, transmitted cultural practices become "locked in." The favorite, although disputed, example of this kind of persistence is the QWERTY keyboard layout. The process is maintained, once established, by mechanisms characterized by what economist Paul David (2005) calls "local positive feedback mechanisms," for example, factors such as sunk costs, the reluctance to learn new techniques, and coordination effects derived from aligning one's actions with others (Arthur 1994: 112–13). However, these factors are not peculiar to path-dependent processes, as critics of the whole idea of path dependence have insisted. Frequency-dependent selection would seem to be the critical factor (called bandwagon and reinforcing expectations in the path-dependent literature). It is when people begin to disproportionately choose a process based on its frequency (initially in conjunction with sunk- and learning-cost considerations) that it becomes locked in and, once locked in, frequency dependence alone explains its persistence, trumping other factors. In a compelling series of web-based experiments, Salganik and Watts (2009) have attempted to explain the winner-take-all puzzle of cultural markets, wherein books, songs, and movies that are only marginally different, and often judged to be inferior by experts, unpredictably outsell competing products by orders of magnitude. Hits emerge as the dynamic collective outcome of a path-dependent process driven by social influence and conformist individual behavior. After an initial chance lead, they get locked

into a "cumulative advantage" in which success breeds success due to the "observation learning" of fans engaging in frequency-dependent decision-making. It is well known, too, that some consumers compulsively select cultural products because of their rarity and "cult" status.

Communication-based reproduction

We now come to a class of mechanisms that have in common the fact that the reproduction of culture is a direct result of the dynamics of communication itself and entails emergent population-level consequences of individual interactions.

The "common-ground" approach of Lyons and Kashima (2001: 374) explores how "information circulated through communication channels contributes to the information environment of individual members, influencing the availability of information to confirm or disconfirm cultural knowledge." They focus on the tendency of communicated knowledge to converge toward shared understanding. The basic idea is that when people communicate they are more interested in confirming their own established beliefs, values, and worldview than in accurately passing on what was communicated to them. Shared knowledge becomes "common ground," rather than a simple repository, which each person in the communicative chain believes others possess, and which they all use to make sense of new information. In this way, ambiguity and incoherence are minimized, creating an inherent tendency in information transmission toward weeding out messages that are inconsistent with established beliefs, and a force toward their propagation. Cultural stereotypes are typical of such common ground, and in an experiment simulating a serial communicative process Lyons and Kashima show how a story about an Australian football player converged toward the common-ground stereotype about footballers despite inconsistent versions transmitted in the early stages of the communicative chain.

The French anthropologist Dan Sperber (1996) draws analogously from virology to develop an epidemiology of representation. Durable cultural processes, he argues, are those that have become contagious. Populations are inhabited by vast numbers of mental representations, only some of which, under special circumstances, become public and enduring. This happens when a particular process becomes an "attractor" that provides the least costly way of achieving a given goal. Reproduction is not simple imitation, but rather one form of cultural production. Communication is a re-cognition of what one interprets the other person to mean, and in the process creates a person's own meaning in terms of what is most relevant to the person and the broader cultural context (Sperber 1996: 53). Micro variation achieves macro stability by movement toward attractors. "In the logical space of possible versions of a tale," Sperber writes of the reproduction of the Red Riding Hood folktale, "some versions have a better form: that is, a form seen as being without either missing or superfluous parts, easier to remember, and more attractive. The factors that make for a good form may be rooted in part in universal human psychology and in part in a local cultural context" (Sperber 1996: 106).

Sperber's attractor model is intuitively attractive but intellectually elusive. It owes more to Noam Chomsky than Charles Darwin. In the same way that a French child will converge toward standard French grammar no matter what French utterances she hears, Sperber argues, a child will be attracted to the "best" version of Little Red Riding Hood, no matter what incompetent versions she is exposed to. This clearly excludes my

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five-year-old, whose Disney version shuns the eating of all human beings! The question, then, is what constitutes the appropriate cultural context.

What is largely metaphor for Sperber becomes a literal social epidemiology in the empirically grounded network studies of Christakis and Fowler (2009). They have shown that behaviors and states such as smoking, over-eating, drinking, happiness, and voting are reproduced or spread through networks in remarkably patterned ways. By going far beyond the traditional emphasis on the structural component of networks (i.e. how people are connected) to large-scale empirical explorations of contagion (i.e. of what flows between the nodes), Christakis and Fowler have greatly extended our under-standing of cultural reproduction. What mainly flow through networks, their research suggests, are fundamentally cultural processes. Arguing that people shape and are shaped by their networks, that ideas, norms, behaviors, and even emotional states flow through chains of friends and acquaintances in hyperdyadic spreads of up to three degrees of influence (friends of friends of friends), and that these networks and contagions have emergent properties unknown to the individuals involved, they are explicit in the implications of such mechanisms for the nature and dynamics of culture (Christakis and Fowler 2009: 24–25, 31, 116–17). Not only have they powerfully demonstrated what the European sociologists Paul Willis (2004) and Dan Sperber (1996) could only surmise from their ethnographies—that the production and reproduction of cultural processes are intimately related—but they have given new life to the role of the superorganic in cultural systems, an idea that reaches all the way back to Emile Durkheim through Alfred Kroeber and Leslie White (see Chase 2006: 47–49). Thus, they write of the norm of quitting smoking: "What flows through the network is a norm about whether smoking is acceptable, which results in a coordinated belief and coordinated action by people who are not directly connected. This is an important way that individuals combine to form a superorganism" (Christakis and Fowler 2009: 117, also chapter 9).

Reinterpretation

Reinterpretation is the often-covert persistence or adoption of a cultural process through the representation of its meaning or practice in terms of another, established process. The mechanism was once widely recognized and studied by anthropologists after its identification and definitive analysis by Melville Herskovits (1937; 1950: 553–60), but was abandoned or viewed with hostility in the late twentieth century (Matory 2005: chapter 7). The classic case of reinterpretation is the identification of African deities with Catholic saints in the Creolization process underlying the formation of Black Atlantic religions such as Voudon, Santeria, and Condomble (Brandon 1997; Bastide 1978). However, the reinterpretive mechanism is found in all cultures, sometimes under other names, such as Brammen's (1992) description of the Japanese reinterpretation of Disneyland in Tokyo in terms of their own culture as "recontextualization." Native Americans, like West Africans and European pagans before them, used this mechanism as a way of retaining and camouflaging some of their traditions, and the Alaskan Tlingits did so as well when they secretly incorporated potlatch practices into Russian Orthodox and Protestant ceremonies (Nagel 1996: 201).

A good part of the fascination of reinterpretation is that it can operate as a mechanism of both change and persistence, accommodation and contestation, and domination and counter-domination, depending very much on the perspective of the agents involved, the context in which the interpretation takes place, and whether the issue is temporal

connections in a single culture or lateral connections between different cultures. In the middle of the fourth century, Christian Church leaders reinterpreted the practices around the winter solstice as the birthday of the Christian son of God rather than the annual re-birth of the sun (Nissenbaum 1997). From the Christian perspective, this was a rather devious exercise in cultural reproduction; to the European pagans it was a hegemonic effort at changing their religious beliefs, which they strongly contested. In due course it became less and less clear which side had reinterpretively co-opted the other, so much so that eventually the American Puritans abolished Christmas as a heathen custom, admitting that the pagans had won!

Recently there has been a rediscovery of the reinterpretive mechanism. Hatch (2004: 199–201) has reprised Herskovits's concepts of focus and reinterpretation in her analysis of the dynamics of organizational culture. Anthropologist De Sardan (2005: chapter 9) sees development enterprise in Third-World countries as "an arena in which various logics and strategies come into confrontation," that of the development agent and that of the peasants. He calls this "innovation as reinterpretation," a cultural contest in which the new cultural package is "systematically disarticulated," selectively adopted, and often appropriated to ends that subvert the goals of the developer. Human-rights scholars and advocates who seek to improve the status of women in patriarchal societies have also rediscovered the value of "cultural reinterpretation" that "seeks to provide cultural 'ground' for the acceptance of women's rights by reinterpreting traditional gender ideologies that have been used to legitimate male domination and discrimination against women" (Bell *et al.* 2000: 180).

Sometimes what the mechanism of reinterpretation reproduces is a group's belief in its own identity and continuity, its sense of a living past that informs the present and leads into the future. In so doing a group may draw on a wide range of traditions from other groups, and even invent new processes. One of the most famous cases in point was the ghost-dance movement of Native Americans during the last decades of the nineteenth century, which reaffirmed a sense of continuity with Native Americans' past, however imagined. As Smoak (2008) shows, the movement was as much about persistence as innovation, a dynamic expression of an emerging pan-Indian identity that integrated reinterpreted aspects of Christianity and traditional beliefs in a fierce struggle against Euro-American cultural hegemony.

Embedded reproduction

We come, finally, to the most covert of all the means of cultural reproduction. Cultural embedding is the mechanism by which a process survives through its insertion into the core of a culture's dominant institution. Space constraints allow me to discuss only the most remarkable, though least apparent, form of this mechanism, what I call *embedded introjection*. This occurs when a cultural pattern persists by shifting from being an overt, secular belief to an inner, spiritual one, in which form it can remain, mainly dormant, for centuries. At any time, however, a reverse-introjection or projection may occur, in which the pattern is projected back into the secular, outer world. This, in brief, is the history of Western freedom from its introjection by Paul of Tarsus into the creedal core of the infant Christian religion during the first century of the modern era until its projective break-out during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

I have shown elsewhere (Patterson 1991: 316–44; see also Martin 1990) that early Pauline Christianity took over the Roman secular notions of freedom (*libertas*)

as liberation from slavery and as the exercise of absolute power, and made them the core doctrine of the religion. In his *Letter to the Galatians*, Paul reconceived sin as a kind of inner slavery and Christ's salvific crucifixion as the price paid to redeem mankind from spiritual thralldom (the Christian word *redemption* being derived from the Latin, *redemptio*, which literally means "to purchase someone out of slavery"). In the *Letter to the Romans*, the Augustan imperial notion of freedom as absolute power, into which secular worshipers could share by surrendering to the emperor's majesty, as freedmen did in the imperial cult, was reconceived by Paul as the spiritual freedom that came with surrender (Paul wrote "enslavement") to the absolute power and freedom of God.

From the beginning, Church leaders were fully aware of the explosive secular potential of Christianity's core doctrine and so worked hard to prevent its projection back into the secular world. When the doctrine became hegemonic following the con- version of Constantine in 312, the concealment took more elaborate form—in the tight and complex organizational structure of the Church, the careful screening and education of priests, and the use of an increasingly alien language, Latin, for the Mass. For the majority of European peasants, the introjection was only partly successful (Patterson 2007). Over the centuries there were radical expressions of freedom, in extreme cases expressed in servile revolts, the ideological bases for which were often secularized projections of the Christian doctrine of freedom revealed by renegade priests (Hilton 1973; Cohn 2006). In the late middle ages and early-modern Europe, we see the full projection back into the secular world of the Christian doctrine of freedom. As Ernst Kantorowicz (1957) has shown, nearly all political thought during the late middle ages and early-modern Europe were simply secularized Christology—a point that holds for the foundational text of liberalism, Locke's *Two Treatises*, the most authoritative recent reading of which sees it as essentially an exposition of Calvinist natural theology (Dunn 1983).

Conclusion

The mechanisms discussed above are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, we often find two or more interacting in the reproduction of cultural processes. Thus introjection involves reinterpretation, and in hegemonic persistence the powerful establish structures that reinforce the replication of favored values. We have also seen how cultural processes reproduced structurally can sometimes become institutionalized. Also, in the very long run, a similar tendency toward institutionalization characterizes many path-dependent reproductions.

It has not been my objective to underplay the role of socio-cultural change, which has garnered the overwhelming attention of social scientists. Rather, I have drawn attention to the neglect of the problem of cultural reproduction and persistence, which should be of equal importance for at least two reasons. First, social and cultural change on one level may be accompanied and powerfully influenced by deep underlying continuities, in much the same way that the Gulf Stream, one of the earth's most stable forces, has recently been shown to have profound effects on Northern Hemisphere weather patterns. Thus we have seen how quite radical changes in the turnover of American names have been accompanied by shifting but far more stable patterns of name concentration and even greater stability in the distribution of frequency-dependent preferences, and that volatility in criminal behavior and speech patterns are outward

manifestations of deep-seated continuity in the pattern of racial segregation. Second, we need to study continuity, not only in its own right, but because a proper understanding of change itself is not possible without knowledge of the process of persistence against which it is measured and can only be properly understood.

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