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Colonization of the Normative Realm in the Age of Instrumentality

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Colonization of the Normative Realm in the Age of Instrumentality

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Dedication

To my mother, Awatif Istafanus Casagranda.

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The Colonization of the Normative Realm in the Age of Instrumentality

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This dissertation aims to establish a contemporary model of why apolitical actors engage in the *political realm*. The project will intersperse practical cases with theoretical concerns. I look at two cases: the role of Soccer Hooligans in the 2011 Egyptian Revolution and the Occupy Austin Movement (2015). The goal of these juxtapositions is to provide insights into the realities behind political theories, as I accommodate additional strands of theory that have received little attention to date in studies of political motivation. I begin by showing how inadequate Rational Choice Theory (RCT) has proven in explaining political action and then move onto employing central concepts from Heidegger, Arendt, Marcuse, Foucault, Habermas, and Wendy Brown to create a richer picture of what choice means for subjects. With the aid of the categories these thinkers provide, I then build an analytical heuristic device called the *Three Realms of Action Model*. My claim is that this model, which explains the relationship between the *normative*, *political* and *economic realms* can better explain political choice. The actions of nonpolitical actors might seem non-rational when viewed from within a purely *economic realm*, but switching between the *three realms* and the rationalites they inhabit, provides the three-pronged lens needed to make a more nuanced study of the power

relations between political actors. To better illustrate how subjects negotiate the realms, I use familiar historical sites. Each historical event allows us to inhabit an epistemology that describes how the realms bargain for dominance with each other. The insight I come away with here is that the economic realm has colonized the *normative* and *political realm*s in the United States. But despite the dominance of the *economic realm*, political action or choice is not driven "only" by market rationality but also by a shifting play of the power in the three realms where we see new and competing rationalities. This allows us not only to see "choice" as a more dynamic and nuanced category but also better clues us into how it is manipulated and even subverted.

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INTRODUCTION:

Being and Revolution in the 21st Century

"The two biggest political parties in Egypt are Ahly and Zamalek."[1]

Assad, Leader of al-Ahly's football Ultras

I was inspired to conduct this inquiry by a question: "Why is voter turnout so low in the US?" Yet that inspiration came not because I wanted to ask that question, but rather because I thought it was the wrong question. It seemed to me that the real issue was almost the exact reverse: "Why is voter turnout so high in the US?" In light of single member district representation, winner-take-all elections, winner-take-all legislative processes, the quirky electoral college, and gerrymandering it is actually a wonder that anyone would waste their time voting, at least in recent national elections. For example, in 2014, all but 26 congressional districts in the US House were safe districts, meaning

[1] Montague, J, "Egypt's Politicized Football Hooligans," *Al Jazeera*, February 2, 2012, accessed May 12, 2016, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/20122215833232195.html.

that they were firmly in the hands of one party and unlikely to change, given their demographics.[2] In other words, the outcome of the election was a foregone conclusion for 94.0% of the US House races.

Thus, I came to formulate the mystery of current electoral politics rather differently than has been conventionally done: I wondered not why is voter turnout a mere 36.4%,[3] but rather why is it more than 6.0%. Expanding this logic into a more formal research question, I have claimed a more radical point of departure for the study that follows. I ask not only: “Why do non-political actors occasionally enter the political realm and undertake low cost-no reward behaviors like voting," but also: "Why do non-political actors enter into the political realm to engage in high risk-low reward political actions like protests, riots, and revolutions?"

These formulations would find little resonance within models favored by today's political science, I found, given that all too many current discussions of voter behavior remain anchored by a single heuristic, Rational Choice Theory (RCT). Here, I found little support for associating notions like risk and reward with political action, since RCT privileges the assumption that all people are rational and self-interested all of the time. Yet in my preliminary deliberations, it seemed to me that an actor who votes in a system where the outcome is a foregone conclusion is hardly rational. The "rational thing to do" in the 2014 election should have left turnout at around 6%, with votes coming out only in

[2]https://ballotpedia.org/U.S._House_battleground_districts,_2014#The_26_.22Most_Competitive_Districts_in_2014.22

[3] I chose the 36.4% from 2014 as opposed to the 60.2% of 2016 to remove the turnout effect of presidential politics. The voter turnout in 2014 http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/2014-midterm-election-turnout-lowest-in-70-years/

the very few contested districts. And yet, as noted above, voter turnout in 2014 was 36.4%, six times more than conventional notions of rationality would predict.

As I will argue in the following chapters, RCT becomes even less useful for understanding political decisions that lead to protest, riots, and revolutions. In these cases, the potential costs of political action include time and energy, injury, jail, and possibly death, in contrast to the considerably lower threshold of getting into the voting booth. Here again, the premise that actors are always self-interested and rational falls apart, because any cost-benefit ratios are massively disproportionate: after all, one can lose one's freedom or life protesting, but the likelihood of success and potential rewards by mans of political riots are low for individuals.

Not being able to apply RCT to the study of this type of political action, I turned to other models for political action, especially to Heidegger, Arendt, Marcuse, and Habermas, to see if I could tease out another explanation. In the process of so doing, I began to evolve a model for understanding what goes into motivating action. As I will amplify in the body of the present project, I identified three categories/realms in which other logics for political action prevail, beyond simple self-interest: a Normative Realm (motivated by narratives that generate meaning or values), an Economic Realm (defining rationalities based on concerns about survival, convenience, and luxury), and a Political Realm (comprising rationalities that ground community-level steering mechanisms for actions within the other two realms).

The project took its final shape as I tested my model against specific instances of political action that RCT did not sufficiently illuminate. To justify my theoretical

interventions, this project will intersperse practical cases with my theoretical concerns. As noted, I will focus principally on two cases: the more or less successful role of Soccer Hooligans in the 2011 Egyptian Revolution and the Occupy Austin Movement (2015) and the reasons it failed.

Both examples speak to my research questions. The first involves soccer hooligans turned rioters; the second, a local Occupy Movement, with its sit-in protest tactics. Both forms of political action emerge more clearly as reasonable or rational when addressed though my three realms—they show how human motivation structures actually fluctuate as different motivation frameworks come into play, beyond self-interest defined traditionally. Soccer hooliganism in the Arab Spring in Egypt and Occupy Austin both had similar grounding, as a public that had been stripped of agency but that nonetheless wanted to insert itself into the Political Realm.

In one sense, the calculus for apolitical soccer hooliganism seemed uncomfortably similar to that of the US voter in House races: the outcome is predetermined—whether you win or lose, you're going to fight the fans of the other team, because the situation has in it only a single rationality. Why, then, did Egypt's soccer hooligans and US voters decide to jump into the political realm by using the rationality of revolution, which seems to be irrational, by traditional norms? As we shall see, I believe that the answer lies in the ability of new norms to arise and colonize the Normative Realm, under the impetus of new constellations of the Economic and Political Realms. Both groups of actors came to believe in the connection of their actions to a certain set of values in the Normative Realm, and so, after embracing them, they were willing to challenge the power structures

through what they believed were new forms of political action. The two sets of actors hoped to tie meaning or values to what they did—they "made it worthwhile" for themselves to act, creating sources of meaning that has not been accounted for in RTC.

The goal of these case studies is to provide insights into the realities behind political theories addressed by theorists, as I accommodate additional strands of theory that have received little attention to date in studies of political motivation and make the case for a new understanding of political rationality as a more dynamic process. As I proceed, I will be drawing repeatedly on several theorists. The first is Heidegger, with his notion of an authentic Being-toward-death, a commitment toward a certain set of values that makes it worthwhile for a community to act and to structure its life against—a "calling" toward fulfilling action, toward (in these cases) a renewal of democratic values. Adding to this resource, I consider the utility of Arendt's and Habermas' ideas of political spaces and political action and Marcuse's one dimensionality, which will lead me to propose that a more telling narrative of motivation for political action results in considering three realms that ground individual motivation and help it form into groups through transmission of dominant rationalities that help individuals understand the modern world.

The ultimate aim of this project, then, is to outline a new, contemporary model of why apolitical actors enter the *political realm* and then to pursue the limits on that model by ascertaining what the largest impediment is towards evolving the contemporary political system towards a more people-friendly state.

To set the stage for the project as a whole, the remaining sections of this introduction will provide an overview of the soccer hooligans' 2011 actions. In Chapter 1, to help explain why the soccer hooligans took part in the Egyptian 2011 revolution, I will examine Rational Choice Theory (the dominant paradigm in Political Science and Economics). I do this considering the question of how (and if so, to what degree), either political science or economics can shed some light on their actions in the traditional terms most often used in Anglo-American political theory. In Chapter 2, I will attempt to expand this "standard model" of political action by looking at Heidegger, Arendt, and Marcuse. This cross-reference will focus particularly on identifying more carefully what kinds of political choices are actually at play in a situation like the soccer hooligans. At that point of my exposition, in Chapter 3, I will introduce a possible extended model, which I am calling the Three Realms of Action Model. And finally, in Chapter 4, I will test my proposed extended model to demonstrate what the major stumbling block was for the Occupy Movement, in general, and Occupy Austin, in particular.

Let me now set the stage for my project by introducing my first case study, an unexpected political action that took place in Egypt during 2011's Arab Spring.

How Egypt's Soccer Hooligans Might Have Saved the Egyptian Revolution of 2011

On January 25, 2011, tens of thousands of protestors assembled in Maydan Tahrir (Freedom Square) in Cairo and other parts of Egypt for what became a day of rage.[4]

[4] "Egypt Protests: Three Killed in 'Day of Revolt'," *BBC*, January 26, 2011, accessed May 23, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-12272836.

Maydan Tahrir had played a key role in the 1919, 1952, and 2013 Revolutions, for which it has been known in English as Martyr Square for its role as an agora for the city of Cairo, serving as the site for major modern protests since the 1977 Bread Riots.[5] Moreover, the Square sits at the very heart of Cairo, and whomever controls it controls the traffic congestion. It is at Maydan Tahrir that the historic Qasr al-Ayni Street, now the home of a major medical school meets Talaat Harb Street, where major protests against Egyptian President Mubarak had taken place since 2005, and, following Qasr al-Nil Street, with its tradition of night life, the square gives access to the Qasr al-Nil Bridge, the first bridge that had been built in central Cairo to cross the nearby Nile River.

Tuesday, January 25, was a difficult day for the regime of then, President Hosni Mubarak. This was the day when demonstrators were simply out in too great numbers for the regime to suppress quietly and, to make matters worse, the protesters planned to stay the night. Their goal was the permanent occupation of Maydan Tahrir. The numbers weren't only high in Cairo, there were 20,000 protesters in Alexandria [6] and protests in other cities including Suez and Ismailiyah.[7] What's more is that the people demonstrated

[5] The Egyptian "bread riots" of 1977 affected most major cities in Egypt from 18–19 January 1977. The riots were a spontaneous uprising by hundreds of thousands of lower-class people protesting World Bank and International Monetary Fund-mandated termination of state subsidies on basic foodstuffs. As many as seventy-nine people were killed and over 550 injured in the protests, which were only ended with the deployment of the army and the re-institution of the subsidies. For more on the bread riots see Mokhlis Y. Zaki, "IMF-Supported Stabilization Programs and their Critics: Evidence from the Recent Experience of Egypt," World Development Vol. 29, Issue 11, (November 2001): 1867–1883.

[6] "Egyptians Test Tunisia's Twitter Revolution," *Vancouver Sun*, 26 January 2011, accessed 5 June 2011, http://www.canada.com/story_print.html?id=548de2b9-7d46-440c-8ac1-c4f6fcee37f2&sponsor=.

[7] "Egypt Protests: Three Killed in 'Day of Revolt'," *BBC News*, 25 January 2011, accessed 26 January 2011, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-12272836.

"a remarkable combination of discipline and volume."[8] This was the day, when dissent and protest crystallized into a different kind of choice for the people of Egypt.

But to the regime's pleasant surprise, the number of protesters became much smaller over the next two days. In fact, the numbers fell to just a few thousand. This was the trigger for government action. On January 26, Mubarak ordered the Central Security Forces police to drive the occupiers out of Maydan Tahrir. The police marched down the streets leading to The Square, using the neighborhood's street grid, shaped like spokes on a wheel, to surround the demonstrators and limit their ability to flee. The police wore full riot gear, carried shields, and were armed with tear gas. The protestors on Wednesday, January 26, were thus hard pressed. If they were defeated, it would have allowed the government to then occupy Maydan Tahrir—the return of downtown Cairo to regime control. Though the protesters erected barriers in the square, they were in trouble. The media were clearly waiting for images of a Tiananmen-Square-type crackdown.

There were several problems facing the revolution that day that made the political outlook unclear. First, people were simply unsure of how far their protest could go in the current climate. In particular, facing off against the Mubarak regime was a scary proposition, since the Mubarak administration was happy to use torture in suppressing dissent. They knew that the regime, on June 6, 2010, had murdered twenty-eight-year-old activist Khaled Said, Egypt's equivalent of Bouazizi (the martyred symbol of the

[8] Robbert Woltering, "Unusual Suspects: 'Ultras' as Political Actors in the Egyptian Revolution," *Arab Studies Quarterly* Vol. 35, No. 3, Special Issue: Perspectives on the Arab Uprisings (Summer 2013): 292.

Tunisian Revolution), in Alexandria.[9] While Said's death had fueled a new stage in the Revolution, enraging the demonstrators, it also scared them.

But it was not merely the threat of torture or death that dissuaded the participation of a greater number of protesters. The largest factor in their indecision was quite empirical, the Egyptian military is massive. If the military sided with Mubarak, who was a retired Air Force general, then the prospects for a successful revolution would be low, but the likely number of casualties high. In addition, the Army still had widespread support from the more general public. It was not clear that a few tens of thousands of people were enough to make this revolution succeed.[10]

The second greatest factor in any public reticence to escalate their protests was even more practical than the first. Said bluntly, Egypt is not a rich state. According to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics in 2010 Egypt's urban population

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[9] Khaled Mohammad Said was a young Egyptian man who died mysteriously while in police custody in the Sidi Gaber area of Alexandria on 6 June 2010. Photos of his disfigured corpse spread throughout online communities and incited outrage over allegations that he was beaten to death by Egyptian security forces. A prominent Facebook group, "We are all Khaled Said", moderated by Wael Ghonim, brought attention to his death and contributed to growing discontent in the weeks leading up to the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 ("Google Worker is Egypt's Facebook Hero," *Financial Times*, Feb. 9, 2011, accessed May 5, 2016, http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/e41c5faa-3475-11e0-9ebc-00144feabdc0.html.). In October 2011, two Egyptian police officers were found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to seven years in prison for beating Said to death ("Egypt Jails Police over Activist Khaled Said's Death," *BBC News*, 26 October 2011, accessed May 5, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/15467022.). They were granted a retrial and sentenced to ten years in prison on 3, March 2014 ("Khaled Said's Killers sentenced to Ten Years in Jail," *Al-Ahram*, 3 March 2014, accessed 3 March, 2014, http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/top-news-khaled-said-s-killers-sentenced-to-ten-years-in-jail.). For more on the role Khaled Saeed played in the Egyptian revolution see Rodolfo Diaz, "From Lambs to Lions: Self-Liberation and Social Media in Egypt," *Harvard International Review* Vol. 33, No. 1 (Spring 2011): 6-7. Also see Chapter 4, entitled "Emergency Law Martyr" in Ashraf Khalil's, *Liberation Square: Inside the Egyptian Liberation and the Rebirth of a Nation*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2012).

[10] For more on Mubarak's support base see: Galal A. Amin, *Egypt in the Era of Hosni Mubarak 1981-2011* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2011), 100 and Saad Z. Nagi and Omar Nagi, "Stratification and Mobility in Contemporary Egypt," *Population Review* 50, no. 1 (2011): 6.

has an average (not median) annual household income of 30,000 LE. With an exchange rate in 2010 of just under $0.18 to the 1.00 LE, that means that the average annual household income of an Egyptian worker family was $4259.[11] To complicate matters, "nearly half of all Egyptians [lived] under or just above the poverty line, which the World Bank sets at $2 a day."[12] Missing a day's worth of work thus would have made paying rent or eating even more difficult than it already was because of the tight margin of surplus income for that average family.

By Wednesday, January 26, in consequence, many protestors had left the square to go to work, diminishing the numbers who had appeared the day before. To counter this diminution, the protest planners had adopted the tactic of allowing people to take shifts at Maydan Tahrir—a weak tactic where most jobs start in the morning and end by afternoon, guaranteeing that, even with people on shifts, there would always be a smaller turnout in the mornings. In addition, the planners' hope was that those who could not participate by occupying the square could still support it by bringing food and drink to those who were there. And this is exactly what happened. The sense of community building was palpable. As Nasser Rabbat has pointed out, the Arab Revolutions literally took back the public space by creating new types of communities.

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[11] According to Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, "the average annual Egyptian household income during 2010-2011 was LE25,353." Given that the average exchange rate for the Egyptian pound was 0.168 for 2011, LE25,353 is $4259. The agency said that the average household income in urban areas was about LE30,205, compared to LE21,370 for families living in the countryside "Egyptian family's average annual income is LE25,000, agency reports," (*Egypt Independent*, November 28, 2012, accessed May 5, 2016, http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/egyptian-family-s-average-annual-income-le25000-agency-reports).

[12] Newsmax.com quotes AP in "Egypt's Poverty, Unemployment, Push Youths to Breaking Point," on Jan. 31, 2011, accessed May 1, 2016, http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/Egypt-poverty-unemployment-unrest/2011/01/31/id/384555/.

The protestors stand together in their square, hoisting their banners and chanting their slogans demanding the departure of the corrupt regimes. The squares virtually become their homes, their operation rooms, and our window on their revolution. They sometimes morph into the places where they live, sleep, pray, socialize, demonstrate, and shape their destiny. Many lost their lives defending their squares and their burgeoning revolution therein against the attacks of the security forces and the regime's thugs (named differently in different countries). Others found meaning to their lives in finally breaking the chain of fear and revolting against the regimes that had dehumanized them for so long. In fact, squares such as Tahrir Square in Cairo, … have come to frame the Arab revolutions and to represent their exuberance and anguish at the same time. To a world that watches with wonderment, they have acquired the same mystique that other squares of revolution had gained before: the Place de la Bastille in Paris, the Red Square in Moscow, the Azadi Square in Tehran, and, most famously for our short-memoried present, Tiananmen Square in Beijing. [13]

The regime's tactic of asserting physical control of Cairo's urban space was an old tactic of the state's security apparatus. What this revolution was doing was disrupting that pattern and creating a whole new community who were learning how to fight the regime.[14]

The situation got even less clear from the national perspective. To make matters worse, the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood, the single largest group opposing

[13] Nasser Rabbat, "The Arab Revolution Takes Back the Public Space," *Critical Inquiry* 39:1 (Autumn 2012): 206.
[14] Rabbat, "The Arab Revolution," 207.

Mubarak, had initially condemned the uprising, saying that they did not want to desecrate National Police day by holding it as planned. Over the next days, the Brotherhood subsequently issued a flurry of mixed messages. First, they refused to collectively back the protesters, then they condoned individual members to march. By January 29, the BBC was reporting that "the Brotherhood has been careful to take a low-key role in the latest protests."[15] This toned-down role of the Brotherhood effectively meant the elimination from the ongoing protests of the largest, oldest, and best-organized opposition group in Egypt.

The secular left and youth groups were going to have to win the day on their own. by Wednesday, it became clear that the police were going to prevail. Then something unexpected happened—the Ultras arrived, these were groups of Egyptian "ultra-fans" for the Cairo-based Egyptian Premier League football clubs. The Ultras were identified as part of the original protest, on Tuesday, January 25.[16] However, they ended up playing a more fantastic role on January 26 and 27. On these days, as the protest was looking to be in decline, the Ultras did much more than simply adding numbers to the mass of protesters. The rival Ultras arrived at the square, nodded to each other, and then turned towards all points of the compass, towards the streets leading into Maydan Tahrir that were being blocked by the police. They charged up the streets and battled the police in pitched combat. The police fired rubber bullets and tear gas. The Ultras threw the tear gas canisters back at the police with oven mitts and followed them with anything that they

[15] Y. Knell, "Egypt Unrest: Tough Questions if Revolution Succeeds," *BBC*, 29 January 2011, accessed June 1, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12317285.
[16] Muhammad Jamāl Bashīr, *Kitāb al-Ultrās (The Book of Ultras)*, (Cairo: Dār Dawwin, 2011), 28-29.

could find. For two days, protestors and Ultras fought with all that they had against the police in an effort to keep them out of the square. The Ultras may or may not have saved the day, but their combat skill and numbers certainly did not hurt the cause of the revolution.[17] And amazingly enough, they have remained a major protest force in Egyptian politics ever since that day, next battling Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), then the Morsi regime, SCAF again. Today, they stand in opposition to President Sisi. In fact, Egyptian courts banned the Ultras as a terrorist organization on May 16, 2015.[18]

To say this was an unforeseen event is an understatement. In Egypt, soccer boils down to two teams—al-Ahly and Zamalek, who are archrivals and inevitably end up the two teams in the finals every year. In Egypt, as in countries like the UK (with internationally known national teams), someone who likes soccer is not a passive fan. You hate one of the two teams and love the other. In 2007, some fans organized into these "ultra-fan" organizations: “Ultras Ahlawy” for al-Ahly or “Ultras White Knights” for Zamalek. Violence by the Ultras is so rampant that, if you find a store that sells soccer paraphernalia in Egypt, it will not carry any of the Egyptian teams. If a store did, violence will ensue, with or without the Ultras' hooligans present.[19]

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[17] Woltering, “Unusual Suspects,” 302.
[18] Amira El-Fekki, “Ultras Groups Banned by Court Order,” *Daily News*, May 16, 2015, accessed June 1, 2016, http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2015/05/16/ultras-groups-banned-by-court-order/.
[19] Muhammad Jamāl Bashīr, *Kitāb al-Ultrās. ʿIndamā Tataʿaddā al-Jamāhīr al-Tabīʿa* (Cairo: Dār Dawwin, 2011), 28-29. Much of what I say here about the Ultras are based on Robbert Woltering’s article noted in the last footnote, a primary source, the book Kitāb al-Ultrās written by Muhammad Jamāl Bashīr, posts on Ultras’ Facebook pages, personal experiences at matches in Cairo in 2007 and anecdotal evidence provided by family and friends in Egypt.

Needless to say, cooperation is not the watchword of these groups. At the matches, all fans are separated out, in the best world traditions of controlling soccer hooliganism. Busses arrive, stuffed with fans cheering exclusively for one side or the other. The police at these matches seem to outnumber fan, appearing as they do in full riot gear and equipped with trucks to carry away violent fans. Once inside the stadium, the police form ranks to cut the stands in two, they surround the outer perimeter, and they surround the field. Any fan from one side attempting to enter the other will be stopped. Having said that, there are still acts of fan sabotage at most of these matches. Rival fans will don a red shirt for al-Ahly or a white shirt for Zamalek, and then sit in the section for the other side. At some point in time, such an infiltrator will remove that outer shirt to reveal the color underneath. They shout taunts as they are attacked or chased, until the police arrive and capture the interloper. Note, however, that these are just the everyday, regular fans in the super rivalry. The Ultras go further. Regardless of which team wins, there will be a brawl afterwards. This is what the Ultras do: they fight. They are young males, with high unemployment rates, who have banded together to commit acts of violence against Ultras from the other side. In the process, they inevitably turn on the arriving police.

What made this violent group of young men decide to go from fighting each other to working with each other for the cause of revolution? This is the question that subsequent sections of this chapter will turn to.

After 48 hours of battling the police, Friday had arrived. After the Friday morning prayers, and with the vast majority of the Egyptian population off for the Sabbath, turnout

for the Revolution soared into the hundreds of thousands. The turnout on Friday was so great, in fact, that a new word in Egypt was coined, "Millioniya" where a call was issued for Egypt's first-ever a million-man gathering.[20] All of this is in stark contrast to the Muslim Brotherhood which had told its members not to participate in the revolution. At this point Maydan Tahrir resembled a war zone. By January 29th there were roughly 2000 injured as a result of the clashes[21] and by January 30th there were 150 dead.[22] By the end of the eighteen-day revolution there were a total of 846 dead protestors.[23]

The revolution that the soccer hooligans helped to carry through has become known as the January 25 Revolution. Its issues had crystallized earlier, but now they were widely broadcast: resistance to police brutality and state-of-emergency laws, a call for free elections and freedom of speech, and resolutions to persistent economic issues such as corruption, high unemployment, low wages, and high food prices. Now, the protest emerged as a clear and final call for an end of the Mubarak regime and the State of Emergency Law[24], a non-military government, and representation in all facets of Egypt's governance.

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[20] Ashraf Khalil, Liberation Square: Inside the Egyptian Liberation and the Rebirth of a Nation, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2012), 210 and 212.
[21] "Update 1-Death Toll in Egypt's Protests Tops 100 – Sources," *Reuters*, 29 January 2009, accessed 5 February 2011, http://www.reuters.com/article/egypt-dead-idAFLDE70S0LX20110129.
[22] Goran Tomasevic, "Curfew Hours Extended in Egypt as Turmoil Continues," *Sputnik International News*, 30 January 2011, accessed 31 January 2011, http://sputniknews.com/world/20110130/162383449.html.
[23] This is according to the Fact Finding National Commission About Jan 25 Revolution Final Report. The pdf can be found here: http://www.ffnc-eg.org/assets/ffnc-eg_final.pdf, last accessed March 17, 2016.
[24]Law #162 of 1958, enacted during the Six-Day War against Israel, and called into play since Answer Sadat's 1981 election.

On February 1, Hosni Mubarak announces in a televised address that he will not run for re-election but refuses to step down from office - the central demand of the protesters. Mubarak also promises reforms to the constitution, particularly Article 76, which makes it virtually impossible for independent candidates to run for office. He says his government will focus on improving the economy and providing jobs. Shortly after his speech, clashes break out between pro-Mubarak and anti-government protesters in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, Al Jazeera's correspondent reports.[25] The estimated number of protesters in Cairo's Tahrir Square is revised to more than a million people. Thousands more take to the streets throughout Egypt, including in Alexandria and Suez. By February 9, Labor unions join protesters in the street, with some of them calling for Mubarak to step down while others simply call for better pay. Massive strikes start rolling throughout the country. Human Rights Watch says that 302 people have been killed since the start of Egypt's pro-democracy uprising. Based on visits to a number of hospitals in Egypt, the organization says that records show the death toll has reached 232 in Cairo, 52 in Alexandria and 18 in Suez.[26] Finally on February 11, after tens of thousands take to the streets across Egypt in angry protests, Hosni Mubarak resigns as president and hands over power to the army after which the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) dissolved the parliament of Egypt.

As I noted at the start of this introduction, the most perplexing question I have encountered in the study of politics, "is why do people act politically?" Even if I take

[25] "Timeline: Egypt's Revolution," *Al Jazeera*, Feb 14, 2011, accessed May 13, 2016, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/01/201112515334871490.html.
[26] "Timeline: Egypt's Revolution."

Aristotle at his word that "man is by nature a political animal," I am left wondering why we as individuals make the leap from inaction to action. Of course, neither the US nor Egypt resemble the Athenian democracy. Our political actions are confined to rare and periodic elections. In the US and Egypt there is little opportunity to act politically between such elections and revolutions and those who serve as activists are rare. My point is that whether we are see ourselves as political animals or not, very little actual time is spent acting politically.

The United States is essentially apolitical between elections. The principle way in which partisans express their political leanings is during Presidential elections once every four years. Presidential elections have seen voter turnout between 55% and 62% since 2000 and turnout between 37% to 42% in midterm elections[27]. So, for the majority of the US, political action only takes place, once every four years. This means that such a person goes from political inaction to action once every 1,461 days, or is active for 0.068% of the days of their lives.

In Egypt, there is little to no opportunity for legitimate political action. But Egyptians have frequently partaken in revolution. Egypt has gone into revolution five times over the last 137 years. That is an average rebellion every 27.4 years[28].

There is an interesting similarity between the US and Egypt, despite the obvious differences. If we consider the Civil War, the Progressive Era, the 1960s, and the Occupy

[27] http://www.electproject.org/home/voter-turnout/voter-turnout-data
[28] Urabi Revolt (1879-82), Egyptian Revolution of 1919, Egyptian Revolution of 1952, Egyptian Revolution of 2011, and Egyptian Revolution of 2013. In fact, there are signs that President al-Sisi may be in the early stages of facing another revolution.

Movement as revolutionary moments, then it becomes clear that the US is simply not as revolutionary as Egypt has been. In 241 years, the US has experienced the same number of revolutions, five, but over a longer period of time, for an average of one every 48.2 years. This suggests that Egyptians are about 1.76 times more revolutionary.

An obvious conclusion might be drawn to suggest that electoral politics diffuses the need for revolutions, whether because the public's demands are achieved or the illusion of them is. In fact, there is some evidence to suggest this. According to Skowronek, clusters of US Presidents are organized into "regimes" according to the ruling political interests of the period. If we assume that Obama marks the end of the Conservative Regime (a big assumption) then the average regime in the US has lasted 31.4 years[29]. At that point, US regime lengths appear to only be 1.15 times longer than Egyptian.

However, if we throw in the single revolutionary period, which does not overlap with a regime change (the 1960s), the average period of change in the US falls to 27.5 years. The nearly identical numbers are coincidence of course, but they suggest something interesting about political action. Over the course of a period roughly 1.375 times longer than a generation in length, both Egypt and the US experience serious political shakeups. That is to say, in Egypt the population cannot act in a meaningful political way for nearly three decades then it does so in a revolution.

[29] Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1997). Washingtonian (12 years), Jeffersonian (28), Jacksonian (32), Lincolnian (32), Republican (40), Liberal (48), and Conservative (28).

In the case of the US, the public votes in presidential elections for around six times and then in the seventh commits itself to a political shakeup. In both cases the risk for participating is high. I say this because in Egypt the risk is imprisonment, death, or injury. In the US, the worst that can happen is that the new regime will in fact be worse than the one being replaced. To take this one step further, the six US elections in between the shapeup election are such low risk, that in many ways because so little is at stake, it is really political dormancy. In effect the US population becomes truly political every 27.5 years.

Since Egypt lacks a legitimate electoral mechanism for elites to manipulate the public into overthrowing other elites, revolution is left as the only real option. But of course, discerning such a pattern does not explain, why people in the US vote or why Egyptians rebel. What I want to attempt to discover is a mechanism to explain why both populations go from political dormancy in their day-to-day lives to politically active.

To do this, I will first look at rational choice theory. This is the dominant paradigm in political science to explain political action. It treats political actors the same way that economics views consumers, i.e. as always rational and self-interested. From there, I will examine the works of Heidegger, Marcuse, and Arendt to attempt to get a philosophical explanation for what is taking place. Following that, I will construct my own model based on the works of those three philosophers. At which point I will apply it to the US. Of all the revolutionary events listed above, the two least impactful are the Urabi Revolt of 1879 and the Occupy Movement. The former because of British intervention.

The Occupy Movement is remarkable considering the age we live in. Though I am personally more inclined towards a more Kierkegaardian view of the world where we sin-repent, sin-repent and where there is no real progress, with all the technology and sense of personal empowerment in the contemporary period, the fact that Occupy failed so miserably during the Obama administration is perplexing. Foucault's understanding of increasing state power is a reasonable explanation for this failure,[30] but considering that Occupy in no longer a movement, I will apply my model for understanding this particular moment in US politics.

[30] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," trans. Rosi Braidotti and revised by Colin Gordon, in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (eds.) Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 87-104.

CHAPTER 1:

How the Ultra Soccer Hooligans' Choices Challenge Political Science

The details of Egypt's situation in 2017 are complicated and not of particular interest to the main question here. The main question is why the Ultras, who are no longer considered apolitical soccer hooligans, joined the revolution, and how their participation calls into question the dominant paradigm in political science: Rational Choice Theory. The main question in this chapter, therefore, is whether or not Rational Choice Theory has a meaningful explanation for why the Ultras joined the revolution. We will start with classical Rational Choice Theory because its project in the latter twentieth century has been a redefinition of the *agent* of political action—to try to explain the behaviors of the "normal" protesters-turned-voters in situations like Egypt's revolutions.

How Rational Choice Theory Defines Political Participation

The evolution of theories of government since the late 1950s have created a clear, dominant research and teaching focus on what is called "Rational Choice Theory" (RCT). How this came about is critical to trace because it helps to identify assumptions that can be questioned in establishing a different paradigm for considering the behaviors of individuals and groups with respect to questions of government and governance. As we

shall see, RCT was never designed to deal with situations like the one in which the Ultras made their political choices, but it does outline a fairly normative image of an everyday Western actor making political choices.

The core of RCT, as practiced, emerged over the course of a half century for scholars of "government" or "political science," as they gradually changed their research focus away from theories and issues of government structure, law-giving and implementation, and the political process and moved into to a new model, one drawn from economics. The links made between these two independent fields would be fateful for the evolution of government theory in the latter twentieth century.

At first glance, that new focus on participation based on economics would seem to accommodate many Egyptian complaints and demands. In his 1890 book, *The Principles of Economics,* Alfred Marshall had defined economics as the study of material pursuits. In his 1932 essay, *An Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science,* Lionel Robbins changed the study of economics into a study of practical reasoning and ultimately into what came to be known as choice theory, which focused on consumers' motivations rather than value, price, and profit in isolation from macro level explanations for economic behavior. What followed was that economists decided to look at micro-level economic behavior while intentionally ignoring psychology—ignoring, for example, the lingering effects of economic deprivation and lack of economic opportunity that were drivers in Egypt's revolution.

There were some attempts to repair that neglect. In 1957, in *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, Anthony Downs followed this general trend and argued that the general

conception of US politics, as an expression of popular government, was an illusion that skewed our perceptions of what was going on in the political process. He argued instead that political actors made decisions and acted in their own best interests rather than in response to governance. This implied that political actors, at least in the US political system, were not unlike consumers. In the years since Downs' seminal book, Political Science has adopted central tenets of such an economic model of behavior as a core research principle, under the rubric of Rational Choice Theory (RCT), and in the process, both it and economics have moved away from their root fields of study (the *structures* of government and the economy) and toward what they think are more psychological issues. Until Robbins' and Downs' innovations, economics had been largely the study of production, while political science had been the study of the state and government, respectively. Since that time, the two have claimed to evolve into the study of why people act the way that they do.

Both fields thus moved from the analysis of larger systems (governments, economic systems) to a more micro level analysis, focused on the behaviors of individual actors that has continued to be the core of RCT. In economics, the concept "value in use of an object" was replaced by that of "utility," which in turn was later modified by eliminating most other psychological variables and focusing instead on general, empirically observable behaviors as correlated with *utility*. In much research, however, utility was reduced in effect to a test of a consumer's ability to rank their preferences, rather than to judge more complicated political options. In analyzing the data collected, scholars explained each set of preference rankings as a rationality, but often only thinly

defined. "Rationality" in economics and political science was thus reduced to "consistency with preferences" and had little to do with reason or rationality, when these are defined as the application of logic to problem solving. The empiricism of the field grew and limited its own paradigm. When addressing an individual's consumption of goods this way, the base form of RCT does not fully address the psychology of the purchaser, or necessarily do much to address the predictability of the consumer's behavior. In its simplest variant, then, RCT does not really *want* to account for how voting is not the same as purchasing a can of beans.

That limited model is the one figuring in basic undergraduate textbooks. In the better variants of RCT, available in more contemporary political science research, actors voting are by definition acting on behalf of an entire community, even if they are only casting one ballot. That is to say, that, while it is likely and probable that voters regularly think self-interestedly (as when buying a can of beans), this approach to political behavior also assumes that it is also entirely predictable that voters are simultaneously making voting choices as part of a larger community and thinking selflessly on behalf of the greater good. This more evolved model thus makes a splice between the poles in the selfish-altruistic dilemma of all human behavior by arguing that the individual actor feels good when being "altruistic" and as a result, must still be seen as acting selfishly rather than for the abstract "greater good."

To say, for instance, that soccer hooligans were acting altruistically for the common good is a stretch, at best, especially as "altruism," is factored in RCT. Thus, this analytic logic, characteristic of much second-generation RCT scholarship may satisfy a

definition of behavior for a behaviorist-rationalist research model, but it fails to consider the definitions of altruistic behavior that can consider other biological and social imperatives. Scholars embracing a broader RCT model may satisfy its predictive needs by claiming that altruism does not exist in more than generalized forms. However, in nature, biologists have found an opposite logic at play: individuals who are most selfish are most successful, but communities populated by altruists are most successful.[1] Since humans are grouped into communities and their survival depends on the health of those communities, these biological givens imply that, by definition, altruism is just as real and just as important as self-interested behavior. In effect, then, late twentieth-century Rational Choice Theory has come to an impasse in its oversimplifying the effects of individual and group psychology—a problem to which I will return, in later sections of this chapter.

[1]Examples of studies on altruism being biological include Daniel Batson, N. Ahmad and E. L. Stocks, "Four Forms of Prosocial Motivation: Egoism, Altruism, Collectivism, and Principalism," in *Social Motivation,* ed. D. Dunning, *(*New York: Psychology Press, 2011), 103–126; Shankar Vedantam "If It Feels Good to Be Good, It Might Be Only Natural," *Washington Post*, May 28, 2007, accessed, 23 April 2010; Richard Fisher, "Why Altruism Paid Off for our Ancestors", *New Scientist*, December 7, 2006, accessed May 24, 2016, https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn10750-why-altruism-paid-off-for-our-ancestors/.
Daniel Batson is a psychologist who examined the question of how biological altruism is and argues against the social exchange theory which postulates that altruism only exists when benefits to the self, outweigh costs to the self). Batson identified four major motives for altruism: altruism to ultimately benefit the self (egoism), to ultimately benefit the other person (altruism), to benefit a group (collectivism), or to uphold a moral principle (principlism). Altruism that ultimately serves selfish gains is thus differentiated from selfless altruism, but the general conclusion has been that empathy-induced altruism can be genuinely selfless.
Vedantam discusses an experiment that discovered that it is in fact the same part of the brain responsible for food and sex which lights up when people commit altruistic acts. In other words, "altruism, the experiment suggested, was not a superior moral faculty that suppresses basic selfish urges but rather was basic to the brain, hard-wired and pleasurable."
Richard Fisher shows how humans may have evolved altruistic traits as a result of a cultural "tax" we paid to each other early in our evolution.

To be sure, RCT has had some positive impact on political science research of the latter twentieth century. Thinking of voters as people capable of rank-ordering their preferences and then consistently acting on that rank-ordering can help in predicting some voting behavior.[2] Nonetheless, the totalizing reduction of all forms of interest to a single type does not take into account the evidence presented by the field of psychology. Such assumptions also foreclose central psychological motivations that play out in all political actions, but which are foregrounded in situations like Egypt's. Pretending that there are no emotions that really need to be considered in addressing the psychology of the voter renders such RCT relatively blind in describing most political behavior (especially political motivations for change, revolt, and revolution, all manifest in the Ultras situation). RCT adherents are not unaware of this objection. To address this deficiency, for instance, Rational Choice Theory has turned to what has become known as "Behavioral Economics," a field that has developed to correlate rational behaviors with psychological factors like perception of risk.

Unfortunately, Behavioral Economics has not moved to take up a broader picture of what actually constitutes behavior. That claim again is revealed in textbook examples for the field. For example, the so-called independence axiom, which essentially claims that rational actors will evaluate risk linearly—that individuals will maximize what they expect from their choices (an assumption at the heart of most models of capitalism).

[2] Christopher Wlezien, "The Public as Thermostat: Dynamics of Preference for Spending," *American Journal of Political Science* 39 (1995): 981–1000. In above article Wlezien predicted the 1996 presidential election. However, using the same model he failed to predict the 2000 Presidential election results. His model predicted that Al Gore would win by 5% points, whereas he won by only 1%.

However, when this axiom is tested in the laboratory with lottery exercises, it turns out that respondents overwhelmingly chose to minimize risk when risk is low and are happy to increase risk when rewards for doing so are high and risk is also high. In other words, willingness to risk is not linear but rather a function of amount of risk. This was discovered in 1952 when Maurice Allais presented individuals with the following two lottery scenarios and asked them to choose options:

Figure 1: Allais' Two Lottery Scenarios

Experiment 1				Experiment 2			
Gamble 1A		Gamble 1B		Gamble 2A		Gamble 2B	
Winnings	Chance	Winnings	Chance	Winnings	Chance	Winnings	Chance
$1 million	100%	$1 million	89%	Nothing	89%	Nothing	90%
		Nothing	1%	$1 million	11%		
		$5 million	10%			$5 million	10%

The test subjects consistently chose 1A and 2B. To be consistent each respondent should have chosen 1A and 2A or else 1B and 2B—sets of choices reflecting equivalent, linear increases of the relation of risk to reward. However, by choosing 1A and 2B, we see instead that the respondents chose sure things when those were available (the 100% chance offered in option 1A), but when the risk of failure was high they chose to increase

risk for an increased reward (the difference between 2A and 2B). This is known as the Allais Paradox, a result which contradicts the independence axiom.[3]

Unfortunately, the focus on *maximalization* only models a few situations, not the more general conflict situations of realities like Egypt's, where a so-called global maximizing function (Allais 1953) cannot be applied straightforwardly. Realities fraught with economic insecurity lead to much non-linear behaviors, which have, to be sure, been accommodated to a degree in economically based RCT extensions as, a set of non-utility theories focusing on other psychological variables like "prospect" and "regret."

Such work proves that RCT can indeed survive the inclusion of non-linear, non-utility risk preferences—that the general theoretical framework may be more robust than its first- and second-generation researchers demonstrated. These non-expected (non-rational) utility models - "prospect" and "regret theory" - have undone some of what classic Choice Theory did in the 1930s and brought psychology back into the picture.[4] Yet RCT has been slow to move in this direction. It took until 2002 for Behavioral Economics again became to a major focus of theoretical interest, as it brought increased attention to psychology and a whole new generation of research on behavior. Rational choice theorists were facing overwhelming evidence from cognitive psychology and neuroscience that, in fact, rationality was such an exceedingly rare human behavior as to

[3] M. Allais, "The So-called Allias Paradox and Rational Decisions under Uncertainty," in *Expected Utility Hypothesis and the Allias Paradox*, ed. M Allias and O. Hagen, (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979).
[4] For more on Prospect Theory see D. Kahneman and A. Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk," *Econometrica* 47 (1979): 263-291. For more on Regret Theory see G. Loomes and R. Sugden, "Regret Theory: An Alternative Theory of Rational Choice under Certainty," *The Economic Journal* 92 (1982): 805-824.

not exist for all intents and purposes—it seemed increasingly absurd to assume that all human behavior was rational all of the time. At this point, RCT began to incorporate a series of non-linear risk models to explain how humans make their risk choices based on preferences (not rationality in and of itself, but psychologically based rationales).

For example, one attempt by RCT to deal with the problem of non-expected utility was to claim that humans are both rational and non-rational—on the face of it, a good assumption for situations like Egypt's Ultras. Or in effect, it assumes that people are torn between what they should do and what they are tempted to do. The normative right thing to do is defined as a linear risk function, while a non-linear risk function (non-expected utility) was defined as what people wanted to do. In this case, the Ultras would need to be seen as spanning two poles: correct politics and their own desire to fight for their rights. However, one tries to spin that, however, the Ultras are not accommodated in these images of actors within choice scenarios. What they chose was a truce, which is rational to the outside, but not to the identity politics of their own groups; in attacking the police, their risk was anything but non-linear, if their goal was winning. One has to go further, as I address in the final section of this chapter.

I am not alone in noticing the limits of that theory, but what that "going further" might mean in theory was not particularly helpful, if one follows the subsequent evolution of RCT. Familiar with neuroeconomics, RC theorists after the millennium decided that the rational part of the brain was being overridden by the emotional or

affective parts of the brain as a result of evolution.[5] In effect, in such studies, the newer generation of RC theorists had decided that the observed behavioral norms that contradicted RCT were actually flaws in human evolution rather than flaws in their own hypotheses. Non-rational behavior was seen as a weakness or lower order behavior and as reflecting the inability of the rational part of the mind to overcome the affective systems.[6] In this model, then, self-deception and self-manipulation are seen, not as socially useful mechanisms for creating socially acceptable and altruistic behavior, but rather as flaws that hinder a person's true nature as a self-interested, linear, mathematical, and rational being. So, the Ultras become simply throwbacks behind the civilized protesters.

This mean that RCT had gone from a model that attempted and failed to describe what actors would do at the micro level, to a model rationalizing the seemingly incongruous abyss between the evidence presented by psychology and the assumptions made by RCT practitioners. RCT did not admit the flaws in its model, but chose instead to designate human behavior as flawed. At this point, proponents of rational choice theory literally came to call for paternalistic policies, since people were incapable of making their own rational choices, while in the long-term people were reeducated in rationality.[7] This is a significant problem in addressing political actors like the Ultras,

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[5] C.F. Camerer, G. Loewenstein and D. Prelec, "Neuroeconomics: How Neuroeconomics can Inform Economics," *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol XLIII (2005): 9-64. See also I. Brocas and J. D. Carrillo" The Brain as a Hierarchical Organization," *American Economic Review*, Vol 98 (2008): 1312-1346.

[6] Camerer et al., "Neuroeconomics," 18.

[7] See O. Morgenstern "Some Reflections on Utility" in *Expected Utility Hypothesis and the Allias Paradox*, ed. M Allias and O. Hagen, (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979), 180; J. C. Harsanyi "Review of Gautier's 'Morals by Agreement'," *Economics and Philosophy* 3 (1987): 83 and J. Elster, "When Rationality Fails," in *The Limits of Rationality*, ed. K. S. Cook and M. Levi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 19.

because their roots are in collective (if negative) action and identity politics, rather than in individual choice.

Correcting RCT: New Considerations

Clearly, even this most current generation of RCT has not necessarily dealt with its own model's failings in describing the political actions of groups like the Ultras, since they persist in defining people (political actors) as essentially rational, whose reason is overruled by emotion. Such descriptions make no sense of the Ultras decision to join the revolution: they had to have more than a normal reason to act (hooligans have no trouble finding fights), they must also have a desire to act (desire is often driven by emotion (they had to *want* to call a truce and attack the "real enemy")). The Ultras are not alone in being mischaracterized, if we follow RCT. After all, any political theory that stresses *rational* political action ignores the fact that all actors make their decisions to act based on emotion and then rationalize their actions in an internal post-action narrative. By so doing, individual political actors like the Ultras can appease their self—or culturally—imposed need to be rational and also, in the case they are asked that most poignant of questions, “Why did you do that?” so that they can project themselves as rational, as in control of their acts. The Ultras *came out* to the protests, they didn't just happen upon it.

To put this distinction in Marcuse’s terms: “Technological rationality has become political rationality.”[8]

[8] Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society, 2nd edition, (Boston: Beacon Press 1991), 12.

The more rational, productive, technical, and total the repressive administration of society becomes, the more unimaginable the means and ways by which the administered individuals might break their servitude and seize their own liberation. To be sure, to impose Reason upon an entire society is a paradoxical and scandalous idea - although one might dispute the righteousness of a society which ridicules this idea while making its own population into objects of total administration.[9]

In reality, the need to be rational or at least to be perceived as rational, requires actors to take on a level of self-deception, self-manipulation, and dishonesty about one's motives to a constant, but imaginary audience; it constitutes essentially a *rewriting* of original events and reactions. In effect, in a situation like that of the Ultras, rationality becomes a sort of socially constructed but self-administered, after the fact, superego. "The Superego," which according to Marcuse, "in censoring the unconscious and in implanting conscience, also censors the censor because the developed conscience registers the forbidden evil act not only in the individual but also in his society."[10] The Ultras had to shake hands before confronting the police, after all.

More recent innovations in economics are initiating an area of investigation known as Prospect Theory, bridging psychology and economics. Psychologists like Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky have proposed a different sort of conclusion than that used by RC theorists trying to adapt classical forms of the theory to neuroeconomics. Quite reasonably, they suggested that RCT as a utility theory worked in highly

[9] Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, 16.
[10] Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, 64.

transparent situations (where choices are so self-evident as to be virtually pre-chosen), while non-expected utility worked well in complex situations. In consequence, they stress that the difference between these two models' abilities to predict outcomes is not descriptive of gaps between rationality and irrationality in human behavior, but rather in a more complex set of factors that adhere to the situations in which individuals find themselves. Predictable outcomes rise in actions where information is high, emotions are low, and calculations about situational variables become possible, thus offering a more intuitive heuristic for action.

In his 2003 seminal paper, Kahneman explores three assumptions central to this new approach to economics that broaden our definitions of what motivates actors: selfishness, rationality, and taste.[11] He notes that, in the classic Ultimatum Game familiar to generations of economists, notions of fairness also play a role in decision making. In the Ultimatum Game, a player is given a sum of money. He or she then has a partner with whom he or she must split the money. If the partner agrees to the split, then both receive that money as it was split. If the partner refuses, then neither player gets any money. RCT in its classic form, of course, predicts that the first player will offer considerably less money than they will take, and that assuming the offered sum is even a small amount, that the second player will accept, because some money is better than none. However, two things happen more often than RCT would predict: first, the offered sums are higher than would be expected (often half as great), and second, the second player refuses more

[11] D. Kahneman, "A Psychological Perspective on Economic," *American Economic Review*, P&P 93 (2003): 162-168.

often than would be predicted (never). In both cases, a sense of fairness (not just rationality or self-interest) seems to be at the heart of these decisions (Fehr and Schmidt 2004).[12] Nonetheless, Kahneman did not push these insights to developing an alternative to Rational Choice Theory. Instead he wrote, "But the rationality model continues to provide the basic framework for these models."[13]

Despite such attempted reforms, RCT and the model of the rational actor which it relies on does not survive the contradictory evidence provided by neuroscience and cognitive psychology, which it originally rejected nearly a century ago, and then in recent years has desperately attempted to assimilate; RCT, even with the sort of reforms implemented by Kahneman and the like, has remained largely unsuccessful.[14]

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[12] E. Fehr and K. M. Schmidt, "A Theory of Fairness, Cooperation and Competition," in *Advances in Behavioral Economics*, ed. C. F. Loewenstein and R. Rabin (Oxford/Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

[13] Kahneman, "A Psychological Perspective," 163.

[14] Another classic problem from RC theorists expands our vision of what is at stake in an evolutionary model - the Allais Paradox. Instead of looking at it as a function of greed, an inconsistency in rationality, or a failure on the part of the participant to understand statistics, what if we did the same lottery, but instead of dollar we put survival and the likelihood passing on DNA to the gene pool as our reward/loss.

Experiment 1				Experiment 2			
Gamble 1A		Gamble 1B		Gamble 2A		Gamble 2B	
Winnings	Chance	Winnings	Chance	Winnings	Chance	Winnings	Chance
Survival	94%	Survival	83%	Death	89%	Death	90%
Death	6%	Death	7%	Survival	11%		
		Survival with a 5 point increase in the survival the next time risk happens	10%			Survival with a 5 point increase in the survival the next time risk happens	10%

In Experiment 1 there is no benefit from taking Gamble 1B. This is true because 94 % x 94% is 88.36% from 1A, while in 1B there is an 83% that you will face at least the 94% again, and a 10% chance that you will survive 99% on the second time, meaning that your chance of survival in 1B is 81.77%

(93%*(83%*94%+10%*99%)). The extra risk in 1B reduces the likelihood that such a person will pass on his or her DNA, because the extra risk actually decreased the likelihood of survival.

In Experiment 2, however, if I chose 2B, my chances go from 10% to 15%. So assuming two risk events, the survival rate for 2A is 1.21% (11% x 11%), while 1.50% for 2B (10% x 15%). In other words, it is entirely consistent with evolution that people would be rewarded for taking greater risks for greater rewards when risks were high, while they would also be punished for taking greater risks for greater rewards when risks were low. Our evaluation of risk is thus consistent with evolution, since there is a survival reward for thinking in accordance with the Allais paradox and a survival penalty for thinking consistently with the independence axiom.

Obviously, if the above exercise were altered enough, scenarios where increasing risk in the short term decreased risk in the long term could be created, even where risk was small. For instance:

Experiment 1				Experiment 2			
Gamble 1A		Gamble 1B		Gamble 2A		Gamble 2B	
Winnings	Chance	Winnings	Chance	Winnings	Chance	Winnings	Chance
Survival	94%	Survival with a 5 point increase in the survival the next time risk happens	93%	Death	89%	Death	90%
Death	6%	Death	7%	Survival	11%	Survival with a 5 point increase in the survival the next time risk happens	10%

In this scenario, survival for two events (if you chose 1A) would be 88% (94 % x 94%). But survival for 1B is 88% from 1A, while in 1B there is a 92% that you will survive both events (93% x 98%). This is a significant boost in survival; however, we have to remember that there is a serious short-term effect here. If I choose 1B over 1A, in the short run, the likelihood of me dying increases from 6% to 7% for an increase of 17%. On the other hand, if I choose 2B over 2A my likelihood of dying goes from 89% to 90%, which is only an increase of just over 1%. In other words, what the Allais Paradox is not properly considering is that if survival is at stake, there would be a serious change in my likelihood of dying when risks were small, but a much less noticeable one when my risk was high.

This kind of effect pertaining to topic of the risk is magnified when we consider the role of time. Let us say that the time interval between risk events is 20 years. If we consider that, then the likelihood that I will choose 1B drops dramatically. If on the other hand the interval between risk events is 1 year, my likelihood of choosing 1B increases dramatically. Moreover, my age will likely be a determining factor, as well. If I am young, I might be personally more interested in 1B, than if I am older. As I get older, health issues are going to become a factor. In a time when life expectancies were considerably less than today, say 35 years, I am going to be less willing to risk the healthier now for the later years. All of this is made all the more complex if I am in my reproductive years. A short term increase in risk for a long term decrease in risk might be good for me personally, but if I make such a decision in my reproductive years, so that I can live into my post reproductive years, the benefit might be less than the gain in terms of passing on DNA.

Again, those assessments might change if the causal agent for the risk is changed. For instance, if we are looking at instability in weather systems (such as droughts) as the risk causing factors, if such events

Despite all the promise that neuroeconomics seemed to hold, the collaboration between neuroscientists, psychologists, and rational choice theorists over the last half decade or so has produced little useful data and little to confirm their hypotheses. It turns out that finding out what parts of the brain are used during problem-solving does little more than tell us what parts of the brain are used when problem-solving, not what is actually happening in the act of problem solving. In one sense, this is a relatively mechanistic approach to understanding choice, if it is considered a biological attempt to explain behavior.

What is perhaps more interesting about this approach to understanding choice is that it does not attempt to explain behavior biologically, but rather psychologically—potentially opening up considerations of *non-rational* grounds for choice that are rational for the individual, if not normatively so. This of course also seems to feedback into behavioral choice theory. In fact, the first decade of the twenty-first century has seen a large proliferation of neuroscience articles that expand what we can see about brain

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occurred every 10 years, there would be a serious genetic advantage for a person age 15 to choose 1A over 1B. While 1B might improve the chances of such a person getting to age 35, 1A maximizes the likelihood of getting the benefit of the reproductive years from age 15 to 24, which of course are those reproductive years that will most likely result in DNA being passed on. As a result, there is a very serious genetic reward (which self-reinforces from generation to generation) for choosing 1A over 1B.

Moreover, all of the choice periods matter for evolutionary purposes, even for those people past reproductive years. A person past their reproductive years could still contribute to the passing on of their own DNA or related DNA since they can assist the survival and wellbeing of descendants and relatives. In other words, those past reproduction years can increase the likelihood that their DNA will be passed on. At an older age 1A will almost certainly be preferable to 1B.

I mention all of this not necessarily as conclusive support for evolutionary influence on how we make decisions, but rather to illustrate that there might be more to such choices than simply assuming that people make logic "errors." Considering how impossibly complex human behavior is to describe and predict, it seems extremely reductionist to make the sort of judgments that the Allais Paradox provides the test for a RCT model—one needs a better model than simply to assume that people are acting irrationally because their risk evaluations are not linear.

function. This is, in large part, because of technological improvements, especially functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). The goal of a current generation of neuroeconomic research follows up on these newer possibilities, seeking the discovery of the anatomy and physiology of choice behavior in the brain, for individuals and collectively. Enthusiasm for the possibilities of this approach was expressed widely at the time it became feasible: "[R]emarkable advances in neuroscience now make direct measurement of thoughts and feelings possible for the first time, opening the black box which is the building block of any economic interaction and system—the human mind."[15] Optimism does not necessarily guarantee results. The fMRI or any brain scan cannot read the brain, "In fact, fMRI is not and never will be a mind reader."[16] At best, the fMRI discovers a where parts of our thoughts originated within the brain, but through inference rather than direction observation. The fMRI does not see where the brain is thinking, but rather measures where blood flow has increased within the brain—a problem, given the brain's complexity.

Despite such limitations, in Fall of 2008, a special issue of *Economics and Philosophy* was devoted to Neuroeconomics. On the enthusiast side, it noted that "the goal of neuroeconomics is to build up a mechanistic and mathematical theory of choice and exchange."[17] In effect, their hope is that a model for choice drawn on a neural basis will be created. Of course, such hopes are pinned to what must be a comprehensive map

[15] Camerer et al., "Neuroeconomics," 53.
[16] N. K. Logothetis, "What We Can Do and What We Cannot Do with fMRI," *Nature* Vol. 453 (2008): 869.
[17] C. F. Camerer, "The Potential of Neuroeconomics," *Economics and Philosophy* 24 (2008): 369.

of the brain, a tool which is very much still missing. On the other side, a skeptic noted that neuroeconomics "has been dazzling images of light bulbs popping on in different parts of the brain, but unimpressive economics."[18] Ariel Rubenstein (2008, 485-6) explains why he finds it hard to accept neuroeconomics:

I can think of two reasons. The first is my position on the mind-body problem. I fear the approach in economics in which decision makers become machines with no souls. The second reason (discussed in Rubinstein 2008, and Harrison 2008) is neuroeconomics' style and rhetoric.[19] Conclusions are hastily drawn on the basis of scanty data. Lack of knowledge and uncertainty are swept under the rug. Colourful diagrams, which mean nothing to economists, are presented as clear evidence. To me, they look like a marketing gimmick like those used to sell a new product in the supermarket…

When I read Neuroeconomics papers, I don't get the impression that those who make claims for Neuroeconomics know how it will change Economics. Part of the problem is that many brain researchers misunderstand the meaning of economics.[20]

Such comments demonstrate how the hope for neuroeconomics has been so high, that social scientists like Jack Vromen and Emrah Aydinonat believe that neuroeconomics will be able to determine whether participants who reject offers in

[18] G. W. Harrison, "Neuroeconomics: A Critical Reconsideration," *Economics and Philosophy* 24 (2008): 338.
[19] A. Rubinstein, "Comments on Neuroeconomics," *Economics and Philosophy* 24 (2008): 485-494 and Harrison, "Neuroeconomics."
[20] Kevin McCabe, "Neuroeconomics and the Economic Sciences," *Economics and Philosophy* 24 (2008):345-368.

situations like the Ultimatum Game or the Ultra Soccer Hooligan uprising are making their choices because of fairness or not.[21] They also try and predict what other affective issues might be implicated.[22] In fact, Aydinonat takes it one step further and concludes that that part of the brain that will regulate fairness coincides with the part that creates disgust[23]—a focus that much more closely approximates the situation for groups like the Ultras.[24]

At present, hopes in this direction are limited: brain research in this form is far away from dealing with affective choice. Petri Kuorikoski and Jaakko Ylikoski point out that knowing where a complex thought like the rejection of an Ultimatum Game offer in the brain takes place does nothing to enhance our understanding of that rejection, either for the individual or for a profiled group like the Ultras.[25] We already know that the

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[21] J. J. Vromen, "Where Economics and Neuroscience Might Meet," *Journal of Economic Methodology* 17 (2010): 180 and N. Emrah Aydinonat, "Neuroeconomics: More than Inspiration, Less than Revolution," *Journal of Economic Methodology* 17 (2010): 159-169.

[22] Thus Glenn Harrison and Don Ross point out that neuroeconomics is making a mistake, first by treating the fMRI data as first-order observations and second, by forgetting that typical fMRI datasets generally have small sample sizes. As a result, the reliability of inferences from such data is in doubt (G. Harrison and D. Ross, "The Methodology of Neuroeconomics," *Journal of Economic Methodology* 17 (2010): 191).

[23] Aydinonat, "Neuroeconomics: More than Inspiration," 166.

[24] The research on the power of disgust exemplifies the ground for such hopes. When liberals and conservatives were asked about how they felt about homosexuals, as expected liberals responded more favorably than conservatives. But when a homosexual who was openly expressing his sexual preferences was put in a room with respondents, both the liberal and conservative respondents responded unfavorably about homosexuality (Alison George, "The Yuck Factor: The Surprising Power of Disgust," *The New Scientist*, July 11 2012, accessed June 6, 2016 https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg21528731-800-the-yuck-factor-the-surprising-power-of-disgust/.

2012). The research on disgust suggests that is it such a powerful force in determining human behavior that if fairness and disgust were caused by the same part of the brain, it would seem then that a person's sense of fairness could not be overcome by "education" and that, at least in the case of the Ultimatum Game, the notion of rational choice as proscriptive or normative would be off the table.

[25] Petri Kuorikoski and Jaakko Ylikoski, "Explanatory Relevance across Disciplinary Boundaries: The Case for Neuroeconomics," *Journal of Economic Methodology* 17 (2010): 220.

rejector is rejecting because he or she thinks that the offer is unfair.[26] Despite these hopes, then, neuroeconomics is not merely redundant for existing behavioral economics, it also does little (if anything) to add to RCT. “Neuro-science evidence cannot refute economic models, because the latter make no assumptions or draw no conclusions about the physiology of the brain”.[27]

Despite these issues, Rational Choice Theorists still attempt to save the hypothesis. For instance, one such position is that there is a pre-historic or maybe even a pre-homo sapiens sapiens mind—the affective—and a modern or possibly homo sapiens sapiens mind—the reasoning. That these two systems evolved independently and contradict each other allows them the dual system hypothesis, where an actor is rational (modern), but is held back by the primitive affective mind. One can read this insistence as an attempt to justify capitalism by insinuating that we have evolved to a state of rational self-interest because our brains developed a rational mind. However, we still also act in ways that contradict the "dog eat dog" mantra of our economic system, because we are tied down by a primitive mind that evolved before we were fully human (Brahic 2012). It is too long a digression here to go into further details used in today's neuroeconomics research. One can simply conclude that RCT is not entirely wrong about the dual system of unconscious and conscious motivations. While fMRI results remain dubious, the brain

[26] Kuorikoski and Ylikoski, “Explanatory,” 211. Nonetheless, they continue: “the explanation hardly goes beyond the trivial point that behavior is (to a large extent) controlled by processes in the brain” (ibid., 223). And beyond that, even most neuroeconomics experiments either rediscover outcomes already discovered by conventional economics, or more likely are biased towards certain experiments, because they have already been exposed to those outcomes.

[27] F. Gul and W. Pesendorfer, “The Case for Mindless Economics,” in *Foundations of Positive and Normative Economics* ed. A. Caplin and A. Schotter, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 26.

injury results seem to indicate very clearly that there are two distinct types of mental processes one that looks like classical motivations, and then something more affective.

However, RCT's assumption that the affective mind is primitive and that the rational is advanced and that the two are in competition with each other is not upheld by the results of brain injury research, nor by neuroanatomy in general.[28] And again, applied to the Ultras, such judgments make little sense. They were not a mob when they chose to stand and fight the police together. Moreover, at least one scholar, Damasio, underscores how badly the mind works without emotion.[29] In effect, emotion, is what allows us to make the decision[30]—an assertion much closer to the situation of the Ultras. Damasio's brain-damaged, fully rational, emotionless patients lose their jobs, their families, and any sort of normalcy. What this tells us is that Rational Choice Theory, in its prescriptive form, only works for a dysfunctional human being, and not for a political movement that has distinct local configurations and implications.[31]

In fact, Damasio's observations suggest that our reasoning is more often than not trumped by subconscious processes and that without that mechanism we would be utterly incapable of making decisions. Lacking the ability to make decisions has negative effects on our day to day functioning and even survival. Our minds are dual only in the sense

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[28] See Jonah Lehrer, *How We Decide* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2009).
[29] A. Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2010).
[30] "When a person is drawn to a specific receiver, or a certain entrée on the menu, or a particular romantic prospect, the mind is trying to tell him that he should choose that option. It has already assessed the alternatives—this analysis takes place outside of conscious awareness—and converts that assessment into a positive emotion" (Lehrer, *How We Decide*, 18).
[31] Moreover, "neural localization of different reasoning mechanisms is not tantamount to evidence for qualitatively distinct reasoning systems" (Osman, M. "An Evaluation of Dual-process Theories of Reasoning," *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* 11 (2004): 1005). Just because the brain processes different parts of a thought in different locations does not mean that there is competitive dual system.

that there appears to be an affective part and a rational part. Damasio, in 2010, states that the conscious is essentially an advisor to the unconscious.[32]

There remain some hopes for neuroeconomics, Damasio thinks that recent experiments confirm that unconscious and conscious are working together. He goes on to say, that non-conscious thought has been trained by conscious thought (Damasio 2010, 275). I would add and modified by instinct and personal preferences.

A Corrective is Necessary: But What?

As the thumbnails I have provided above outline in brief, theories of government since the late 1950s have preferred "Rational Choice Theory" as their corrective to their discipline's older norms. Over the last half century, political scientists used this theory to change their focus from issues of government structure, law-giving and implementation

[32] Tests to confirm this were conducted by Dijksterhuis and Nordgren in A. Dijksterhuis, L. F. Nordgren, "A Theory of Unconscious Thought," *Perspectives oil Psychological Science* Vol. 1 (2006): 95—109), where they set up three different groups of participants. One group was given plenty of time to decide between 4 apartments, one groups was asked to decide immediately, and the last group was repeatedly distracted during the time that they had to decide. Each apartment was described by 12 features and one apartment was intentionally made the nicest, one was the worst, and the other two were in the middle. Those being distracted were of course expected to have to decide unconsciously since they were not actually allowed to engage their conscious mind by the distractions. Amazingly they did the best.

However, this does not mean that unconscious is better than conscious thought. From Damasio's patients with damage Orbitofrontal Cortexes we already know that conscious thought is ineffectual without unconscious thought. But just because the distracted participants did best in one experiment this hardly constitutes iron-clad proof. Indeed, Gonzalez-Vallejo et al, did their own experiment with car selection. They had 6 cars with 40 features. They found that only 6 of the 23 respondents picked "correctly" unconsciously ("correctly" as defined by market rationality, technological rationality, or instrumentality), about the same as random guessing should have derived. They then allowed the respondents to consider their choice consciously and discovered that nearly all of them made the "correct" choice. In other words, when combined conscious and unconscious processes resulted in the "correct" choice. (C. Gonzalez-Vallejo, G. D. Lassiter, F. S. Belleza and M. J. Lindberg, "'Save Angels Perhaps': A Critical Examination of Unconscious Thought Theory and the Deliberation-Without-Attention Effect," *Review of General Psychology* Vol 12 (2008): 282-296.)

to a new model, one drawn from an economics that believed that value and price were used rationally by individuals. Certain deficiencies in their model emerged almost immediately; examples like the Ultras illustrate them, in which reason seemed to have been consistently overruled by emotion, as they defined the terms. To correct this RCT then turned to what has become known as "Behavioral Economics," a field that has developed to correlate rational behaviors with psychological factors like perception of risk. The problem with this attempted reform is that RCT does not survive the contradictory evidence provided by neuroscience and cognitive psychology, nor explains how, in situations like the Ultras, that "risk" may be defined in extraordinary ways—that the *risk* of having a future state that does not work might trump the *risk* of losing a job or suffering harm in a riot.

In the end, Rational Choice Theory, does not incorporate or address what seem more to be philosophical-ethical choices rooted in particular situations. In light of all of the contradictory evidence provided by psychology and the existence of compelling case studies, RCT has attempted to adapt by recasting itself as a normative or proscriptive field, based on essentially old terms.

The subsequent chapters of the present project are constructed around the belief that the materials exist to do a much better job of describing what *choice* means in situations that RCT would virtually be forced to call irrational: 2500 years of philosophy have addressed the issue of choice, as well. From the point of view of philosophy, the source of what I am considering a persistent error is clear: the Rational Choice movement

retains, at its base, the image of the early Enlightenment subject, a model which works by equating the human with the rational, and rationality as a prime goal.

I will thus turn now, to a very brief selection of post-enlightenment philosophers that speak to the problem and that I will use in the next chapter to help remedy theories like RCT in modeling political choice and political action in ways that account more broadly for human behavior—accommodating more precise distinctions between macro- and micro-level analyses of the behaviors of individuals and groups.

These are the topics of the next chapter: a brief recapitulation of RCT's "failures" with respect to the Ultras, and then a review of certain philosophical solutions that open out the vision of what choice in the political sphere means—work that moves beyond the too-simple premises of rationality or utility that RCT and the limited vision of economics that it draws on. This approach may seem pedantic, but because RCT remains so powerful in both political science and economics, I don't believe that I can simply ignore it. So, the question at stake for the next section is: why did soccer hooligans go from politically inactive to full-fledged revolutionaries? Rational Choice Theory tells us that all people are rational and self-interested, and their actions are aimed at creating benefits that outweigh the costs. Otherwise, by definition, their actions would be irrational.

The Rationalities of the Ultra Revolution: Some Conclusions

So, what are the benefits of the revolution for the Ultras? What might be recoverable from the Ultra affair, if we move beyond the scope of Rational Choice Theory.

If we look at the political process from the point of view of 26 January, when the situation was just escalating toward extreme choice, the answer about benefits that one probably would have gotten from the demonstrators is: ending the Mubarak tyranny and possibly ushering in a new age of Egyptian democracy.

What are the costs of this revolution, including the Ultra's acts? Injury, death, imprisonment, torture, chaos, a failed state, the rise of Islamists, and a collapsed economy.

Such a situation simply does not compare to the more abstract benefit inherent in the free and fair elections in an electoral system—the case that classical RCT was designed to address. Add to that considerations of how the Egyptian political system is open to economic manipulation by the wealthy, and the personal cost to the protestors of injury, imprisonment, or death, it becomes shockingly obvious that RCT is designed to designate anyone who chooses to join a revolution either not rational or not self-interested (there is a strange irony in RCT that an individual who was not self-interested and not rational would make similar choices as the person who was both rational and self-interested, since he or she would make irrational choice relative to his or her altruism). Revolutionary values held by a group, like self-sacrifice, are not considered to be motivating factors by RCT. Nor is a commitment to a partial outcome. At best, in the Egyptian situation, the Ultra actors had scant hopes at success. As actors, they could hope for a less repressive state or slightly better economic conditions, and those only at a distance in time, when political actors might eventually curry favor with voters by creating policies that make some attempt at better economic equality, and such an actor

might achieve a sense of accomplishment. While all of these factors are definitely beneficial to the citizens of a state, they are abstract, long term, and distributed over a population of millions, rather than directly granted to the individual. In contrast, the costs for such participation is manifest in a very real worldly, painful, time consuming, and very directly on an individual basis.

Here is the first issue that RCT does not consider: a choice whose costs very directly impact the individual, while the benefits accrue to the community. Despite such a situation being familiar historically from many important political situations (especially long-term ones like the Civil Rights Movement in the US, which took a series of court cases over years to realize the legal work for). Almost without question, RCT would require that a paradigmatic self-interested actor-citizen would simply have to opt out of participation in such movements. Yet at present, "revolutions" of various definitions happen regularly, and since December 2010, they occur so routinely that they have become background noise for our daily lives, in the form of demonstrations, sit-ins, torchlight parades, or armed resistance that ultimately force political transformation to be engaged.

But let us consider our soccer hooligans specifically. It is difficult to see how the behavior of soccer hooligans in any situation is rational or self-interested, or enlightened, compassionate, or community oriented for that matter—the social type associated with the term is portrayed in the media as disruptive, vehement, anti-social, and guilty of gratuitous violence. Yet such "outsider" social formations have long been recognized as

potentially providing an element of community.[33] Being a soccer hooligan, therefore, means that you are expressing your allegiance, even if only symbolically, to your favorite soccer team, but even more powerfully, you become the member of a group of fellow fans sharing that allegiance. In an act of hooligan violence, you become an active member of your community. Comradery among soccer hooligans undoubtedly becomes a powerful motivating factor in choosing action.

To be sure, the community of soccer fans may be only a tiny community in a much broader state. Moreover, through the violence between two rival soccer hooligan gangs, the community at large, may be harmed. There might be damage to property, injuries to police, and hospital expenses. And although your gang might prevail on a particular occasion, there are likely prices to be paid, in the forms of injuries and lost work, or even jail time or fines. If your group is defeated, the psychic outcome would be even worse, because you not only have suffered for your cause, you have also proved unworthy as an actor who is trying to serve the group's interest. In other words, even if there is devout loyalty to your soccer hooligan gang, your actions would by RCT and other followers of Enlightenment definitions of subjectivity, be seen as inherently self-destructive, and your insular community not at all a viable one.

At best, soccer hooligans are irrational, if judged by roles of "proper" social behavior; they are aberrant social actors. At worst, they seem to be neither altruistic nor self-interested because the news associates them with violence against people and

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[33] M.S. Jankowski argued for street gangs as surrogate families a quarter-century ago in *Islands in the Street: Gangs and American Urban Society*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

property. That is to say that the very ground assumptions of RTC's debates—whether we are altruistic or not, conventionally "rational," or not—may not even apply to the Ultras. Remember that RTC advocates advance the claim that no individual ever acts altruistically, because even if they give money or volunteer time, they are still getting a benefit. Perhaps they improve their reputation, or their actions made them feel better. But in terms of basic logic, however, the claim essentially reduces to the form “self-interest” = "altruism" (direct or indirect benefit) = “behavior.” To distinguish lines between altruism and self-interested behavior in what the Ultras did would be challenging, if not impossible.

What benefit is there to anybody in beating up fans from the opposing side? Then fighting the police when they show up to stop the brawl? What could possibly motivate a group of people who seemingly had no political, community, selfish, or economic interests in their routine behavior to suddenly put aside all their pent-up hatred to join each other in a revolution?

Remember that the situation in Egypt started with competing ultrafan groups *acknowledging* each other. When the Ultras for Ahly and Zamalek arrived in Maydan Tahrir they nodded to each other and then turned down different streets to battle the police. That is, they acknowledged that they were both soccer fan groups that like to fight, *and* that they were different, *but* that they had in this moment a greater enemy to their common culture.

A Rational Choice defender might reduce this situation to the immediate situation- to *direct* habits of self-interest: “Well these soccer hooligans love to fight. They

joined their gang to have the excuse of fighting each other. It is self-interested, because this is a vehicle for being able to express your violent nature. Now they get a better-armed enemy, and they will prevail." This is a clear oversimplification of human motivations in this case. I doubt very much that there are many individuals who say to themselves, "I really want to go express my violent nature. I know! I will go beat up the cops because they're such an easy target…" That kind of description of what was an act of bravery or perhaps even chivalry makes it irrational, at best.

But let us accept that premise for the sake of looking at the move in joining the revolution through RCT's lens. If their primary goal is the expression of their violent nature, then why not just meet up somewhere and beat each other up? Because January 26 would have been an excellent occasion for such activities, seen as a rational way to fulfill this (irrational?) desire. With the police in large numbers in Maydan Tahrir battling protesters, the likelihood of a speedy response to a soccer hooligan brawl was low.

And to make things more interesting, perhaps those desires could be satisfied even more overtly: attacking the police directly not only increased the chance of police intervention from relatively low to absolutely certain, it also increased the costs for such an action. If the two rival gangs had just beaten each other up in a location away from the police, fatalities would have been a possibility. But the probable mortality rate, in light of rubber bullets being fired by the police, would be lower if the Ultras fought each other, rather than attacking the police directly.

And here we reach a logical impasse. If the primary objective was to commit acts of violence, then joining the revolution was simply irrational in light of the increased

cost, unless we believe that the group found the risk acceptable for the reward of attacking the police (a superior power) rather than their ultra-fan peers. Using the excuse that the Ultras were ignorant of these costs will not work in this analysis either, because the difference in attacking each other rather than the police, is very much obvious. Indeed, if the goal of the groups in this engagement had simply been to commit acts of violence, the Ultras could have lowered their cost even more dramatically by attacking the protesters—to side *with* the police and become part of what would emerge as even a more violent force. It is not certain that police would have ignored their unofficial participation indefinitely, but considering that the police were struggling to clear the protesters they might not have objected to the "assistance."

These options for choice of action, defined as they are around the concept of *enacting personal needs to commit violent acts*, simply fail to capture the exigencies and the public reaction to this situation. Rational Choice Theory thus fails to explain much of anything in this situation—it can construct scenarios that do not adequately encompass a larger range of motivation in human action. What the Ultras *chose* was something beyond violent action. Their "reward," considering there was a reward, was unclear at best, negative at worst; their "self-interest" or "altruism" lied outside the immediately visible frame of the event. It lied in a fundamental redefinition of "hooliganism" as a group identity that helps individuals give meaning to their lives, a redefinition that transcends personal self-interest. That realization lies beyond RCT's vision, but *not* beyond certain strands of twentieth-century philosophy that allow us to model the *self/subject* and the *act of choosing* in different ways, as we will turn to in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2:

Heidegger and His Children—The Three Realms Model

What kind of a model will allow us to capture the meaning of choice in the sense of the Ultras? In this chapter, I will look for an approach different from RCT to the question of why the Ultras joined and saved the 2011 Revolution. Central concepts from Heidegger, Arendt, Marcuse, Foucault, and Habermas show us different sides of what choice means for subjects. Specifically, I will look at *Sein-zum-Tode* (Being-toward-death) the *homo faber*-a*nimals laborans-vita activa model,* the one-dimensional man, the idea of governmentality, and the system-lifeworld model. These terms each flesh out what an encounter like the Ultras really shows us.

In my introduction, I laid out the role of the Egyptian soccer hooligans in the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, which is of course part of the broader so-called "Arab Spring." Then I considered Rational Choice Theory, discovering that the dominant paradigm in political science and economics, was based on the experiments conducted by Rational Choice Theorists and psychologists not descriptive of human behavior. The notion that all people are rational and self-interested all the time has been largely disproven. To put it in Daniel Kahneman (the psychologist with an Economics Nobel Prize) words, "We think, each of us, that we're much more rational than we are. And we think that we make

our decisions because we have good reasons to make them. Even when it's the other way around. We believe in the reasons, because we've already made the decision."[1] Rationality, it turns out, is very rare and that the defenders of Rational Choice Theory today see RCT as more proscriptive rather than descriptive. When we applied it to soccer hooliganism and the Ultras actions in the revolution we found that the model told us nothing.

To shift the discussion, then, I will build a model based on the works of Heidegger, Arendt, Marcuse, and Habermas that will describe the nature of contemporary society in terms of realms of action, interspersing parts of the model with re-descriptions of the Ultra soccer hooligans' actions in the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. Then in the final chapter of this study, I will apply this model to discover where the US is relative to political actions like the 2011 Revolutions by looking at the Occupy Movement. My hope is to shine a light on why there has been so little political action on the part of non-elites since 1970. My hope is that my model will allow us to explore a different way of talking about how political action is encouraged or discouraged and how in the case of the soccer hooligans, those actors might have sought to do something good and meaningful that transcended mortal boundaries of their selves, to uncover another interpretation of soccer hooliganism. What we will discover is that soccer hooligans engage in violent collective behavior in order to create a new sort of social capital that transcends the actual monetary

[1] See Chapter 8, "How Decisions Happen" in Daniel Kahneman's, *Thinking Fast and Slow,* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013).

capital of the upper middle class. In effect, the hooligans became Ultras in order to compete with males of greater economic means in a manner that has a low entry cost.

Because of the powerful influence of Heidegger on the other four names, I will start with his terminology as a re-setting of the problem of what it means to be an actor in the world, and then will nuance those acts with reference to the other thinkers above.

Beyond Self-Interest and Altruism: Heidegger's Redefinition of Human Action

In *Being and Time* Heidegger proposes that a cause for people in taking action is "being-toward-death." In the beginning of division two, Heidegger takes up the question of what it means for the human being to "be in the world" (to be part of *Da-sein*, being in the world of human comprehension). He points out that any act that comes from the being of a human in the world has in it a temporal dimension, a pro-ject, a projected outcome into the future. Engaging in an act like *Care*, caring-for, caring-about something in the world splits the individual into frames of being, disrupts him as an ontological whole.

Heidegger writes:

> Care, which forms the totality of the structural whole of *Da-sein*, obviously contradicts a possible being whole of this being according to its ontological sense. The primary factor of care, "being ahead of itself," however, means that *Da-sein* always exists for the sake of itself. "As long as it is," up until its end, it is related to the potentiality-of-being. Even when it, still existing, has nothing further "ahead of it," and has "settled its accounts," it's being is still influence by "being ahead of itself." Hopelessness, for example, does not tear *Da-sein* away from its possibilities, but is only an independent mode of *being toward* these possibilities. Even when one is without illusions and "is ready *for* anything," the "ahead of itself" is there. This structural factor of care tells us unambiguously that something is always still *outstanding* in *Da-sein* which has not yet become "real" as a potentiality-of-its-being. A *constant unfinished quality* thus lies in the essence

> of the constitution of *Da-sein*. This lack of totality means that there is still something outstanding in one's potentiality-for-being.[2]

The language of this quotation is difficult, but it clarifies that every attitude assumed by the subject in the world (care, hopelessness) orients the person in a particular way, turning them towards or away from certain illusions (facts?) of *Da-sein* and leading them to project certain outcomes and meanings for their acts *(possibilities* is his word). In the case of *care*, it projects outcomes forward, thus describing the subject who cares as engaged in a state of being "ahead of itself" and "unfinished."

What is striking about the above Heidegger quote is that we can imagine the Ultras fitting the description of "hopelessness" as an "independent mode of *being toward*." Chronically unemployed, young, living in a state with few economic opportunities, and fewer still means of expressing one's self, the Ultras take a *different* line toward the future of their own existence than mainstream subjects might prefer. Perhaps, soccer hooliganism is an attempt to find something in the hopelessness—or rather, in defining something as *hopeless*, are also implicated in a description of what might be *hoped for*. But what Heidegger does with hopelessness here is interesting for this reason, as well. He is in effect saying that being still looks to the future, even when all future possibilities are exhausted, as seen from the now. Similarly, care of the self also still implicates a future, but in terms of where the self will be in it. For the present, however, we will not pursue the hopelessness of the Ultras, but must rather turn to their

[22] Martin Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: SUNY Press, 2010), 219.

willingness, in the face of hopelessness, to set aside care for their personal futures and engage in a risk behavior that could lead to injury or death.

What I am after with Heidegger is a description of why a person chooses action over inaction in the moment of seemingly no benefit for the self. The answer lies in the orientation of life as a being-toward-death: "Death does reveal itself as a loss, but as a loss experienced by those remaining behind."[3]

Thus, *death* reveals itself as the *ownmost nonrelational possibility not to be bypassed*. As such, it is an eminent imminence. Its existential possibility is grounded in the fact that Da-sein is essentially disclosed to itself, in the way of being-ahead-of-itself. This structural factor of care has its most primordial concretion in being-toward-death. Being-toward-the-end becomes phenomenally clearer as being toward the eminent possibility of Da-sein which we have characterized.[4]

As we engage in our daily lives we cannot help but notice death around us and its inevitability. What that means is that, because of the knowledge that death is invisible, the stakes of life become visible in ways that may have been lost to consciousness by individual subjects: "The fact that tactically many people initially and for the most part do not know about death must not be used to prove that being-toward-death does not "generally" belong to Da-sein, but only proves that Da-sein, fleeing from it, initially and for the most part covers over its ownmost being-toward-death."[5]

[3] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 219.
[4] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 251.
[5] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 252.

What Heidegger accomplishes here is realigning questions like "choice" and making them structural in the sphere of being rather than personal. Thus, it is not paradoxical when he says that we can avoid death through engagement in the mundane activities of life: “The publicness of everyday being-with-one-another ‘knows’ death as a constantly occurring event, as a ‘case of death.’” That is: “Someone or another ‘dies,’ be it a neighbor or a stranger. People unknown to us ‘die’ daily and hourly. ‘Death’ is encountered as a familiar event occurring within the world. As such, it remains in the inconspicuousness characteristic of everyday encounters.”[6] And for our purposes here, the *everyday* is the form of the Da-sein, being-in-the-world, within which human actions like choice need to be understood—part of a larger system, not simply a problem of individuals and what they "should" do.

In one sense, this seems counter-intuitive, when Heidegger speaks of death. We as individuals should be aware of death because we cannot help but be witness to it in our daily lives. However, it is precisely our exposure to death as part of being-in-the-world, our alignment towards it, and the relationship to death that is constituted by being-in-the-world, that makes avoiding it possible. “The public interpretation of Da-sein says that ‘one dies’ because in this way everybody can convince him/herself that in no case is it I, myself, for this one is *no one*. ‘Dying’ is levelled down to an event which does concern Da-sein, but which belongs to no one in particular.”[7] In this sense, then, Heidegger is

[6] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 253.
[7] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 254.

arguing that self-interest such as is posited for the Ultras will *not* necessarily be governed by fears of individuals:

> The evasion of death which covers over, dominates everydayness so stubbornly that, in being-with-one-another, the 'neighbors' often try to convince the 'dying person' that he will escape death and soon return again to the tranquillized everydayness of his world taken care of […]. But, basically, this tranquilization is not only for the 'dying person,' but just as much for 'those who are comforting him.'[. . .] Even "thinking about death" is regarded publicly as cowardly fear, a sign of insecurity of the part of Da-sein and a dark flight from the world. *The they does not permit the courage to have* Angst *about death*.[8]

It would be easy to re-conceive soccer hooligans' *choice nexus* (not personal choice) in terms of such an orientation toward the world. As a set of groups, they have made an art out of confronting death (either social or physical).

For the hooligans, high risk attacks against each other can result in the arrival and violence of the police (social death if not real death). If someone were to die from within their ranks, they will easily shift to adapting to act as Heidegger would charge them with doing: using the death of others to affirm one's own state of not being dead:

> Entangled, everyday being-toward-death is a constant flight from death. Being toward the end has the mode of evading that end—reinterpreting it, understanding it inauthentically, and veiling it. Factically one's own Da-sein is always already dying, that is, it is in a being-toward-its-end. And it conceals this fact from itself by reinterpreting death as a case of death occurring every day with others, as a case which always assures us still more clearly that "one oneself" is still "alive."[9]

In essence, the hooligans live because some among them can and do die: they use the death of another in their group to point to them and make death into a binary, affirming that that person is dead, but I am still alive.

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[8] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 254-255.
[9] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 255.

Note, however, that this is an understanding through which a self is constituted. Heidegger's charge is that such understandings are by definition false. In its facticity, as we live, death becomes more and more a part of each of our lives. But as projected into being-in-the-world, Da-sein, it is parsed into the appearance of time, so now is not then, they are not I, a set of distinctions that turn into a cultural interpretation of death. To understand what is being papered over, in turn, requires an act of disclosure: "The existential project of an authentic being-toward-death must thus set forth the factors of such a being which are constitutive for it as an understanding of death—in the sense of being towards this possibility without fleeing it or covering it over."[10] To understand what an actor in the world is doing, and for that actor to be authentic to his position in Da-sein, we and that actor must embrace that death is happening, always already, and everywhere. But when we do that, as interpreter or actor: "In *Angst*, Da-sein finds itself *faced* with the nothingness of the possible impossibility of its existence. Angst is anxious about the potentiality-of-being of the being thus determined, and thus disclose the most extreme possibility."[11] The act is seen in relation to mortality.

And here, we as interpreters may see something different in the position of the Ultras than was done in RCT: It is not that they are self-sacrificing (altruistic) or embracing violence, each of which would be a judgment referencing something outside their experience of the *now*. Instead, they are thrown into (*geworfen*) a *now* with what can be embraced as stoicism, but which more profitably is seen as a procrustean bed, a

[10] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 253.
[11] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 246.

permanent and unforgiving state of being. We see that they embrace the possibility of the terminality of being as something that cannot be escaped—the most general goal of being is to end. Heidegger continues:

> Uncanniness reveals itself authentically in the fundamental attunement of Angst, and, as the most elemental disclosedeness of thrown Da-sein it confronts being-in-the-world with the nothingness of the world about which it is anxious in the Angst about its ownmost potentiality-of-being. What if Da-sain, finding itself in the ground of its uncanniness, were the caller of the call of conscience?[12]

That is, what is produced in the person thrown into such a situation is a confrontation with being-in-the world, one which makes us recognize its uncanniness and thus produces in us a psychological state: *angst*, anxiety.

That confrontation of self-manifest in Da-sein and the "nothingness of the world" requires us - calls to us—conscience, as motivations like *care* take shape between the poles of Da-sein as a temporal assessment. The effect of the confrontation calls forth in the subject a cognitive reaction to it:

> *Conscience reveals itself as the call of care*: the caller is Da-sein, anxious in thrownness (in its already-being-in…) about its potentiality-of-being. The one summoned is also Da-sein, called forth to its ownmost potentiality-of-being (its being-ahead-of-itself…). And what is called forth by the summons is Da-sein, out of falling prey to the they (already-being-together-with-the-world-taken-care-of…). The call of conscience, that is, conscience itself, has its ontological possibility in the fact that Da-sein is care in the ground of its being.[13]

Perhaps this is, in some way, the most radical thing that Heidegger says, and the thing which best describes what happened when the two Ultra camps saluted each other and took their individual roads to confront the police. They found in this moment of authentic

[12] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 255.
[13] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 256.

self-awareness of mortality their call to action. That call comes from somewhere, Heidegger says—some say God, others biology, it does not matter which. The call is a call to conscience. At that moment when we realize we will be dust rather than selfishly flying in fear of our end, we come to care, both about ourselves, but more importantly about others.

Critical for the present case is that this is less a question of choice than it is of affect: "[T]he call addresses Da-sein as 'guilt' or, as in the warning conscience, refers to a possible 'guilt' or as a 'good' conscience, confirms that one is 'conscious of no guilt?'"[14] Here, again, Heidegger stresses that the human does not produce meaning, but rather that the call—virtually the intentionality—this structure of being-in-the-world conditions the subject to certain forms of judgment. The call to affective reaction is a blank that individual action and predispositions fill up: the predisposition of the person determines whether they feel guilty or it confirms their sense of "good." Thus, care manipulates our understanding of being temporally. "The being of Da-sein is care. It includes in itself facticity (thrownness), existence (project) and falling prey."[15] It is our role in the world to care, and "being guilty constitutes the being that we call care."[16]

Here again, Heidegger displaces choice onto the structures of world understanding, away from the individual: "Understanding the call is choosing, but it is not a choosing of conscience, which as such cannot be chosen. What is chosen is *having* as conscience as being free for one's ownmost being-guilty. *Understanding the summons*

[14] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 259.
[15] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 262.
[16] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 264.

means: *wanting to have a conscience*. This does not mean wanting to have a "good conscience," nor does it mean willfully cultivating the "call"; it means solely the readiness to be summoned."[17] It is this call from the framework of world understanding that makes us take action. Heidegger thus has an interesting answer for why soccer Hooligans saved the Egyptian Revolution of 2011. In effect, as they sat around after the first day, they were confronted with a call for the second day, because the dimensions of the situation called for it, not because of individual choice about the situation: "Thus wanting to have a conscience takes over the essential lack of conscience within which alone there is the existentiell possibility of being 'good'."[18] And "As *authentic being a self*, resoluteness does not detach Da-sein from its world, nor does it isolate it as a free floating ego… Resoluteness bring the self right into its being together with things at hand, actually taking care of them, and pushes it toward concerned being-with the others" (274).[19] The hooligans were pushed toward "being-with" within that situation.

Those soccer hooligans found themselves drawn into the revolution not because they had a choice, but because the call to conscience implicates a concomitant call to do good that takes shape within this situation. It cares, it is resolute, it requires engagement with the world:

> The situation cannot be calculated in advance and pregiven like something objective present waiting to be grasped. It is disclosed only in a free act of resolve that has not been determined beforehand, but is open to the possibility of such determination.[20]

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[17] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 265.
[18] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 265.
[19] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 274.
[20] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 284.

After years of inauthentically living in a culture of hopelessness and violence, the Ultras found before them the moment of moments. They had the skills and the resoluteness in the face of police violence to handle a vicious state apparatus designed to crush revolutions. The calling was theirs to have; all that they needed was the openness to it.

Care does not need a foundation in a self. But existentiality as a constituent of care gives the ontological constitution of the self-constancy of Da-sein to which there belongs, corresponding to the complete structural content of care, the factical falling prey to unself-constancy. The structure of care, conceived in full, includes the phenomenon of selfhood. This phenomenon is clarified by interpreting the meaning of care which we defined as the totality of being of Da-sein.[21]

From this perspective, it is not surprising that the hooligans found themselves in being hooligans-for-the-good in attacking the police instead of each other. But this is not where Heidegger stops:

> Every ontic experience of beings, the circumspect calculations of things at hand as well as the positive scientific cognition of things objectively present, are always grounded in the more or less transparent projects of the being of the beings in question. But these projects contain an upon-which from which, so to speak, the understanding of being is nourished. If we say that beings "have meaning," this signifies that they have become accessible *in their* being, and this being, projected upon its upon-which, is what "really" "has meaning" first of all. Beings "have" meaning only because, as being that has been disclosed beforehand, they become intelligible in the project of that being, that is, in terms of the upon-which of this project. The primary project of the understanding of being "gives" meaning.[22]

[21] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 297.
[22] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 298.

The hooligans's world became intelligible to them in new ways as they engaged a new project to become more themselves.

In effect, Heidegger is showing us that we need to understand ethics by going beyond simply listening to some sort of mystical calling. Instead, ethics and choice come into being when a situation calls for us and makes us want to "have meaning." We are called to create meaning, to make a "project" that gives meaning to our lives. The Ultras adopted the revolution and in that moment had their project and their meaning—they achieved an authenticity in this set of acts

Care is being-toward-death. We defined anticipatory resoluteness as authentic being toward the possibility that we characterized as the absolute impossibility of Da-sein. In this being-toward-the-end, Da-sein exists authentically and totally as the being that it can be when "thrown into death." It does not have an end where it just stops, but it exists finitely. The authentic future, which is temporalized primarily by that temporality which constitutes the meaning of anticipatory resoluteness, thus reveals itself as finite.[23]

If it were not for death there would be no incentive to action. Why would we bother to write a dissertation if we knew we had thousands of years to procrastinate before bothering with it. It is precisely the shortness of our existence that gives our actions their resoluteness.

In fact, it is the discovery of our mortality that calls us to action now, rather than in the future. "The ecstatic quality of the primordial future lies precisely in the fact that it

[23] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 303.

closes the potentiality-of-being, that is, the future is itself closed and as such makes possible the resolute existentell understanding of nullity. Primordial and authentic coming-toward-oneself is the meaning of existing in one's ownmost nullity."[24] And this call to action has as part of it an ecstatic imperative. In a strange way once one is authentically being-toward-death one can achieve a sort of immortality. The actions of care, conscience, that are part of the undertaken project leave an impact on the society around us. That impact will linger even after our death. That is to say we get a sort of Greek immortality where the remembrance of us reinvokes us from death, but it will not be our names that are remembered but rather the sum of our actions will have impacted our community into the future and so it will be the actions of our descendants, students, descendants of friends, people affected by good deeds in the past, etc. who will invoke our being every time they benefit from and take action in the community that we changed as a result of our actions. The hooligans saw a way to become memorable by using their own strengths in a memorable way.

This is Heidegger's claim to a kind of *Existenzphilosophie*, as well because he shows that alternative is otherwise quite horrible. Had the hooligans not embraced being, they would have become irrelevant in their frame, and beyond it in history:

> The pallid lack of mood of indifference to everything, which clings to nothing and urges to nothing, and which goes along with what the day brings, yet in a way takes everything with it, demonstrates in the *most penetrating* fashion the power of *forgetting* in the everyday moods of taking care of what is nearby. Just barely living, which "lets everything alone" as it is, is grounded in giving oneself over to

[24] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 303.

> thrownness and forgetting. It has the ecstatic meaning of an inauthentic having-been.[25]

This different understanding of what the Ultras did, of how they can legitimately be conceived of as actors in their world, is critical to opening the space for a philosophy of action that moves beyond rational choice as a question of individual actors.

In the next sections of this chapter, I will offer an account of a theory that supplants rational choice theory, while accommodating Heideggers demands of seeing collective action as resulting from a situation rather than an individual choice—from a kind of self-interest construed very differently than has been done in the theories of choice in political action that I have discussed in the earlier chapters of this project.

Origin of the Three Realms of Action: Adding the *Economic Realm* to Action

The first step in recasting theories of political action is to realize that groups like the Ultras in today's world come together in their projects quite differently than have the groups who appear in the examples of earlier political theorists used in today's rational choice theories and their extensions.

Today the *economic realm* is master over much of human behavior in the United States, but this has not always been the case. On a more mythic level, we might note that, when government first planted itself into the black soil of the Nile Valley some six and a half millennia ago, its function was to modify and regulate the *normative* and *economic realms* of action. It did this in order to create the sort of mass behavior required to meet

[25] Heidegger, *On Being and Time*, 317.

the needs of the Egyptian people. Today, however, government does not have that power in its own right. Instead, it is the *economic realm* that does the modifying by manipulating the *normative* and *political realms*. Accordingly, any political space driven by economics does not necessarily exist to meet the needs of the public, but rather to maximize profit and consumption in order to meet the needs of the system.[26] The space of politics thus becomes understood in terms set by economics' definitions of being-in-the-world, which means that "needs," too, assume different forms, as do the behaviors that this understanding calls forth from the actors in it.

The very definitions of behaviors will change. In the case of the Ultras, the hooligans became the heroes when their lives were engaged in their revolution. But I will argue that this violent uprising in the streets is not the only kind of revolution we recognize today. This condition of *economic realm* dominance means that new sorts of revolution are possible, among which I count the *Occupy* movement in the US, which will be discussed in the last chapter.

What I note now is that, in addition to the normative-ethical and political rationales that have been attributed to individuals making choices, the *economic realm* has emerged in a new significance and salience for understanding individual political actions. Whereas, in previous periods most civilizations subordinated their economic systems to normative and political institutions, our contemporary era has subordinated the

[26] By system I mean it exactly in the way in which Habermas defines it, where complex, rational institutions differentiate and decouple from the lifeworld and become the steering media of culture by returning to the lifeworld and colonizing it (Jurgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol II*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 82-85, 115, 154, 165).

political and *normative realms* of action to the *economic realm*. This is perhaps nowhere more pronounced than in the US, where using rhetoric like "free markets" and "trickle-down," nearly all action has been subordinated to the whims of profit generation, rampant consumerism, and market forces. It is the crux of Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* and its consequences, and the greatest source of Arendt's lamentations in *The Human Condition*, to which I turn in later sections of this chapter.

At this point, I suggest that we need to follow Heidegger's logic and look for a more encompassing ground from which to understand human action. I posit here that a model of Three Realms of Action will be more profitable. As I will explicate here, the three realms that determine the emergence of actors with choice are the *political*, the *economic*, and the *normative*—three determining frames of reference on their being-in-the-world.

Although, my three-realms-of-action model is influenced by Plato's allegory of the metals and Aristotle's Private/Public dichotomy, it also accommodates critiques of the modern world, including Freud's id, ego, and super-ego, Arendt's *animal laborans*, *homo faber*, and *vita activa*, Habermas' lifeworld/system dichotomy, and the works of others. In fact, as Arendt describes a world, in the *Human Condition*, where *animal laborans* has usurped power over *homo faber* and as Habermas describes, in chapter 8 of *Communicative Action*, a world where *system* has colonized the *lifeworld*, in these most modern accounts of the realms of political action, the *economic realm* has usurped control over the *political realm* and eviscerated the *normative realm*. I hope to use my model to discover new insights into the human condition.

To this point, as we have seen in my critique of theories of Government and economy as conditioning political actors, the *political realm* has been the most researched and best defined; it is the ideal within which civil society exists, steered by media. That is to say, most analyses see the *political realm* today as the site within which deliberate manipulation of the economic and *normative realms* occur, prompted by actors who script their actions according to what they understand as the norms of society. The *normative realm* is where all meaning is generated to populate the scripts directing these actions. It is most profitably seen as the point of origin of Heidegger's call to conscience, the realm where religion, morals, ethics, heroics, family, patriotism, nationalism, identity, mythology, mysticism, self-worth, a sense of belonging, love, and purpose come from, and where a group like the Ultras can find the tools to define and redefine their identities and find justification for their acts.

Yet in the most primitive sense, the *economic realm* has been conceived as the most primordial of the three realms. It is where we find food and shelter, it is consumption, appetite, and survival. The *economic realm* grounds the existence of the other two realms, but until recently, the public would not have conceived of it precisely that way. In the world of an ancient Egyptian farmer 4,000 years ago or even a European peasant from the Middle Ages, the statement, "What you are doing is economic," would have only told part of the story. The serf or guild member was just as likely to say, "I am serving my baron and God by laboring" as making ends meet.[27] *Money* (in the form of

[27] For more on labor as a category during the Middle Ages see Mark Addison Amos, "The Naked and the Dead: The Carpenters' Company and Lay Spirituality in Late Medieval England" in *The Middle Ages at Work*, eds. Michael Uebel and Kellie Robertson, (New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2004). Amos's

cash or wages) existed, as did sophisticated bookkeeping, but the rhetoric that would turn it into a full-fledged realm for identity production was a much later emergence.

In the earlier state forms, these three realms of action were more tightly coupled, where today they can be decoupled and understood separately.

Around 800 AD, new discourses of philosophical justification arose when philosophy was redefined in conjunction with natural science, in the context of the new religion of Islam as well as Greek philosophy, especially Aristotle. A few Arabs, a lot of Persians, a few Christians, a few Jews, and a lot of Muslims ended up as the architects of natural philosophy—in some accounts, the origin of physical sciences, but also for new discussions of the relation of the relation of reason to norms (be they religious or political).[28] Here again, however, the evolution of the *normative realms* was hindered. An example of how is found around 1100 AD, when al-Ghazali's book *Incoherence of the Philosophers* took aim at the ungodliness of philosophy in general, but in particular

assessment of guild life in the late Middle Ages examines how the economic, social, and political interests of crafting guilds were colored by religious purpose. Amos's essay is a reminder of just how intricately the institutionalization of medieval labor is bound up with the cultivation of "both" worldly and spiritual success. Taking as his example the Carpenters' Company, Amos shows how guild life operated as a buffer against future privations, measured culturally and spiritually. A 'theology of work' emerges where secular activities dovetail with religious missions. Such a theology of labor justifies the inevitable exploitative dimensions of an emergent capitalism in terms of salvific benefits.

[28] For more on the scientific contributions of the Islamicate world during the Middle Ages see George Saliba, *Islamic Science and the Making of the European Renaissance (Transformations: Studies in the History of Science and Technology)*, (Cambridge, MIT Press, 2011). Just to give you an idea, I'm referring to the innovations of al-Khwarazmi, al -Kindi, al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ishaq, al-Farabi, ibn a- Haithem, Ibn Sina, Nizam al-Mulk, Maimonides, and Ibn Rushd. They invented zero, algebra, translated Aristotle and deconstructed his idioms, invented literary analysis in order to unravel which of the *hadith* were legitimate, invented hydraulics, invented modern agriculture, created the first scientific method, invented the lens, discovered that light had a finite speed, asserted that all objects in the universe exerted gravity on one another, invented modern medicine, described the application of reason to politics, and more. Men like al-Farabi questioned the very fundamentals of Islam and men like ibn Sina skirted around the subject of God in order to lay the foundations of what would become phenomenology and the concepts of entropy and singularities. Nizam al-Mulk pushed the boundaries of politics by questioning the norms of his time.

targeted Ibn Sina, al-Farabi, Plato, and Aristotle. Despite an attempt by Ibn Rushd, in his *The Incoherence of the Incoherence*, al-Ghazali's critiques held, leaving politics and religion closely conjoined in the *normative realm*. It would not be before the Renaissance when the *normative* realm grounding action would decisively be split from the *political*, with reason becoming the defining element of all realms of action and identity production. Reason allowed not only the production of skepticism, but also different norms for justifying action and producing identities, and its use allowed for the emergence of media as ways to enforce rational norms outside of the direct control of politics.

This separation is critical as the basis of modern Western thought, bringing with it what has been called the Enlightenment, but also its attendant ills: religious fanaticism, extremist ideologies, environmental degradation, luxurious convenience, genocidal wars, and exponential technology growth, all held in place by the media as much as they are by governments. And finally, it appears that in our age of massive technological growth we have given our sovereignty over not to the public as we would like to pretend, but rather to our consumer appetites, Arendt so eloquently points out in *The Human Condition*. The sort of reason that we apply to our daily lives is not the rich reason of Socrates, but rather the toxic "technological rationality" that Marcuse describes in *One-Dimensional Man*.[29] And with such theories of the Enlightenment, as I shall now turn to, we reach also the point where the *economic realm* plays its role.

[29] "Technological rationality has become political rationality," (Herbert Marcuse *One Dimensional Man*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), xvi).

Let me now outline each realm and *political*, *normative*, and *economic realms* in detail and then demonstrate the power relationship between them. This will help me to evolve my model and explore evolution of the realms in order to show what we have done to get here and how the realms are differentiated and separated from each other. In the remaining sections of this chapter, I will outline how economic and economically-based social theories have influenced our ideas of realms of political reaction (and in my conclusion, I will return to the Occupy Movement, specifically Occupy Austin) to exemplify why economic theory needs to be added as an independent factor in political action, in light of the current shape of our political and economic intuitions.

The Three Realms of Action: An Overview

Let me now return to theories of government to see why we need to assume three realms of action—*economic*, *normative*, and *political*—to understand political action in a more encompassing way. This is not to say that all action discreetly fits into one of those three realms, even in my model. I do not pretend that the boundaries between the three realms of action are always well defined. Nonetheless, post-Heideggerian theory indicates that we need to pursue how we differentiate between them even when such differentiation may not actually exist. Much contemporary work on government, construes work as *economic*, voting as *political*, and family-life, religious activities and making art as *normative-ethical*. When choice and judgment are spoken of in this way, three realms appear carefully differentiated in day-to-day life, and we are careful with each other in addressing them: “Never discuss politics and religion in polite company.”

While there are numerous variations of the saying, the meaning is always the same: your religion (*normative realm* beliefs) and your politics (*political realm* beliefs) should be held in private.

What this *de facto* separation implies can best be exemplified with some practical examples from government.

Institutions are often created in one *realm of action* specifically to manipulate another *realm of action*. Some institutions, such as the Supreme Court, seem to operate in more than one *realm.* The Supreme Court, as the final arbiter of the land, may rule over the *normative realm* through moral, ethical, ideological, or legal decisions. However, the seeming overlap here is misleading. It is true that the Supreme Court can affect the *normative realm* in a ruling. However, that does not make the Supreme Court a *normative* institution: the Supreme Court belongs to and was created by the *political realm* to adjudicate laws. It was designed in large part to regulate the *political realm* even if the Supreme Court uses *normative realm* justifications.

Congress can pass a law that affects the *economic*, *normative*, or *political realms*. A corporate lobbyist comes from the *economic realm* and is mandated by the *economic realm* specifically to manipulate the *political realm*. When the Protestant religious right in the US specifically organized (three decades ago) to get their people elected into political positions across the US, that was an example of *normative realm* institution acting within the *political realm*. Advertisers are *economic realm* actors who specifically target the *normative realm* by using *normative realm* symbols to alter how you feel about a product (economic), a norm (normative), or a candidate (political). In this case the

economic realm needs to be understood as infiltrating the *normative realm* in order to manipulate any of the *three realms*. Despite these constant crossing-over events this does not change the nature of the institution making the cross over. The advertiser is still at the end of the day an *economic realm* entity.

This kind of institutional overlap is important for recasting our prevailing model of political action. Most Marxists and capitalists today would both likely argue that nearly all behavior has some economic component or motive. As we have seen, this is certainly the premise behind Rational Choice Theory, as well as of much of Marx's analysis about human behavior. Aside from its relation to economics, for example, Marxian anthropology is premised on the notion that all cultural traits exist for some sort of Darwinian survival purpose.[30] Only those cultural traits that lend themselves to the group survival will be retained by the group. Those that harm will either have to be abandoned, or else they will lead to the demise of the group. In economic terms, from this perspective, in a society that has endemic theft, the function of theft might be understood as adaptive: to redistribute the wealth to those who need it more. So while we might look at the theft as counter-productive or ethically evil and see it as detrimental to a community's well-being, the Marxian anthropologist could argue that we simply have not identified the economic importance of the behavior. In Marxist terms, this is necessarily the case, because economically harmful behaviors would have evolved away or caused the community's demise and therefore the demise of the destructive behavior.

[30] Barbara J. Price, "Cultural Materialism: A Theoretical Review," *American Antiquity*, Vol. 47, No. 4. (Oct. 1982), pp. 709-741.

With such assumptions, we arrive again at Rational Choice Theory, which posits that all actors are essentially rational all the time, that they seek to maximize their self-interests while simultaneously minimizing cost, and that they are capable of knowing "what they want and can order their wants transitively."[31] The result is that they say that these situations make people essentially lazy (because "efficiency" means figuring out what the minimal is that one needs to do to get by), and that altruism does not exist. Neither option is as open as Marxist economic theories would assume, but Rational Choice theory remains stuck in that paradigm. Even Anthony Downs' 1957 hallmark work, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. led to the emphasis on big data and prediction of trends. This happened because political science theory has taken economics to mean econometrics, rather than examining how a theory like Marxism would affect the concept of rational choice.

Factoring in economics as a realm of action, however, highlights an aspect of today's government theory that carries such emphases on big data forward, with little theoretical innovation. It mirrored the same sort of dichotomy in physics between the theorists and experimenters. The theorists in political science lost. A job search on the website of the American Political Science Association should dissuade most graduate students from becoming theorists, because the lack of listings mentioning that skill. Indeed, the lack of reflection within political science has become so acute that the American Political Science Association produced a painful report in October 2011

[31] William H. Riker, "The Political Psychology of Rational Choice Theory," Political Psychology, Vol. 16, No 1, (Mar. 1995), pp. 23-44.

demonstrating that Political science "tends not to be self-reflective about the analytical limitations of many of its traditional methodological approaches."[32] The report goes on to say that "[t]he tendency to accept its approaches as 'objective' science, for example, tends to inhibit the development of a more critical debate about the potential phenomenological bases of much empirical social science."[33] In practice, this means that the interface between economics and choice emerges as particularly under-theorized, given that extant work sometimes is little more than dropping a data set into SPSS and looking for high R^2. "Research, the report notes, is 'the Holy Grail' in academe, determining career advancement and the prestige of professors and departments. And when research is evaluated on quantity and impact, 'rarely does the discussion' focus on such questions as 'alleviating inequality or advancing the cause of social justice,' the report says."[34]

The reductionism of economics in this way (which can include classical, nineteenth-century Marxian analysis, where everything is about its economic importance in the sense of value, price, and profit), has a very serious consequence that leads to a failure to understand behavior. This way of seeing the universe is reductionist in the same

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[32] *Political Science in the 21st Century*, American Political Science Association: Task Force Report, October 2011, accessed 4/7/2017, http://www.apsanet.org/portals/54/Files/Task%20Force%20Reports/TF_21st%20Century_AllPgs_webres90.pdf.

[33] Political Science in the 21st Century.

[34] See Scott Jaschik, "Ill-Equipped Political Science," *Inside Higher Education*, October 24, 2011 (https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/10/24/political-science-urged-diversify-itself-and-its-faculty). Ultimately, even the APSA report cited in the last footnote had to distance itself from the Rational Choice debate lest it be thrown into the garbage pile "[T]his discussion is not meant to be a repeat of the same qualitative versus quantitative debate that is decades old within the political science discipline," the report says. "The critique is not of empiricism per se, of science, or of quantitative methods write large, but rather of scientifically oriented research that is not sensitive to the ways in which an emphasis on objectivity sometimes obfuscates the normative assumptions implicit in how a study is framed, carried out, and analyzed."

way that saying "we eat to gain energy" is. It is true that eating gives us energy, but it is not the only reason that we eat. We also eat because we are compelled to do so by pain and instinct. We also eat because it brings us enormous pleasure. We also eat because it is a social action, and we are social beings. It is true that the energy provided by food is crucial to our survival, but it is not the only motivation that causes us to consume food. In fact, as far as motivation goes, energy is probably low on a person's list, unless they are poor or facing famine-like conditions.

And now we come to the other side of trying to factor in economics as part of the three realms defining motivation. Ever since critiques of Enlightenment and neo-liberalism have become possible, political scientists have been quickly inclined towards believing that all action boils down to economics and that the other two realms (ethical norms and political structures) are merely façades used to motivate economic behavior—that, ultimately, norms and politics exist simply to foster economic outcomes. This modern simplification of traditional control vectors has led economic behavior to be considered as itself rational. Here, again, however, this is a historicized corruption of the idea.

My own formulation of *three realms of action* is itself tainted with that corruption, because, as I have suggested earlier, any division among the normative, the political, and the economic is done strategically within modern contexts. That conceptual grid divides private vs. public, rational vs. irrational, Christian vs. heretic, etc., in order to essentialize our motivations for human action. Since Marx in economics and Downs in

political science, the contemporary paradigm stresses only economics and only one kind of data-driven economics, based on the idea of capital. We are in Marcuse's nightmare.

Now, it is important to pull in other models for economic and political action, in order to open out the vision of how money, capital, and capitalism might be modeled in ways more commensurate with the kind of thought we explored in Heidegger. Two terms come into question as of primary importance

In Habermas' *Theory of Communicative Action, Volume 2: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason,*[35] the philosopher moves to a more system-based project. First, he defines *lifeworld* as the living realm of informal, shared, culturally-grounded understandings, values, beliefs, and mutual accommodations. He then defines *system* as those bureaucratic institutions which decouple from the *lifeworld* only to return to it and *colonize* it. The colonizing of the *lifeworld*, rising in part out of the secularism of modernity, serves to dismantle it and yields a general loss of meaning. These terms amplify what is at stake in a reading of a model like Heidegger's, applied to real behaviors. *Lifeworld* becomes a term summarizing many patterns of naturalized values in the *normative realm*; *system* refers to particularly the institutions which exist to enforce such patterns, as well as to propagate acts of essentialization according to the desiderata of the political winds in which they function. In the next sections of my argument, I will assume that when I mention *economic*, *political*, or *normative realms* that both *system* and *lifeworld* components are contained within them. Habermas's original text, however,

[35] Jürgen Habermas, Theory of Communicative Action, Volume 2: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987).

leaves out the third realm, the economic, and so I will supplement that third column with reference to one of his contemporaries, Hannah Arendt, because it is critical to see how all three realms need to be accounted for.

In *The Human Condition*,[36] Arendt amplifies the notion of economics by pointing to the idea of appetite (or desires) and work as part of the economic domain of life. She first defines *animal lobrans* as the consumer, the appetites. At the other focus of this shared dynamic, we find the *homo faber*, the entrepreneur who feeds the desires of *animal laborans*. *Homo faber* innovates to create new markets and generates profits in the process. However, in the process *homo faber* also falls victim to his or her success in capitalism, because the consumptive appetites of *animal laborans* cannot be met because they are illusory and always subject to revision.

Even worse, as *homo faber* generates new markets or creates new ways to satisfy old consumptive desires, he or she will eventually produce just to feed the consumption, becoming emptied of all meaning—what at one point might have been choice has become empty routine for both producer and consumer, reproductive rather than productive in nature. There is an additional issue for those assuming that the economy determines consciousness. Eventually, as the system persists in action, the addiction of profit-making becomes so great that *homo faber* no longer rules over the economy, but instead is ruled by *animal laborans*. Considerations such as the consequences of over-production or damage to the environment are lost to both *homo faber*, who cannot

[36] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

produce fast enough and *animal laborans* who cannot consume responsibly. Both groups within the economic cycle, as Arendt models it, have become alienated from life, and both will eventually be in situations that will be (or are) regulated by the *system*. *Homo faber* begins to become a cog in the system, creating new niches that serve no purpose other than creating more consumption. The result is a world that will in effect, to use Habermas' term, consume itself in abstractions/administered systems.

To resolve this danger, Arendt counsels moving away from *vita contemplativa*, which she says is already operative (it is how *homo faber* innovates), and instead turn to *vita activa*. To her, this is a new definition of the intersection between politics and economics. The *vita activa* is not merely a life of action; it is one that engages in the political system. It is not completely clear how this engagement or level of action will transform the political system, but what Arendt is counseling is to put the *political realm* in charge of the *economic realm*.

These two bodies of thought allow for an outline of representative forces within the three realms. The Three Realms Model can best be illustrated in a chart with cells occupied by typical entities, so that it becomes clear that "choice" will take on different faces for individuals in various positions:

Figure 2: Habermas and the Three Realms of Action

	ECONOMIC REALM	POLITICAL REALM	NORMATIVE REALM
LIFE-WORLD	Culture and reification generated by CONSUMERS WORKERS	Culture and meaning generated by VOTERS ACTIVISTS	Culture and meaning generated by BELIEVERS STUDENTS
SYSTEM	CORPORATIONS MARKET RATIONALITY	GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY	RELIGION SCHOOLS

The relationship between the Three Realms of Action Model I am proposing here and Arendt's model in the *Human Condition* has much overlap in the *Economic realm.* To clarify the space between her work and my own, it is worthwhile to show how much more simply Arendt actually structures her ideal of world experience:

Figure 3: Arendt and the Three Realms of Action

REALM	ECONOMIC	NORMATIVE	POLITICAL
ANIMAL LABORANS	consumer	-	-
HOMO FABER	creator	subversive	-
VITA CONTEMPLATIVA	problem solver	observer	observer
VITA ACTIVA	problem solver	activist	activist

I believe that Arendt's *animal laborans* and *homo faber* together make up what I identify as the *economic realm* of action. Indeed, my discussion of the *contemporary modern form* of the *economic realm* is in part a reconstruction of Arendt's model. Yet she does not differentiate other forms of action, most likely because she is writing a critique especially aimed at the capitalist West. As I read her project, *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* fit into all three realms since they are not specifically realm-oriented activities, but rather ways of relating thinking and acting. Of course, Arendt points out that *vita contemplativa* already exists within *homo faber*, which is why it is not a solution, but rather a part of the problem.[37]

Let us now turn directly to the advantages of integrating definitions like Habermas' and Arendt's into a model for choice and action in a more comprehensive world picture, rather than as a logic of individual advantages.

In the next chapter, I thicken the description of this *three realm of action model*. My claim is that this model can better explain the public political choice taken by the soccer hooligans and those involved in the Occupy movement. These actions seem non-rational when viewed from within an *economic realm* that utilizes the lens of market rationality. The question, then, is the following: If Rational Choice Theory is unable to explain what seems like non-rational behavior, can switching between realms help us better describe the reality of choice? Switching between realms then become an analytic

[37] Without *vita contemplativa*, *homo faber* would not be able to conceive of new tools, markets, and new ways to increase consumption, p. 304.

heuristic device for the study of power which, although an abstract concept at first, begins to gain explaining power through the use of familiar historical sites.

CHAPTER 3:

The Three Realms as an Analytic Heuristic for Power Relations—

The Evolving Definition of Public Political Choice

This chapter amplifies the brief overview I just gave of my three realms model for political action. It will do so in two ways: first, by explicitly correlating each realm with the types of action it comprises, and then by expanding on them in a historical epistemology. The point of the first approach to the three realms is to more precisely locate what types of action are predicated in each; the second approach, in turn, correlates the identities of the three realms with familiar historical sites used to analyze the nature of political action. The goal of these two approaches is to establish the three realms model as a flexible typology for opening out analyses of human choice and action in what will emerge as an extended political context, one that changes our inherited notions of what political action might actually be. The results achieved here will be tested in the next chapter, which takes up a modern case that inherited models for political practice have not successfully addressed.

The Three Realms of Action: Extended Version

As indicated in the last chapter, an early form of the *economic realm* is perhaps the most primal site of being-in-the-world and hence the most overt ground for personal action and choice. But as Arendt's example points up, it is also the realm that requires nuancing, if it is to be considered as more than a realm providing instrumental motivation for individuals.

1. The Economic Realm

All living beings are part of the *economic realm* and thus act within it as one understanding of the lifeworld in which they exist (Habermas's term). In its *primordial form*, the *economic realm* comprises what Arendt had described as pure *animal laborans*. In effect, in the primordial economy, all living beings are actors and can be acted upon by the fundamental conditions of their labor. That labor, seen economically, also implicates a transformation of the environment: that labor transforms the earth and its resources., All economic activity is some transformation of the environment, as it acts upon the Earth and all its resources. In fact, it is precisely the acting upon other lifeforms that fuels the basic core of all economics, even for the historically later, extremely complex form of the *economic realm*. After all, the primal center of all such economic activity rests in the collection of food and shelter.

Such economic activity may, of course, be considered the primal politics of being-in-the-world. The *simple form* of the *economic realm* is that which existed before the emergence of civil society as we know it, but we must be cautious about not equating the

primordial with the primitive, because this primal order already features tools and tool-making. The primal politics associated with economics comes into being as soon as the human become *homo faber*. That *simple form*, in addition, relates to an order of being, not completely limited to humans, but to tool = users, including chimpanzees, sea otters, and beavers—it is the realm of life-preserving action.

The *simple form* of the *economic realm* is also a necessary precursor for the members of that economic group to attain a *civil form*, because it allows animals to transcend the physical limitations of bodies. Metaphorically, the simple form of the *economic realm* lies at the boundary between "nature" and "culture": once sea otters "discovered" that they can break into crustaceans with a stone, they could supplement or even alter their diets—they participate in their own economic development. That advance in simple economic organization, in turn, allows for a larger population of sea otters. When food can be acquired by more than one means, this community has the space for other changes in behavior, e.g. the acquisition and keeping of a "favorite" stone. In effect, sea otters transformed themselves into something new when they enter an *economic realm* and become agents within it. This is the rudimentary form of an *economic realm*, shared by all being in the world, but it usually is quickly overcome in human groups.

The *civil form* of the *economic realm* comes into being only once specialization occurs and when the *economic realm* begins to sponsor differentiated economic identities (as in the case of the differentiation between workers and consumers). At that moment, individual identities emerge as determined by systems of exchange that have come into being. If I am a specialist in that *economic realm* (e.g. I make pots), I survive by

exchanging a portion of my pots for food, or I will perish. As a specialist, by definition, my identity in the *economic realm* has changed: I no longer participate in the simple form of the economy: I do not produce (all) my own food, I trade for (at least part of) it.

The implications of this kind of shift have been documented many times, especially since Ferdinand Tönnies made the distinction between *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society) in 1887 (and thereafter). In a *Gemeinschaft*, identities within the community are often similar, but at least transparent: each person was capable of and knowledgeable about all the functions within her or his community. The community might practice divisions of labor based on gender or age and even the level of expertise, but, seen broadly, the members of this sort of society could potentially take up the tasks of any other member. When specialization increases and the community evolves towards being a *society* (*Gesellschaft*), such community identities become fragmented across an *economic realm* with a more articulated *civil form*, and the *Gemeinschaft* recedes into history, in a process that, in history, took the better part of a millennium. In the modern era, however, some proponents of the *Gemeinschaft* remain: some forms of conservative ideology (e.g. fascisms and fundamentalisms) and proponents of nostalgia keep trying to roll back the purportedly divisive identities of the *Gesellschaft* into what they construe as the more coherent ones of the community. Precisely this rejection is part of the attraction of works by Nietzsche, Heidegger, Oakeshott and Foucault.[1]

[1] Examples include *Beyond Good and Evil*, *Being and Time*, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*, and *Madness and Civilization*, respectively. Leslie Paul Theile does come close to surveying their rejection of

Psychologically and physically, another factor comes into play, as Heidegger sees it. According to Heidegger, "Our encounter with the question of Being, however, produces anxiety and pain, for it involves an encounter with not being, with nothingness and death. Being itself thus repels us from the question toward answers, toward an interpretation of Being as something, as some being."[2] In one sense, this is literally true: the primary orientation of the *economic realm* is towards death, or perhaps more precisely towards avoiding death, because, at its core, economic behavior is about food, water, shelter, and reproduction. However, as the *economic realm* becomes more complex, the available identities within that realm build on more factors, including a desire for luxury or convenience, monument building, transportation, trade, specialization, etc. Such identities begin to reshape the potentials in the *economic realm*, and especially being, to move it toward the *normative realm*, first by enforcing standards of taste, propriety, or power, as conditioning forms of identity.

Yet some of these potentials turn into ideologies, with possible consequences. For example, religion ameliorates the pain of death by creating a narrative that allows believers to transcend death and thereby confront it with less fear and dread. In the process the events of a person's life purportedly become meaningful, because the individual's identity is not lost at death, but continues thereafter. As Heidegger would note, however, becoming such a believer means that the agency of the individual is

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Gesellschaft with his article "Reading Nietzsche and Foucault: The Hermeneutics of Suspicion?" *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 85, No. 2. (Jun., 1991), pp. 581-592.

[2] Michael Allen Gillespie, "Martin Heidegger's Aristotelian National Socialism," *Political Theory*, Vol. 28, No. 2. (Apr., 2000), pp. 140-166; here, p. 141.

disseminated in the role: believers cannot be authentically being-toward-death; they never truly have to face obliteration. Authentically being-toward-death in an identity would mean accepting a total end and requires the individual to do something meaningful with one's life in order to make sense of the events of one's life. Yet in most cases, that authentic being, Heidegger would note, tends to become part of a new realm of being-in-the-world: the *normative realm*.

2. The Normative Realm

In one sense, the *normative realm* is also oriented towards death, and it serves to help individuals regulate their behavior and orient their lives, in the face of death and oblivion. The *normative* provides the materials out of which identity can be constructed within the *Gesellschaft*. It is the place of symbols, language, art, tradition, monuments, flags, religion, morals, philosophy, and more. Because we as individuals and as communities invest so much into avoiding death, death plays a large role in the *normative realm* raising the spectre of inauthenticity within being-toward-death. While it is the role of the *economic realm* to stave off death through the supplying of food and shelter, it is the role of the *normative realm* to help individuals create identities by providing the materials to help them understand the meaning of death and make sense of life.

The *normative realm* is also the space wherein societies anchor their identities. They build monuments (e.g Egypt's pyramids, the tombs in the Valley of the Kings, etc., through which Egyptians hoped to transcend death and continue to live in the afterlife). Symbolically, the *normative realm* achieves its own life, as is well documented in the

"immortality" that is marketed in the tourist industry and in Egyptian exhibits in museums around the world. The Greeks and Romans achieved their immortality through heroic deeds memorialized in epics and tales. Both kinds of memorialization enter the collective memories of the living and add to the culture and mythos of the living (their memories add to the *normative realm's* meaning). The Christian and Islamic religions, in contrast, refer identity to the afterlife, and thus subsume individual identity into a different kind of group narrative, one dealing in standards of ethics or morality.

In all three examples above, the *normative realm* in effect cancels death, and, in so doing, the examples also show how that realm subsumes individual identities into group narratives. In Heideggerian terms, what the *normative realm* has historically done is give people a means to inauthentically be-toward-death—to subsume "their own" choices into group narratives, and, concomitantly, to prescribe "appropriate" scenarios for action. In essence, individuals choose among ready-made actions, each of which has familiar benefits; individuals thus actually choose which types in the *normative realm* they are going to represent. Thus, in Christianity and Islam the actions in life are really only meaningful to the extent that at the moment of death one must reconcile them with God, and one is expected to be humble in both Abrahamic religions, because public displays of "good" behavior might cancel their "goodness" if they were mixed with sinful pride. In contrast, Greeks and Romans were expected to tell tales that became public acts of heroism. In Egypt, class figured into its identity-creation in the normative: the ruler had to bring his community into the afterlife.

Heidegger reminds us of another dimension of being-in-the-world in the realm of the normative: it creates ideologized spaces. In the cases above, the Greeks find identity in public acts reinforced by public narratives that propagate normative virtues. In other words, in order to become the Greek equivalent of immortal you have to act within the public sphere because you have to have your name spoken posthumously. In Christianity and Islam, the requirement for becoming immortal, which here means living well in the afterlife, is to act meaningfully in the private sphere. This does not mean that acting heroically doesn't engender greater bounty in the hereafter, it just isn't a necessity. For example, in the Christianity and Islam, excellence in child-rearing is one of the many tickets into paradise. In this sense, the practicing Muslim or Christian in the *economic realm*—the individual created as an understanding within that realm—looks to a legacy that does not necessarily include the glory of one's name. Nonetheless, that individual has made meaning in the normative sphere by embodying its values and acting according to them, thus bearing witness to what that sphere does.

3. The Political Realm

The individual acts out of economic interest and in relation to the norms that help constitute his or her agency in acting. But the normative is also not entirely a voluntaristic product, a realm in which individuals choose to participate. Beyond it, the *political realm* exists to manipulate the *economic* and *normative realms*. It could exist to manipulate those realms to meet the needs of the people or it could manipulate those two realms in order to serve the needs of the state or more likely, the elites whom the state serves.

The *political realm* likely came into being to modify economic behavior, when, for instance, community leaders needed to convince or force a community to act together. It is very easy to see the benefits for a community to deliberately and collectively manipulate the *economic realm* in cases like needing to stockpile grain for long-term food stability. Building an irrigation ditch, a fort wall, or setting aside a portion of the population to guard a granary are all reasonable responses to easily imagined problems. Yet it is not so easy for individuals to be motivated for such long-term projects on an economic basis only. It is more likely that the community leaders will need to manipulate the *normative realm* to make such collective planning possible. And not infrequently, reason and self-interest may not satisfy individual desires.

To make matters more difficult, to put it in Habermas' terms, the person who proposes that a community band together must pass three validity claims for his or her speech to be able to enforce a new norm for action—to transform an idea into a collective political will:

> (a) to establish and renew interpersonal relations, whereby the speaker takes up relation to something in the world of legitimate (social) order:
>
> (b) to represent (or presuppose) states and events, whereby the speaker takes up a relation to something in the world of existing states of affairs;
>
> (c) to manifest experiences—that is, to represent oneself—whereby the speaker takes up relation to something in the subjective world to which he has privileged access.[3]

[3] Habermas, Jurgen, The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume One, Reason and the Rationalization of Society, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), p. 308.

Habermas says that a person's rejection of what another says actually constitutes a "no" to the act of accepting the speaker's legitimacy to establish personal relations, to be representative of the social order, and/or to take personal experience as a key to a ground for collective action. All three are difficult, because most potential actors in the proposed collective are influence more by personal experience and norms rather than testimony about the empirical. Not that we are dealing with the question of individual agency and will within the collective.

In such cases, the speaker's truth claims may be based on fact, but the receivers who should be influenced by these claims could fail to understand it, but reject it as not factual, or understand it, accept it as factual, but reject it anyway because it contradicts that person's interests or more likely that person's normative perception of the world. But to make matters more complicated it is entirely possible that a listener could understand a claim, accept it as fact, agree to act accordingly, but simply be too lazy to properly follow through. Indeed, an actor might want to follow through for a plethora of reasons: to advance interpersonal relations, to better one's community, in one's self interest, etc. Yet here history intervenes: such an actor might even enthusiastically pursue actions suggested by the speaker, but then over time such a listener might lose enthusiasm for the project of trying to establish new norms.

And with this, we find the conditions for the necessity of the emergence of the political order, rather than assuming that a collective will be established on the basis of voluntary acts. Rationality and reason are thin. Emotions on the other hand are thick. If a speaker can appeal to a person's emotions, she or he has a much better chance of

changing behavior. Emotions are exactly the energy of the *normative realm*. In other words, if an actor has a choice between using reason or emotion to convince someone to change their behavior or the norms to which they adhere, the actor is advised to choose the latter. Such is the power of the *normative realm* as it predicates individual activity and the "acceptable" acts, and another restatement of the failure of classical Rational Choice Theory.

But the willingness or ability of an individual to assume leadership and try to change the norms for collective behavior, opens up a break between the *normative realm* and a new *political realm*. In that situation, we speak not only of actors voluntarily following norms, but of overt political action, where different level causes offer individuals new grounds for political action, grounds that transcend the memory and experience of individuals.

A person who survives a famine, for instance, is likely be a very enthusiastic contributor to a community granary in the short term. However, as the experience of the famine fades from memory and the survivors are replaced by a new generation of political actors who are expected to affirm a choice based on past facts, their commitment to maintaining a community granary will erode. Yet if someone can lead the society by implanting the granary as a norm in a different collective memory, then members of the community can be brought to different types of political actions. Thus, if a king or priest can convince the people that it is the will of the gods to bring the grain to the granary annually, then a change in economic behavior will be greeted enthusiastically and eventually will become routine. This is the power of the *political realm*: the ability to

make new norms and convey them to potential political actors to create new types of acts according to norms—now, validated as *political* and hence authoritative in new ways. Referring back to Hannah Arendt's terms, what happens here is that individuals, each with their own *vita contemplativa* can be brought into new forms of the *vita activa* within what has become a realm of *political* norms and acts, vouched for by the reasons and rationalities of others, rather than personal experience. That is, the *political realm* brings people to a *vita activa* through manipulation of norms that purportedly benefit the collective—a clear extension of the idea of choice and its motivations than what is used in Rational Choice theory, with an alternate account of what might demand personal motivation to action.

Let us now return to significant moments in history, to chart the problems of identity and motivation that we have identified as remaining in the wake of Rational Choice Theory. These cases will argue the importance of making these distinctions by returning to history and seeing how they open out these conventional reference points for choice analyses of specific historical moments. The result of looking at this series of case studies will be an account of *power* and the various ways that actors emerge in relation to the specific types of power in each realm.

The main point I make here is that while the ancient and medieval worlds where dominated by the *normative realm*, the early modern era saw a transition away from the hegemony of the normative first into the political and later into the economic. My hope is that the following historical case studies will make that clear.

Historical Case Study 1: Frederick II Challenges the Dominant Order of the Realms—The Political Realm Competes with the Normative Realm

After explicitly correlating each realm with the types of action it comprises we now turn to familiar historical examples in order to better see the evolution of the three realms. The most straightforward cases of the interaction of the three realms are to be found in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds. These were societies (no longer just communities) to a great degree dominated by a *normative realm* that still carried the force of a *political realm* and in which the *economic realm* remained very localized, with a very few exceptions. Political leaders emerged as those who mastered the *normative realm*, who constituted the value systems of their *normative realm*. That is to say that, the *normative realm* was often the source for decision making in the *political realm*. Today, the *political realm's* main objective seems vested in manipulating the *normative realm*; in the Middle Ages, it would be more accurate to say that political leaders were guided by *normative realm* considerations. This is, of course, the set of functional relations that form the basis for theocracy.

At the same time, we must not forget that the *normative realm* stands in a dynamic relation with its others, especially the *political realm*. Frederick II, King of Sicily (1198-1250), King of Germany (1212-20), King of Jerusalem (1225-28), King of Italy (1220-50), and Holy Roman Emperor (1220-50), is an example of a figure from the *political realm* who was able to intervene in the *normative realm*. He did so using their tools: his love of science and learning and his knowledge of Arabic allowed him to read philosophy. He and members of his court translated ancient texts back into Latin and

Greek, and he found himself in frequent conflicts with the Papacy. Speaking six languages and being a marvelous soldier made him a Renaissance man a century before the Renaissance began. The consequence of a political figure intervening in a *normative realm* so closely centered around the papacy were unsurprising: he was excommunicated four times, and Pope Gregory IX even called him the "Antichrist."[4]

But looking at this relation as a conflict between a *normative realm* and a political one (or, more properly, when there was a clash between two *normative realms*, each with its own politics, but with one-sided abilities to intervene) offers a somewhat different picture of how the power of persuasion can work as an act that calls locals into political decision-making. Consider a world without birth certificates, identification cards, a massive prison industry, and police states, where "persuasion" through physical coercion was the norm on the side of the *political realm*—persuasion was often negative and positive at the same time, with the negative threatening fines, flogging, excommunication, and execution, and the positive, a seat in heaven. Moreover, the Church had control of the narrative prescribing acts with the most promise for ordinary people, and so the numerous petty states of western and central Europe sent a steady flow of cash to the Papal States, and in return, the Popes gave their vocal support of temporal kingly rule and blessings for all who contributed. This constitutes the decision nexus for action in a world where papal authority had the most profitable narratives justifying action—narratives that included such extreme promises of salvation as those issued by

[4] Richard Bressler, *Frederick II: The Wonder of the World*, (Yardley, Pennsylvania: Westholme Publishing, 2015).

Crusaders, or the complete control of one's soul in cases where blessings, coronations, and annulments were needed by the secular authorities. Papal authority thus extended far across Europe in the *normative realm*, even if Papal armies (and the realm of its most visible direct politics) were very much confined to Rome, Urbino, and Romagna.

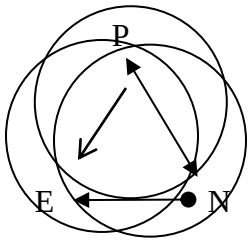

Figure 4: Typical Ancient and Medieval Vectors of Power within the Fused Realms

To make the transmission of power in the *normative realm* of medieval Europe even more pronounced, those leaders were raised in the system and in the forms of action it allowed to emerge.

In this constellation of power, then, the *three realms model* enables us to recover the large area of normative actions shared by the emperor and the pope, while understanding how the hierarchy of norms created very distinct types of benefits of the fusion of the *three realms* served political elites. Even if some saw past it, the benefits of differentiating the realms might not have seemed immediately obvious.

Frederick II represents a precursor to the absolute monarchs who challenged everyone's authority. He takes on the symbol of normative power in Europe and is an early example of an attempt at transitioning from a normatively dominated system to a politically dominated one—an attempt that fails but foreshadows the 16th century absolute monarchs.

Historical Case Study 2: The Republic of Venice Challenges the Dominant Order of the Realms—The Economic Realm Competes with the Normative Realm

The Most Serene Republic of Venice offers a different model of how power flows in the three realms, one that would not have been possible in the Middle Ages proper. Venice shows us that as early as the 12th century, the three realms are already in competition. Venice's decisions appear to be ruled, at least in part, by the *economic realm* in a way that was not present in earlier eras or elsewhere in Europe. The alignment between the political and the economic came into focus when the elected government had nationalized its navy and the traditional differentiation between a merchant ship and a military ship ceased to exist, in practice and on paper. This meant that the military was identified as one with the primary economic force in the maritime republic. However, this also meant that the merchant class was also the military class. The Venetian state had by nationalizing the merchant fleet fused the economic and *political realms* so that they were no longer separate entities.

One of the first indicators that Venice was clear about this fusion of realms was the *Pactum Warmundi*. This treaty between Venice and the Kingdom of Jerusalem lasted from 1124 until 1298 and gave Venice one quarter of the Kingdom of Jerusalem to rule as if it were an extension of its own territory, for Venice's own economic benefit and not for the benefit of the crusaders. In other words, Venice demanded one quarter of all the economic wealth of the crusader state in return for its assistance—more than a simple payment but closer to a large minority shareholding in the territories. Venice was

therefore not even pretending to participate in the Crusades for the benefit of Christendom (for a normative cause), but rather for its own economic benefit.[5]

By 1202, the Venetians, under the leadership of Enrico Dandolo, used the Fourth Crusade to recapture the Dalmatian town of Zara from the Catholic Kingdom of Hungary (who were, at least on paper, participants in the very same Crusade, and hence should have been treated as allies in an assessment guided by the normative position of Christian unity).[6] In the process, Pope Innocent III, the very same pope who called for the Fourth Crusade, threatened the Fourth Crusade and its leaders with excommunication, including Venice's ruler—Doge Enrico Dandolo. Yet the Venetians, full well knowing the consequence of their actions, proceeded with the conquest of Zara, were summarily excommunicated. The leaders however managed to keep the excommunication a secret from their Crusader army underling their cynicism towards normative values despite knowing the importance it held for the common man. The cynicism of the gap between normative and economic interests was made even more clear two years later when the Venetians used the Fourth Crusade to capture and occupy Constantinople, in the process incurring even more Papal sanctions. The Venetians used holy war as a tool to attack fellow Christians, and, despite receiving the worst of Papal sanctions, they continued to act along the same lines. They controlled Constantinople for the next 57 years in an attempt to expand their power. Sanctions from the *normative realm* concerning rights to

[5] For more on this see Joshua Prawer, *Crusader Institutions*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).
[6] The Fourth Crusade only yielded 50,000 of the 80,000 plus silver marks that it had agreed to pay the Venetians for transport to Egypt (the original target of the Fourth Crusade). Doge Enrico Dandolo convinced Boniface of Montferrat (the leader of the Crusade) to invade and return Zara to the Republic of Venice as partial payment for the missing 30,000 silver marks.

the afterlife no longer coerced or persuaded the Venetian leadership, nor did they have the revolutionary effect on the Venetian public, given that the crusading army was made up of mostly non-Venetians, that might have been expected.

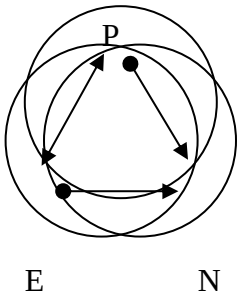

Figure 5: Venice's Vectors of Power within the Fused Realms

In terms of a three realms model, the shift between values directing choice was evident, and modeled in the diagram above: this situation was only possible because the Venetian leadership (the Doge and the merchant class) no longer believed in the supremacy of the *normative realm*. They could attack fellow Christians with a Crusader army (a holy army) and suffer excommunication (the ultimate normative sanction) because, in their new value system, the *normative realm* no longer held sway over them personally and politically—it had been supplanted by the economic, just as the military now acted in conscious espousal of economic motivations. This latter assertion is made all the clearer because the populace of Venice did not rebel, even when given a choice because of the traditions of papal sovereignty, nor did the Crusader army (many did however desert on the way to Constantinople, especially). Moreover, Venice did not simply occupy the lands, it set up complete economic and civic centers in every city controlled by the King of Jerusalem and made huge concessions to the use of Venetian

law in the territories: this was full-scale economic colonization. The prize of ruling Constantinople as a vassal state (The Latin Empire of Constantinople) was seen as something greater to the Venetian leadership than the salvation of their souls.

I stress here the shift in motivations because it effectively changed the overt status of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. There is no doubt that the Crusades overall were heavily motivated by financial gain from the very first. Similarly, this is obviously not the first time that rulers began to act outside the *normative realm*, but it is the first time that an entire government would shift away from negotiation in the *normative realm* actions and stay that way—in effect, the entire conception of Venice was fundamentally redefined. Indeed, by 1229, the power of the merchant class had been codified into the Great Council (a sort of House of Representatives) and the Senate. Venice had become a plutocracy rather than a state defined by loyalties and values.

How the economic realm played out over longer terms also suggests how Venice's shift from normative values to economics was not the only such shift in consciousness about political deal-making and decisions. Despite being a Mediterranean superpower from the 12th century to the 15th century Venice fell into decline after the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks, the discovery of the Americas rerouted the major world trade routes, and the Cambrai League's war against Venice. Venice served as inspiration to Nicolo Machiavelli, who decried Rome for having formed the League of Cambrai specifically to harm Venice, as was proved in the great war between Venice and the League between 1511 and 1514.

In Rome's mind, Venice had become too powerful (powerful enough maybe even to unite Italy),[7] and so Machiavelli shows us an image of Venice as an example for what to do in alleviating class crisis.[8] He certainly refers to the Republic in the *Prince*, especially in Chapter III when Machiavelli recalls the six failures of King Louis XII of France as an oblique but clear reference to his own Republic of Florence as a state whose political decision-making was very different from that of Venice.

Historical Case Study 3: The Republic of Florence Challenges the Dominant Order of the Realms—The Political Realm Competes with the Normative Realm

In the case of the Republic of Florence we see a decline in normative hegemony but unlike in the case of Venice an ascendency not in the economic but in the *political realm*. Machiavelli suggests that, unlike the Most Serene Republic of Venice,[9] both the First and Second Florentine Republics had been born from uprisings. Uprisings are, of course, attempts by a class of people or group of people not in power to seize control of the *political realm*. It is here that the Second Florentine Republic especially takes an interesting turn that can be explained in terms of the three realms I have been defining.

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[7] Nicolo Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, Trans. Harvey C. Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 55.
[8] Ibid., p. 34.
[9] The founding of the Most Serene Republic of Venice did not happen all at once. The community of Veneta was founded to a large degree because of the Fall of the Roman Empire and a desire to preserve it. The City of Venice was largely founded with the symbolic value of the capturing of the body (not including the head) of Saint Mark from Alexandria, Egypt and the establishment of his reliquary on the Rialto in 828 AD. Despite Saint Mark's religious symbolism, the establishment of the city on the Rialto meant a physical and symbolic distancing of Venice from the Church, which was already established on the islands of Malamocco and Castello. Republic was formally established in 1223 with the creation of an advisory board of Rialto elites and with the creation of the Senate in 1229.

In its birth from uprisings, Florence had also made a move to transform its decision-making, but it had moved in a different direction than Venice. From 1494 to 1512, the Second Republic had for its leadership eight priors, one gonfaloniere (standard-bearers) of Justice,[10] 16 minor gonfalonieres and the Great Council.[11] It is this Great Council that is perhaps the most interesting argument for the present analysis because it was made up of all Florentine citizens over 27 years old. In effect, the Florentine Republic was a form of democracy, because it placed citizens in power rather than simply a hereditary elite.[12] In it, the people were directly defined as a primary organ of governance. In effect, the state's legitimacy was defined within the *political realm* in a very modern sense. That *political realm* was such that it could assert itself directly upon the other two *realms*, because its legitimacy was neither normative (referenced against a set of abstract principles) nor economic, but rather popular—it depended heavily on the choice of its citizens. As one might visualize the flows of power in Florence, power had aggregated to the people who could revolt:

[10] Piero Soderini was the only one to serve; he served as the Gonfalonier of Justice from 1502 until the Republic was lost to the Papal backed Medicis in 1512.
[11] For more on Florentine history see John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).
[12] J. Wilde, "The Hall of the Great Council of Florence," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 7 (1944), pp. 65-81.

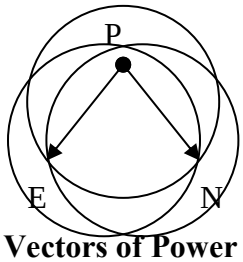

Figure 6: Florence's Vectors of Power within the Fused Realms

My diagrams by no means intend to deny that there were *normative realm* influences exerted upon Florence.[13] It was a Christian state that defined itself by the principles of the church. Rather, it is intended to highlight how, for the most part, *political realm* decisions came from a government that was motivated by the people and their ability to revolt, not by normative principles or economic visions.

Within the Italy of that era, however, populism could only lead to the ultimate demise of the Florentine Republic's political power. Florence was in effect changing the vectors of power away from that Realm which its neighboring Papal States was most keen to see enforced—the older *normative realm* of abstracts. Florence's example threatened Papal authority not only in Italy, but in Europe in general. Given this history, it is not surprising that Machiavelli's *The Prince* and his *Discourses on Livy* are appeals to the leaders and populace[14] of Europe for the ascendance of the *political realm*. He has a sense of what has gone wrong, and he directly conceives of Florence's difficulty as a shift in realms of political motivation.

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[13] For example, the conviction of the Prior Savonarola for heresy and his subsequent burning at the stake at the insistence of the Pope Alexander VI.

[14] "What was truly bold about [*The Prince*] was not so much what [Machiavelli] said, but the fact that he wrote it in a text intended for public circulation" Viroli, Maurizio, *Machiavelli*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 51.

Machiavelli does not fault Florence's basic conception of the source of political power. For him, the *normative realm* is not the proper arbiter of political decision-making. "Since all authority not rational, ultimately depends on something divine, Machiavelli thought it politically necessary (reason does not require it) to draw the line between reason and authority at the boundary between this world and the next."[15] Thus any assumption of power stemming from norms was unreasonable. In *The Prince* and *The Discourses on Livy*, Machiavelli calls for the reduction of the *normative realm* and the reinvigoration of the *political realm* to make its rationality supreme over the other two realms, and actions within the *political realm* the core of politics.

Although the language of the Three Realms of Action model is not the language that Machiavelli uses, he nonetheless identifies the *normative realm* as his antagonist. First, he makes clear, by chapter VI of *the Prince,* that the finest of principalities are those new principalities created by virtue—by a Prince who embrace doing the good in creating "new orders and modes."[16] Machiavelli realizes that this creation of "new orders and modes" is the role of the *political realm*: indeed, the *political realm* exists precisely for what he defines as the virtuous act of creating new orders and modes. Newness is critical for acts to bring political power. By definition, if something is newly created it cannot yet operate in the manner that norms do, which is without thought. When a person first learns something, they must think through their lessons, but as time goes on, they

[15] Harvey C. Mansfield, *Machiavelli's New Modes and Orders*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 260.
[16] Machiavelli, Nicolo, *The Prince*, trans. Leo Paul S. de Alvarez (Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 1980), p. 34.

enter a more normative framework which can operate from those lessons without thought. That is how the *normative realm* works. If a Prince is making "new orders and modes," he or she is, by definition, breaking with tradition and also opening the people to real political action. This is Florence's virtue, but also its downfall, when it was set against the Papal States, with its insistence on political action. Ultimately, early Renaissance society resisted distance among the three realms, and the normative ground for action provided by the Church prevailed.

Historical Case Study 4: Theodore Roosevelt Challenges the Dominant Order of the Realms—The Political and Normative Realms are in Dialogue and Subordinate the Economic Realm

In this, our contemporary era, the destruction of the bonds that bind the realms together has been quite thorough. It is not complete, of course, and there have been global reactions against it (e.g. the rise of fascism in the 1920s and 30s, Iran's Islamic revolution and even Foucault's endorsement of it[17], the US' Third Awakening and the rise of Evangelical politics in its wake).

The critical move in understanding what the *political realm* offers as a rationale for action can be best illuminated by turning to another example: the US presidency, a major actor in accounts of political action. Yet if one looks more closely at such actors, the picture of what power actually exists in the *political realm* changes. Contrary to much

[17] Michel Foucault., "What Are the Iranians Dreaming About?" *Le Nouvel Observateur*, October 16-22, 1978.

government theory, the institutions of the *political realm* are shockingly light on inherent power.

Consider if you will what would happen if an average US citizen suddenly became President of the US. That person, while nominally *entitled* to exercising power, would actually not be in a position to exert much authority. That is to say, "that the mere assertion of formal power is rarely enough."[18] In other words, the institution of president only gives some potential for authority and political action. There are many other factors which include the power that a person brings to the presidency: the president's personality and charm, the public's mood, the "emergency" level of the US' circumstances,[19] the popularity of the President's party, or even where the President is in the regime cycle.[20] A clear example of this is of course the presidency of Donald J. Trump. We have now entered the third month of Trump's presidency and even though both houses of congress belong to the President's party, not much in the way of policy has actually been made into law.

There is a great deal that shapes the sort of power that a president will have—an account that is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, I wish to use one particular president to illustrate a point about the power of the *political realm* in

[18] Richard Neustadt, Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan, (New York: The Free Press, 1960), 11.
[19] Neustadt, 5.
[20] Stephen Skowronek in his brilliant study on the US Presidency, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton, Revised Edition* Belknap Press; Revised edition (March 25, 1997) discovers a cyclical nature to the US President.

determining choice: Theodore Roosevelt.[21] Here was a president who although entrusted with the office was never really designated "presidential" by the Republican party.

First, within traditional party-based narratives of authority and accession to power, Roosevelt was never meant to be president, when he became McKinley's vice president in 1901. All too often, becoming vice president was at that time considered a sort of career ender for US politicians. The last time a vice president had become a president was in 1837, and it was only the second time it had happened in US politics. When McKinley was assassinated six months after his second inauguration, Roosevelt rose despite those expectations, due to circumstances rather than anything he did to justify a reevaluation of his own political power. Second, the vice-presidency was especially weak in Roosevelt's case because of his weak position in the Republican Party—he was nominated for vice president in no small part because it took him out of his governorship of New York. Most nineteenth-century presidents were party machinery creatures and derived their power from the party machine, as the head of a network of political influence and favors.[22] But Roosevelt was not heavily invested in that system, which was essentially a *normative realm* defined by a Republican identity, but supported by an economics of patronage.

On September 14, 1901, Roosevelt had two options to claim political power by dint of his new role. Option one was that he could begin the long climb up the Republican Party machine ladder. Given how little history he had in this hierarchy, if he chose this

[21] For more on Theodore Roosevelt see Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, (New York: Random House, 2001).
[22] For more concerning partisan presidencies see Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, 145.

option, he would spend his first presidency giving out favors like a slave working the fields of concessions and graft. This was not a desirable path for Roosevelt, in part because he was ambitious and idealistic, and in part because there was little hope for a second term in office in his era. Of the presidents from number eight (Van Buren) to number 25 (McKinley), only three had attained two consecutive terms.[23] Of those three, two were assassinated in the first year of their second terms, and the third had a miserable and corrupt eight years. Thus, setting one's sight for achieving political power through a gradual process of network-building would have seemed a less than desirable risk.

Option two was to make a new power source—in a sense, to follow the path like the one that Venice had followed when it created its power in the *economic realm*. The solution that presented itself to Roosevelt would have likely pleased Machiavelli, who could have praised him for creating "new orders and modes." Roosevelt struck upon political gold by identifying and exploiting a new source for a *political realm* and its power: the US had just become an Empire in 1890 when soldiers were sent to Argentina,[24] which created a public face for the administration that he could control. Roosevelt realized that if he could achieve victories, symbolic and otherwise, in international relations, public support would turn his way, no matter what the party might

[23] Grover Cleveland had two terms but they were split by the Benjamin Harrison administration.
[24] See Zoltan Grossman, "History of US Military Intervention since 1890," accessed 4/6/2017 http://academic.evergreen.edu/g/grossmaz/interventions.html. I acknowledge that the US had a history of military interventions overseas prior to 1890. The first being the First Barbary War (1801-05) and in fact the 1890 invasion of Argentina was the second. The first was in 1832 for essentially the exact same reason, to protect US business interests. However, I am using Grossman's 1890 date to delineate between a relatively weak US focused on continental expansion and a US ready to enter the global scene. In effect, I think it is safe to say that I am agreeing with Frederick Jackson Turner's thesis in "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" that the 1890 census indicates that the US western frontier was closed.

have expected. In effect, he turned to the public's need for political meaning in their lives, making it important to them when the US won international relations victories—and, by extension, when *they* became more important citizens on the world stage. In effect the Panama Canal, The Great White Navy, negotiating peace treaties, and the sort, were ways in which Roosevelt created *normative* legitimacy for his *political* actions, usurping the roles the party had reserved for itself. The result of that move is well-known to history: Roosevelt became so powerful that he not only won a second term and the Nobel Peace Prize, but he actually went after his own party's interests in the form of "trust busting" and enforcing regulation on industry.

We note that in Machiavelli's time, political actors had much the same problem that Roosevelt faced: how to create enough power and authority to be able to act politically. At that time, church teachings and renaissance culture created norms for political action and power, where Roosevelt found them in publicity and civil identity. Machiavelli, however, had realized that the *political realm* had an innate tendency to maintain the status quo, if it followed or reinforced those policy outcomes already established. Roosevelt's genius would have been evident to Machiavelli, who realized that the princes who just follow what has already been established are not actually utilizing the full potential of the *political realm*. Significantly, his examples in *The Prince* of Romulus, Moses, Theseus, and Cyrus the Great all point out what can potentially be achieved when a political actor does not just maintain what currently is, but dreams of what *could be*—not only to use political institutions and the norms that hold them in place, but to build or control new ones.

To be sure, through laws, edicts, and orders, a prince could change behavior temporarily without creating new orders and modes, by direct action within existing norms (e.g. he could go to war against enemies defined by the status quo, or assassinate a political actor—all good descriptions of dysfunctional internal party politics in the US, as well). Yet Machiavelli saw the world around him as in need of deep change, when the *normative realm* itself was too dominant to sponsor action or choice. The *normative realm* that Machieavelli recognized supported the status quo and failed to solve problems, essentially rendering Italy incapable of acting in the face of papal control of norms for political agency.[25] Thus he celebrates rulers like Cyrus the Great as exemplary princes who revised the *political realms* they inherited.

In Chapter XVIII of the *Prince*, "The Way in Which Princes Should Keep the Faith," Machiavelli first counsels the use of rationality in the affairs of the state. He tells the prince not to be ruled by the *normative realm*, but that rather, he should *pretend* to operate within the *normative realm* when convenient. Machiavelli's prince must always *appear* to operate from the *normative realm*:

> It is not necessary, then, for a prince to have in fact all of the qualities written [below], but it is indeed necessary to appear to have them. I shall rather dare to say this: that having them and observing them always, they are harmful, but in appearing to have them, they are useful—so as to appear to be full of pity, faithful, human, open, religious, and to be so, but with one's mind constructed in such a mode that when the need not to be arises, you can, and know how to, change to the contrary.[26]

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[25] Machiavelli gives many lamentations to the state of Italy in both *The Prince* and *The Discourses*. For example, he laments how easy it was for King Charles V of France "to seize Italy with chalk in hand." In fact, he says that Charles was "allowed to." He blames short-sighted Italy leadership, Christianity, and the Pope for much of this.

[26] Ibid., p. 108.

This distinction opens up a clear space between the normative and *political realms* that can be exploited. He is not only recommending that a Prince be manipulative, cynical, and ruthless—or, in modern terms, that he act out of self-interest. Machiavelli is also specifying that political action does *not* emerge only top-down, but also in conjunction with those being ruled. He says, "and to be so, but with one's mind…" This point is not Machiavelli's alone; others had put it down in print that a leader ought to look beyond Christian morality for a guide to political action (e.g. Francesco Guicciardini[27]).

Machiavelli is after something much deeper: a broader definition of the rationality behind action that concerns the public. Rationality for rationality's sake was no longer sufficient in his era, when religion set the terms of those rational norms. In effect, what Machiavelli is showing the Prince is that, to rule well, one must be able to look beyond the *normative realm*—to make precisely the kind of moves that Roosevelt made when he turned away from the Party as the source of his ability to govern and chose a different kind of rationality.[28] Party insiders would have called Roosevelt non-rational, but in fact he had inverted the directions in which power flowed, from the public to the ruler rather than from the institutions defining up to that point political action as normative action as

[27] "Guiccardini developed the concept of reason of the state which supersedes Christian morality in a text never intended for publication." Viroli, Maurizio, *Machiavelli*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 51.
[28] Eric Vogelin explains in this text that, once Egypt underwent Christianitzation its symbols fell by the weighside and the Coptic culture that followed, never succeeded in anything resembling the glory of the previous 4,500 years. "This matter can be understood by considering the methods the Christian sect employed against that of the pagans; they obliterated all of its institutions, all of its religious ceremonies, and suppressed the memory of its ancient theology." (*Anamnesis*, trans. Gerhart Niemeyer [Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1978]).
[28] Mansfield, p. 168.

they knew it. The *normative realm*, in this kind of move, is no longer the principal vector of power.

This does not mean that the *normative realm* disappears as a rationale for human decision-making. Machiavelli does believe that the *normative realm* is a necessary realm from which a society must operate. But his diagnosis continues in ways that also illuminate what Roosevelt was facing in the Republican Party: the *normative realm* at both moments was subject to charges of corruption:

> The first is that because of the evil examples set by this court, this land has lost all piety and religion; this brings with it countless disadvantages and countless disorders, because just as we take for granted every good thing where religion exists, so, where it is lacking, we take for granted the contrary. We Italians have, therefore, this initial debt to the church and the priest, that we have become irreligious and wicked, but we have an even greater debt to them, which is the second cause of our ruin: that is, the church has kept and still keeps this land divided.[29]

Machiavelli makes his case even clearer in Chapter XIII, using the example of the flood of Lake Albano, which demonstrates how actors from the *normative realm* manipulated the *political realm* in order to achieve victory over Veii:

> [T]he leaders of the armies employed religion to keep their armies resolute in their undertaking: since Lake Albanus had miraculously increased in size that year, and the Roman soldiers were weary of the long siege and wanted to return to Rome, the Romans discovered that Apollo and certain other soothsayers were saying that the city of Veii would be defeated during the year in which Lake Albanus overflowed its banks; this made the soldiers endure the hardships of the siege.[30]

[29] Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p. 55.
[30] Ibid., p.56.

The powers-that-be in the *normative realm* concocted the story of Apollo from the *normative realm* in order to give their men hope that the siege would not last long, the hope of course coming from the non-rational world of myths. What Machiavelli points out is not simply a critique of lying politicians, but also the fact that oracles can serve political leaders. Roosevelt, turned iconic Rough Rider and outdoorsman had his own oracles to serve him.

In fact, the difficulty in regulating the *normative realm* is such that Machiavelli realizes from time to time it must be renewed (not unlike Eric Voeglin's concept of the decay of original national symbols in *Anamnesis*).[31] The norms themselves must be revitalized because the state of all symbol systems and meaning structures is such that over time they not only lose meaning, but they will lose their ability to affect behavior:

> To conclude, therefore, nothing is more necessary in a community, whether it be a religion, kingdom, or republic, than to restore it to the reputation it enjoyed at its beginnings and to strive to ensure that either good institutions or good men achieve this effect and that it does not have to be brought about by some external force, for although an external force may sometimes be the best remedy, as it was in Rome [when Rome was captured by the Gauls in 390/387 BC], it is so dangerous that it is in no way to be desired.[32]

The *political realm* will derive its authority from the normative power of the state—but that power has to be renewed: to keep its legitimacy at a high level, the state needs to renew its symbolism.[33] Machiavelli notes that such renewal is often sparked from outside,

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[31] Eric Vogelin, *Anamnesis: Collected Writing of Eric Vogelin*, trans. Gerhart Niemeyer (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990).
[32] Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p. 250.
[33] As an aside Machiavelli makes it clear that in order for Italy to unify, the temporal power of the Papal States must be weakened if not destroyed. "We Italians then owe to the Church of Rome and to her priests our having become irreligious and bad; but we owe her a still greater debt, and one that will be the cause of our ruin, namely, that the Church has kept and still keeps our country divided" (Ibid., p. 55). So powerful

which poses a risk, and so renewal should be undertaken from within. Roosevelt's hallmark achievements (establishing national parks and expanding the fleet which are best remembered today) did precisely that. They took him back to his founding personal image of Rough Rider and conservationist, out of the cities and the back rooms, quite literally as a breath of fresh air for his public image.

Roosevelt's situation thus prompted innovations in what the *political realm* in his era should look like. Machiavelli had stopped at cautioning against Christianity itself as having "made the world weak and to have given it over to be plundered by wicked men, who are easily able to dominate it, since in order to go to paradise, most men think more about enduring their pains than about avenging them."[34] His Italians were enfeebled by false humility and a belief that this world is not real, and so he demands "new orders and modes" be put into place at the *normative* level. He is a disarmed founder-captain and because of his unique status having a "free commission" he is "the founder-captain who transcends the distinction between foreign and domestic affairs because he is not devoted to any one 'public' or state."[35] Roosevelt transformed the presidency by means of his bully pulpit, and in so doing, did not only put new values into place for his state, but decisively also opened up space between the normative and the *political realms*, casting their interactions as a dialogue and changing how power moved within his society.

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indeed is the normative strength of the Church in Rome, that even after Italy managed to finally annex Rome in 1870 and complete its union by moving the capital of Italy from Turin to Florence to Rome, the Vatican City still managed to regain its independence in 1929, some 6 decades later. Even after 59 years the normative power of the Papal States allowed it to avoid total assimilation into Italy.

[34] Ibid., p. 159.

[35] Mansfield, Harvey C., *Machiavelli's New Modes and Orders*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), page 298 and also 225.

The Three Realms of Action: A Historical Epistemology?

The examples above are by no means meant to be exhaustive, but rather indicative of how adopting my proposed new model for political action can offer a consistent but flexible model to track strategies for understanding the exercise of political power in more subtle ways than rational choice could do so.

My examples suggest that certain major breaks in how the three realms (normative, political, economic) mapped power relations within states may also contribute to historical understandings, not only political ones. Consider for example the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation creates a situation which had the potential to fundamentally realign the *normative realm* against the political one. Coming as a direct challenge to the top-down exercise of power negotiated between Pope and Emperor, the Reformation bought a realignment of the nobility vis-à-vis old normative institutions.

We have seen that normative power can be slow to transform itself in response to new situations. It also relies on custom and tradition to transform itself—acts of institutional and social habit, rather than legislation. Thus, in the case of Venice and Florence sketched above, the *normative realm* was detached to a degree and separated from the *political realm*, while the *political realm* was enlarged by the independent action of the *economic realm*. The latter two, however, remained fused in a mercantilism that would become the hallmark of this era, because new institutional actors were added. The *normative realm* of church dogma, however, was certainly challenged, as it became vulnerable in new ways, since norms that work well in one place might become harmful in another. In the Renaissance and Reformation, however, the power of rational choice

migrated to new normative spheres, including that of economics. In this way, the seeds for a sort of normative relativity were planted, as well. And the same was true for the *political realm*. The active appeal of the *political realm* to *different* logics opened up any and all normative logics to scrutiny and evaluation. Since the *political realm* relies most heavily upon the *normative realm* for its authority, this new situation also meant a weakening of traditional political leadership.

By the late eighteenth century a whole new set of changes alter the relationship between the three realms of action, especially ones that foster power in the *economic realm*. Slowly we become witness to a loosening of the fusion between the economic and the political that had come to be forged in Machiavelli's Renaissance. In fact, the eighteenth century saw many challenges that called for redefining the power of the *political realm,* from Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* through the Declaration of Independence, and often in terms of economics. Both documents, like many others (particularly those aimed at rights) saw the state as too powerful, and the *economic realm* as too subordinated to it, yet neither one specifically counseled the end of the role of the *political realm* in the regulation of the *economic realm*. Remember, too, that Machiavelli already noted that, if a state promises its people meaning, they will happily die for it. In this sense, through a powerful manipulation of symbolism, the state acts as a massive super-family or super-community in the modern era becoming a vehicle of meaning generation for people.

However, something has gone wrong in this image of the state, in the interval between the eighteenth century and today. As Marcuse shows us in *One Dimensional*

Man, meaning generation through symbolism has been replaced with meaning generation through consumerism. The *normative realm* has thus become a different kind of realm in the modern age. It has always been the source of political power, of meaning, and the source of day-to-day behavioral regulation, but as Roosevelt's case illustrated, it has become accessible to new, potentially dangerous political orders. The *economic realm,* on the other hand, may not be dangerous just for the body. As the source of life, it cannot motivate reasonable people to act beyond survival, unless it is reified as a quasi-normative value system which creates its own kind of symbolic economy (e.g. those reified norms which drive obscene hoarding behavior or trophy style consumption). Finally, the *political realm* becomes the space in which humanity regulates itself and is steered. This realm, in its full extent, can be used by many types of individuals to exercise power within its space of being "public."

Seen historically, these three realms found their particular forms of mobilization at specific moments, when they become sites that transform individuals' relationships to their political identities and choices. Arguably, the *political realm* received its paradigmatic mobilization in 1513 with Machiaavelli's *Prince*,[36] the *normative realm,* in the era of the Protestant Reformation (and thus dating back to 1517 with Martin Luther's *95 Theses* or to Francis Bacon's great 1603 treatises on science), and the *economic realm* in 1776 with the publishing of the *Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith.

[36] *The Prince* was published in 1532.

Yet in our contemporary world, I will argue in the next chapter, it is the *economic realm* that has taken on new urgency. In it, I will first argue, what is at stake is modern redefinitions of the *economic realm*, again with reference to historical examples, and then I will turn to *Occupy Austin* to demonstrate what sensitivity to these new configurations of political power fueled by the *economic realm* can produce.

CHAPTER 4:

The Contemporaneity of the Economic Realm—
Domains of Rationality and Manipulations of the Normative Realm

In the cases sketched above, we have seen that, when the *economic realm* is subordinated to the *political realm*, then it can be ruled through the decision-making structures of the state, as it did in the case of Venice above. However, when the *economic realm* is set apart and allowed to do as it pleases in an electoral republic something unanticipated happens. What that "something" is will be the focus of the present chapter. It outlines how, in the contemporary world, it is indeed possible that the *economic realm* can colonize the *political realm* in much more extreme ways than we have historical examples for.

The Political Realm *in Extremis*: When the Economic Realm Rises to Power

As the case of Theodore Roosevelt suggests, the conscious embrace of symbols can help consolidate power in new ways. But what that case does not bring to the fore is how, in an era in which the *economic realm* is not brought under the control of more traditional ideas of political power, the *economic realm* can in fact create circuits of

power far beyond that employed by Roosevelt. Roosevelt used his new power as president to direct the public's drive as *animal laborans* to consume and as *homo faber* to produce a new image for the US as a nation of patriotic citizens, each contributing to that nation in their own ways.

When, however, the *economic realm* ascends to independent action at a certain time or place beyond the ability of the *political realm* to maintain its parity, then what ought to be described as a *colonization* of the *political realm* takes place. This happens through mechanisms long familiar to political theory, yet not necessarily theorized as offering a source of power that can actually supersede that of the traditional political sphere and its institutions. In other words, in such cases, the *economic realm* begins to impose a different set of symbols as guiding action, signaling a different rationality at the base of its power: maximizing the efficiency of the economic institutions, which leads to a concomitant delegitimization of any decisions in the *political realm* that stand in the way of profit-making for those institutions.

This account converges quite directly with critiques of organized corporate capital since President Dwight D. Eisenhower's famous warning about the military-industrial complex, delivered in his farewell address on January 17, 1961. Here, he identified in his era the emergence of an "iron triangle"[1] which he identified as political contributions, corporate government contracts, and lobbying for industries and the government institutions that (often nominally) regulate them. In such interactions, the *economic realm*

[1] See Robert Higgs, Depression, War, and Cold War: Studies in Political Economy: Studies in Political Economy. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 138.

can invade and subordinate the *political realm*. At the extreme poles of this evolution, campaign financing, advertisements, and lobbyists all conspire to make electoral republics little more than corporate interest legislative machines. Amidst all this we "see" cynical politicians in the US supporting "campaign finance laws" that often seem more like blatant corruption or even overt bribery. Such commonplaces of the contemporary economic world explain at least in part why voting groups might refuse to vote or vote against their own economic interests.

The colonization of the *political realm* by the *economic realm* means that decisions made are not necessarily those that benefit the public or the state. It also means that they are not required to be rational. Here again, however, we might better analyze the situation by positing a reimagination of political power rather than blaming the voter for derationalization: the decisions made will, quite simply maximize profit. Separating the *economic realm* from the *political realm* and thereby maximizing the efficiency of the economic institutions simply allows the emergence of another kind of efficiency, one that capitalism itself provides. It might always be in the best interest of shareholders of a corporation to be efficient, but that might not be true for the state or the community that it serves. And since the primary motivation of a politician is his or her reelection and not the benefit to the community, it means that the state's actors will be motivated by different interests or rationalities from the state and the community that they serve. Such decisions become "not rational" only because their interests are different and the decisions made contradict the interests of the public and the state. In practical terms, this means that, when corporations are legalized and assert their influence from within the

economic realm, economic institutions become fabulously wealthy. In electoral politics, the *economic realm* then can colonize the *political realm* through campaign financing—the modern version of the Venice example. This also means that Rational Choice Theory is once again unable to explain behaviors and predict outcomes since what determines actions in the political sphere are not rational choices at the individual level but choices constrained by rationalities that structure the economic, political and *normative realms*.

One serious result is, effectively, the death of political rationalities itself. Whether the campaign finance capital directly benefits politicians or not, is irrelevant. Since in most parts of the US, a politician cannot win office without some economic support, if politicians were to rebel against their backers following their elections, then the economic interests would simply back opponents in the subsequent election. While money is not everything in elector politics, we have seen big political figures go down in recent years in precisely this way, when economic power invalidated their power in the *political realm* (e.g. Max Cleland and Russell Feingold). If the elections were a onetime event, such politicians might be able to ignore their backers once in office, but with the prospect of a future election on the horizon, a politician seeking another term is obligated to support the causes that financers want backed. In effect, the *economic realm* will soon create a class of politicians who were owned and trained to espouse as Wendy Brown calls it, "market rationality" rather than any political rationality about community or state welfare.[2] Even if a President is elected promising large *political* reform, the economic

[2] Wendy Brown, "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy" in *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

elite can simply back the opposition party in Congress and limit reforms by creating divided government—it almost seems as if the *economic realm* can overcome any rationalities in the *political realm*.

One can argue that the politician class leans back by threatening to withhold support unless the economic interests come through with campaign financing. However, the direction the finance arrow points is irrelevant. The result is the same—the politician class legislates to the whims of the strongest elements in the economy. A brief example of how those "strongest elements" shift may make clear the importance of historicizing the “domains of rationality” involved in decision-making by voting publics.

This example is historical, but politicians have since the beginning of elections motivated voters to shift their grounds for rationality. Consider Mexican politics in the early 1830s. The Mexican state had only had a couple of elections before politicians began to focus on Texas. Increasing Anglo immigration, introduced the presence of slaves. These shifts in Texas were highly emotional issues for Mexican voters, but ones which had little or no impact on the day-to-day lives of the majority of Mexicans because, in Mexico proper, the slaves brought by Anglos did not legally exist. In 1810, during Mexico’s independence revolution, Mexican revolutionary Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla had declared slavery abolished. The next year the Spanish Empire also declared an end to African slavery in all but Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico. Then in 1813 Mexico’s revolutionary government ended slavery. In 1820, Mexico again abolished slavery. In 1824, the new Mexican constitution abolished slavery. In 1829, the last Mexican slaves (outside of Tejas) are freed. So why, then, in 1830 does Mexican

President Anastasio Bustamente order the end of slavery in Tejas, given that Mexico had already abolished African slavery some five times?

The "cause" of this political shift was not immediately evident. That Anglos in Tejas were still practicing slavery was a result of a little bit of neglect, a little bit of Tejas' lack of importance, and a little bit of turning a blind eye to the very clearly unconstitutional behavior in a marginal territory. The Anglos, on their side, evolved a political work-around to avoid coming into open non-compliance with the Mexican law they nominally lived under: they made their former slaves sign contracts for permanent indentured servitude.

Here, however, the domains of rationality at play began to shift, as the region's normative concepts of the law began to be shifted towards different rationalities. Bustamente's order (banning slavery for effectively the fifth time) was legally meaningless for the African slaves in Tejas, but it was symbolically powerful amongst voters. It gave voters something to be outraged at, to rally around, and to get emotional about—it pulled law out of its normative status and reinvigorated it as a contemporaneous political issue. This, thus, became a *political realm* manipulation of the *normative realm*—not a new thing in and of itself, but new in the domain of rationality in which it was applied. Bustamente's goal was not to strengthen Mexico; he did not do it as a prince to make Mexico more powerful or to make his community better, he did it to manipulate voters. And the result was a restriction on Mexico's existing legal-normative framework: that same year Bustamente banned new Anglo immigration to Texas—not to Mexico, just to the Tejas part of Caohuila y Tejas, effectively putting a legal boundary

into place that had not to that point existed. Again, such law would have no impact on the Mexican public, and such a law would be unenforceable with the porous border that demarcated it, no border police, and no real government presence in Tejas. So why pass such a law? The answer is straightforward: cynical manipulation of voters by using the emotional issue of immigration (xenophobia).[3]

This historical situation has its analogues today; not much has changed. What this sort of move in the *political realm* creates is an electorate that is not motivated by rational interests, nor by what benefits the community, but simply by emotions, heuristics, and non-issues. As this kind of normative-political shift operated in Mexico to prepare the way for an eventual split between Mexico and Texas, so, too have electoral politics over the last two hundred years have become less and less dominated solely by rationality. Increasingly, political and economic market rationalities split from the normative to open out different patterns for political action.

But the colonization of the *normative realm* by the *political realm* or the *economic realm*, or the *political realm* by the *economic realm*, these shifts of rational motivations, are lubricated by another category of thing: advertising. Advertising, by its very nature, manipulates the *normative realm*, the realm of values and meanings. An advertiser, happily manipulates any aspect of normative life in order to sell a product, or a policy. The advertiser pinpoints the normative value which needs to be titillated and highlighted in order to generate meaning and through this process subversively redefines,

[3] For more on this see Rodolfo F. Acuna, *Occupied America: The History of Chicanos*, (London: Pearson Publishing, 7th edition, 2014), 62-80.

rescripts the normative. Buying a sporty car is connected to becoming more sexy, desirable, valued and ultimately finding greater meaning through garnering emotional security. Car commercials are an example of the *economic realm* colonizing the normative. The *economic realm's* colonization of the *normative realm* can even turn over norms as solid as religion to the mercy of corporate profits. More will be said on this when we cover the case of Coca Cola and Santa Claus in the next Chapter.

Conclusion

As we have exemplified in this chapter, it is possible to trace cases where the rationality of domains can shift, as it did in the political realm in 1513 with the authoring of *The Prince* by Niccolo Machiavelli, or when the rationality of the normative realm in the case Bustamente's Mexico, was reconfigured to manipulate voters to create an electoral victory.

That these shifts in domains of rationality have not been accommodated in today's theory is not surprising, given the origin of rational choice theory in logical assumptions forged by the Enlightenment. This situation probably rests on two factors.

First, this speaks to the enormous breadth and power of the *normative realm* as the central factor in early modern political thought. The ability of normative systems to shape the way in which we think means that something had first to break the *normative realm's* grip on how we perceived reality. Not just law, but also science and new religions came into the West in these eras as challenges to the single normative sphere that had been assumed since the Middle Ages. In effect, science altered norms of

experience in ways parallel to how the ethics of new religious systems did for morals. The application of observation and reason in an attempt at objectivity, an attempt to transcend the limiting effect of the arbitrariness of the *normative realm* on how we interact with each other and the universe.

The second reason for a split of realms of rationalities lies with the fact that the *economic realm* starts out as the *realm* of instinct, passion, appetite, and the sort, and it is assumed to be at least somewhat natural. The idea of making it independent and rational took an enormous leap of faith. We had to believe in the "invisible hand" that could reshape the world. Calls like Adam Smith's to partially free the *economic realm* from the control of the *political realm* had consequences that no one could have foreseen. It unleashed upon humanity an age ruled by *animal laborans*.

With the pressure of emerging realms of rationality on the *normative realm* that came to its full swing by the early 19th century, new forms of rationality could challenge traditional ones. Just as *economic realms* of rationality put pressure on Italy, later political leaders found in rationalities like nationalism a mechanism to replace older legal norms with new ones and reinvigorate their legitimacy. Similarly, as the industrial revolution began to take off in earnest, political authorities turned increasingly to ideology to combat socialism. Some means of symbols and meaning structures needed to replace the old and no longer valid ones such as God, King, country, feudal lord, military pageantry, and the sort. In addition to "combatting" the decay of the *normative realm*, however, *institutions* evolved to enforce older norms or challenge them with newer ones. Thus, for instance, the state began to legislate on a grand scale. Laws needed

enforcement, so the age of policing was born. But then the egregious offenders needed more than fines, so the prison system was born.

As I have outlined them here, each of the three realms has a different rationality through which they can affect the behaviors of those who would support norms, vote for or against them, or define their own motivations. In the *political realm*, new rationalities can lead to the sort of cynical politics that we call Machiavellian. In the *normative realm*, they can emerge to create philosophy and science. Such shifts, however, need not be coherent to anything but the current situation. And in the *economic realm*, new economic rationality can give new elites new ways to maximize profit and assert political power.

To recognize the potentials for the shift in rationalities requires new analytical tools for understanding the behavior of individuals in political spaces, as I have argued here. It is why Hannah Arendt calls for the *vita activa* and not the *vita contemplativa*. She realizes that *homo faber*, the economic elites, are rational and thinking—which is part of the problem for scholars, since their rationalities are not permanent, but situated in the power relations of particular times and places. How many people in the US, for example, have converted to Buddhism and practice mindfulness as their normative ethics, but not the other traditions in Buddhism? Such movements, if general, may be signs that the rationalities controlling public life are shifting—they should not, I believe, be taken simply as anomalies.

The truth of the situation needs to be seen as more encompassing. When the *normative realm* finds itself in the throes of reinterpretation, and the *economic realm*, exercising new found freedoms, the *political realm* may well itself be in a state of

weakness, because the norms to which it had attached its legitimacy were proving themselves to be insufficient (such as when a monarchy declines). When, as in the eighteen and nineteenth centuries, monarchy failed to hold onto power and was replaced at particular sites by republics, these new political formations were in turn subject to the whims of the economic elite and the frequent changing of political leadership. In effect, then, our understanding of how power is consisted within the state needs to be significantly refined. In such situations, as in Machiavelli's Italy, a new elite, the merchant class, found that it could exercise power directly over the *political realm*, as outlined above. The principal difference between the feudal system and republics was the way in which the elites resolved power disputes. Political power in the feudal system was redefined in terms of newer reward systems.

Using historical data, I have argued for understanding Machiavlli's era as the beginning of the *economic realm's* colonization of the *political realm*. In the next chapter, I will amplify how this *economic realm* dominates in the modern world, in very particular ways.

CHAPTER 5:

The Contemporary Rise of the Economic Realm
Through the Act of Colonizing the Political Realm

This chapter will revisit examples from the *economic realm's* rationalities, as they have emerged and been theorized in the twentieth century. Its first sections will amplify what kinds of pressure new economic realities can exert on the *political realm*. As we shall see, the *economic realm's* conquest of humanity is not confined to the *normative realm*. The *economic realm* has also invaded and subordinated the *political realm*. Campaign financing, advertisements, and lobbyists all conspire to make electoral republics little more than corporate interest legislative machines. The cynical politicians in the US call it campaign finance when it is clearly overt bribery and yet the public does nothing in the face of this blatant corruption. This will lead into a set of brief examples demonstrating how the *economic realm* fosters particular kinds of choice. After that, the final, concluding section of the present study will take up a contemporary example of political choice in more detail, addressing the Occupy Movements of the twenty-first century in order to argue that the three-realm model helps explain the configuration of rational choice in the era of late capitalism and globalization. Together, the two phases of

my argument will make the case for my three-realm model as an improvement on understanding political behavior in the modern world.

Amplifying Arendt's *homo faber*

As I have implied in previous chapters, humanity often attaches normative values to our economic impulses through reification. This is especially true around currency and sex, but even things more basic like breathing are subject to this. For example, in cultures where stoicism is highly valued, children are not infrequently taught shallow breathing to stifle emotional responses. The stifled emotion is still there in all of its fury and force. However, rather than being released, it is stored up like a toxin in the pith of a tree. The subject can then be "rational" in the terms acknowledged within their group. Moreover, that transmutation (aside from leading possibly to Freudian repression) also sets up a version of economic rationalities, joining issues like a desire to survive, an urge to consume to survive, and various social behaviors (fornication, fight or flight, or location of shelter). In this sense however, *animal laborans* is not natural, if by natural we mean primordial. Instead, it is already a rationality, something that emerges as scripts for behavior.

Arendt's idea of the *homo faber* needs here to be adduced as just as necessary for survival as *animal laborans* is, as the ego, the solution maker. Arendt notes that the image of the subject renders it the destroyer-creator: "h*omo faber*, the creator of human

artifice, has always been the destroyer of nature."[1] Nature will dominate when the human destructive force is small—when human footprints are small, as are economic needs and political desires. Without assuming the role of *homo faber*, humanity would be less complex than the beaver. By the 19th and 20th centuries, however, *homo faber* had become something more than merely an economic agent, as the example of Venice has already shown. As center to the activities in the *economic realm*, *homo faber* changed its scripts according to economic/market rationalities, able to colonize and conquer the *normative* and *political realms.* In the process, the *economic realm* went beyond the simple logics of existence inherent in the notion of *homo faber*, just as *homo faber* exercised scripts of being-in-the-world beyond those of *animal laborans.*

Here, we return to Habermas' idea of the public sphere. As Joseph Staats describes Habermas'e extension of the relation of a simpler life world to what I am calling the *economic realm*:

> The corporate sector with this kind of power can do much more than intrude upon lifeworld. It can as well transform lifeworld in its own image, wielding power of such consequences as to be constitutive of citizenship itself.[2]

Habermas' analysis cuts along a different dimension than Arendt's, given his terminology of *Lifeworld* and *System,* but his conclusion amplifies what is at stake in many modern incarnations of the *economic realm,* when (as is assumed in critiques of neoliberalism) the corporate sector colonizes the *Lifeworld*. This colonization leads to the type of reversed hierarchy where the power of the corporate business sector to cause citizens and

[1] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 139
[2] Joseph L.Staats, "Habermas and Democratic Theory: The Threat to Democracy of Unchecked Corporate Power," *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 57, No. 4. (Dec., 2004), pp. 585-594., p. 160.

their political leaders to think of themselves primarily as creatures of economics-the citizens first and foremost as consumers of goods and services; and the political leaders as stewards of the economy whose overarching political mission it is to ensure that more and more goods and services are available to be consumed.[3]

The need to produce for unbridled appetites has become all-consuming. This redefined *homo faber* moves even further from a*nimal laborans* in seeking an endless supply of reified economic meaning through an obscene accumulation of wealth, limitless consumption, and the wild successes of unbridled market growth. Production ceased to be about fulfilling the needs of the many and it became about serving itself as its own ends. Over time, the ends of this *homo faber*'s *economic realm* became the ends of the citizens of this market-driven state, as we saw in the case of Venice.

Today, however, *homo faber* has come to seek economic growth not to satisfy some long-term goal, but rather to have economic growth, even to a greater degree than Venice did. The *economic realm* produces so that its subjects will consume, but never so that they will be satisfied. In fact, in this modern *economic realm*, it is commonplace to note that the producers must make certain that they never satisfy appetites, since satisfaction would halt further consumption. Hence "needs" for survival now are made strategically, incorporating devices like planned obsolesce, adding habit-forming substances to foods and drinks (e.g. caffeine and sugar), or the artificial association of

[3] Ibid., p. 160.

needy emotions with a product (e.g. in advertising, such as associating sex with cars, drinks, or clothing).

The challenge for a realm to impact the space of the political is its need to take concrete form as a comprehensible narrative that can be used by subjects to direct their action. Ideally, that narrative burrows into our desires and rescripts them or at least redirects them. In the case of a capitalist narrative, primal urges like consumption need to be conflated with items to be purchased. Fear, death, religion, democracy, nationalism, and morality all become things to be used by the *economic realm*, not the least by advertisers who hope to corrupt our "natural" patterns of consumption (those from earlier identities of *homo faber*, focused on more basic needs) by manipulating our behavioral patterns to correlate with scripts that conform to the newer *economic realm*. In most modern societies, critics of capitalism would insist that the *economic realm* gains access to our mind through advertising. As a tool, advertising is uniquely free, because it seems to apply to individual choice, and thus does not seem to be manipulating norms or emotions.

Previously, various master narratives that constitute *normative realms* (ethics, religion, science, etc.) had developed and added to the *political realm.* In such cases, systems of norms were designed to create the sort of behavior which enhanced survival, prosperity, or order within the state. The source of such narratives was generally policy generated by the community or at least by its hegemonic representatives (purported or effectively real, as e.g. senators, nobles, kings, etc.). The goals of such manipulations

were overtly political, and even if cynical, they at least had the redeeming quality of being purposeful.

Santa Claus is the classic example of how the *economic realm* can co-opt figures with narratives from *normative realms* (in this case, religious norms). Originally, in his representations in Europe, Santa Claus had been portrayed as a young man in green and brown. Yet in the US, his image was co-opted by Coca-Cola advertisers who wanted to promote more Coke consumption in winter-time. For the sake of branding, they changed Santa's age, outfit, and size. He was decked out in company colors, even in the contrast of his cold pink skin and his aged white hair. And a whole new mythical system was eventually created around him, to include more marketing instruments in the form of new "Christmas" characters (e.g. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Frosty the Snowman, polar bears, etc.). To make Santa Claus less the saint he had been at his origin (as Saint Nicolaus) and more appealing as a secular figure, they made him more generous. To make him more marketable, they made him jolly.[4] His narrative had thus mutated completely: he ceased to simply be a device for getting children to behave—what his role had been in the Old World. Santa Claus in the US became a lever to get children to influence household consumerism. As the image and myth of Santa Claus was being rewritten100 years ago, so too was Christmas itself. Christmas was transformed from a

[4] James Twitchell, Twenty Ads That Shook the World: The Century's Most Groundbreaking Advertising and How It Changed Us All, Three Rivers Press; Reprint edition (Dec. 2001).

Christian celebration of medium importance,[5] commemorating the birth of Christ, to the most widely celebrated Christian event in the world, celebrated even by non-Christians.

Clearly, the new narratives about and surrounding Santa Clause have goals in the *economic realm*, principal among them (for advertisers) the increase in Coke consumption. Yet Hannah Arendt points out another face of how these goals function. According to Arendt, there is a tradition of creating narratives for the sake of consumption and other instrumental forms, even in what is known as the *vita contemplativa*.[6] However, she underscores, that defining such goals instrumentally does not exhaust what goals and their supporting narratives can do. As James T. Knauer defines Arendt's commitment to political action, her point is that master narratives (he calls them "general principles" shared within groups) do more for defining a political subject:

> Arendt's point is not that action must have no goals but that it cannot be defined in terms of them. The particular ends of action are always transcended by the general principles which give them significance and meaning. Insofar as a universal principle is manifested in a particular act, it becomes possible to judge that act in terms of what Arendt calls the "greatness" of the act, that is, the greatness of the manifestation of principle.[7]

Where in a narrative aimed at fostering the economic goal of consumption is there meaning that can define such great acts?

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[5] Theologically, Easter is the most important moment in the liturgical year, when Jesus's resurrection provided him to be the Messiah.
[6] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 289.
[7] James T. Knauer, "Motive and Goal in Hannah Arendt's Concept of Political Action" *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 74, No. 3. (Sep., 1980), pp. 721-733.

Conventionally, consumption is considered to exist for the sake of consumption itself. It may bring pleasure, it may bring profits, but it hardly generates meaning—at most, the great ruthlessness of the advertiser comes to the surface in analyses of these narratives. The advertiser knows that there is no connection between Coke and Santa Claus (except to the extent that Coke recreated him), but the associations grounding this new narrative are artificially created through the repetition of pleasing images, catchy slogans, and emotional appeals, until in fact the victim of the advertising now falsely makes the association as an existing truth. Through such acts that virtually can be equated with brainwashing, the advertiser creates the illusion of meaning where there is no meaning whatsoever. The consumer is now tricked into believing that there actually is meaning in purchasing the product and consuming it. In the rudimentary form of such narratives, their meaning exists primarily in the anticipation of the purchase; it may also linger during the act of consumption, but as soon as the act of consumption is done, the illusionary meaning will start to decline.

Here, the traditional interpretation of the *economic realm* needs revision in the current day. It has long been assumed that such economic narratives cannot function with the same strength as narratives referencing other norms (law, religion) can, because there is no culture or symbol set in place to reinforce the illusionary meaning's existence by anchoring it in the sphere of public politics. The comparison is facile, but understandable. If I go to a religious ceremony I will likely see icons, hear pleasant sounds (singing, chanting), enjoy pleasant smells (incense), and interact with a community. Through this coherent realm of cultural acts anchored by narratives exemplifying various norms, I will

likely acquire a feeling of belonging, greater purposes, and love even if I am not a believer.

To be sure, such feelings may begin to dissipate as soon as I leave the ceremony, but they will do so only slowly. They may in fact persist for a long time to influence my future acts, predisposing me to affirm their reality, even if I do not attend another service for years. The *normative realm* of that religion remains available through such institutionalized experience, and my participation in it has anchored me to its "thick description" of experience and society. In contrast, it is easy to presume that meaning generated by consuming is shallow in comparison, guaranteed only in a false or ephemeral association of symbols with the item being consumed. This illusionary conflation will thus only trick the consumer briefly.

Here, however, the conventional model for narratives created in the *economic realm* may in fact be seriously lacking. The pleasure created in the series of acts leading from the anticipation of buying and consuming a product to its actual consumption will remain in memory. And at moments when other systems of normative value break down, such associations and memories of pleasure will likely be enough to encourage the consumer to purchase and consume again—to use that pleasure as a new norm, as the heart of a new realm of meaning based on narratives created by forces like advertising that give shape to an *economic realm* with new normative force.

Certainly, Santa Claus and Coca Cola were not the first times Christmas and religion were addressed in non-normative ways. For instance, on December 25, 800 CE,

Charlemagne was crowned as the Holy Roman Emperor.[8] In one fell swoop, he made December 25 Christmas, co-opted the Celtic winter solstice death ceremony into Christianity, and managed to associate himself with the birth of Christ. In this case, Charlemagne operated from within the *political realm* and altered the *normative realm* on a large scale by associating religious norms with his rule rather than with church norms. Christianity's dogma was straightforwardly used to encourage unquestioning subservience to Christian sovereigns, not just to the Church. By conflating the Celtic Winter Solstice celebration, with Christianity, and with himself, Charlemagne sought to not merely convert more Gauls and Germans to Christianity, but to also gain a bit of the fanatic zeal of Christians to use in establishing his own normative use of religious language to set and fulfill his own secular, political goals.

What the *economic realm* has accomplished over the last two centuries, however, is not exhausted by Charlemagne's example. Since Venice's transformation, the entire *normative realm*, our very fabric of our social being, has moved on another stage, in which it has arguably been eviscerated by advertisers for the sole purpose of increasing consumption and maximizing profit. This constitutes a set of arbitrary norms aimed at consumption rather than more traditional value norms. That transformation has not been accomplished without resistance. The right wing vilifies the loss of narratives from religion and ethics in the *normative realm*. They blame the left for this what they consider moral deviation and see themselves as standing for what's "right" and "the good old

[8] François L Ganshof, "Charlemagne," *Speculum*, Vol. 24, No. 4. (Oct. 1949), pp. 520-528, specifically p. 524.

days." Ironically, however, this shattering of the *normative realm* is precisely the result of the *economic realm's* colonization of it. The deeply lamented destruction of the *normative realm* by the *economic realm* is the result of its colonization by capitalism.

Not only has the *economic realm* reshaped the *normative realm*, it has gotten rid of what was not profitable in the process, as *homo faber* turns into the modern consumer. The *economic realm* of the twentieth century has become a hyperrational realm, yet using a rationality that would have been decried in earlier iterations of the *political realm*. Through television, radio, the newspaper, the internet, telemarketers, door-to-door salespeople, the work place, movies, billboards, and all other media, this new *economic realm* has set up a new set of norms that can ground a complete revision of narratives in the *political realm*.

The Emergence of Alternate (Non-)Rationalities

The affective dimension of this process should never be undervalued. What we in the West, since the age of the Greeks, call "the rational" has been fundamentally reshaped in the last decades, incorporating what in the past would have been called non-sense rather than rationality. Rationality, therefore, needs to be reconsidered *historically*, as it has not been in models for rational choice, which assume greater stability in the *normative realm*. Rationality was the fuel used by Machiavelli and his Venice to turn the realms upon their heads—to insert norms from the *economic realm* into politics. But with the intervention of the *economic realm* into the *normative realm*, individuals are forced to accept rationalities in forms that had not been acceptable in earlier political spheres, less

controlled by forces like advertising. To understand that requires more than absolute rationality, which as Feyerabend point out:

> refuses to recognize the many ideas, actions, feelings, laws, institutions, racial features which separate one nation (culture, civilization) from another and which alone give us people, i.e. creatures with faces. This is the attitude that destroyed Indian cultural achievements in the USA without so much as a glance in their direction, this is the attitude that is now destroying nonwestern cultures under the guise of development.[9]

Any single rationality does not encompass Arendt's *vita contemplativa*, which has difficulty dealing with transformations in emotions, magic, faith, Geist, intuition, desires, drives, passion, and plain old-fashioned irrationality.

From its perspective, the innovations that I have been addressing have a different claim to truth in sponsoring narratives in public politics. They are no longer guaranteed by normative institutions, as narratives from faith and science have been. With respect to science, the questions in the *normative realm* can be of quite different sources and types:

> By science, in this context, Feyerabend means all those modern institutions which claim a rational and objective basis for their authority; for instance, the medical establishment, and much of the educational establishment. … Needless to say, Feyerabend's analysis is not identical with that of either Weber or Marcuse. Weber ultimately embraces the secular standards of the modern world as the locus of a type of existential freedom within the "iron cage" of rationalization. Marcuse, on the other hand, strongly objects to Weber's accommodation, and seeks to replace one-dimensional scientific reason with objective "Reason."' Feyerabend chooses neither of these alternatives. But he would seem to share Weber's concerns when he focuses on an "imperialism" of scientific reason that drives out and renders insignificant other, especially traditional, ways of apprehending the world, and in so doing renders human existence less full and meaningful.[10]

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[9] Paul Feyerabend, *Farewell to Reason*, (London: Verso, 2002), p. 102.
[10] C. Fred Alford, "Epistemological Relativism & Political Theory: The Case of Paul K. Feyerabend," *Polity*, Vol. 18, No. 2. (Winter, 1985), pp. 204-223.

As Michael Oakeshott points out, "moral ideals are sediment; they have significance only so long as they are suspended in a religious or social tradition, so long as they belong to a religious or social life." [11] Without the fluidity of the *normative realm*, any distilled "truth" runs the danger of becoming incapable of providing meaning. Moreover, economic rationalities are just as powerful as earlier ones in providing grounds for narratives to help individuals understand their worlds.

What we must return to, however, is the question of how norms are enforced after they have become parts of a realm that can provide narratives guiding human action. That is how are norms enforced after these new narratives changed how we saw the universe and thus the *normative realm*. The 20th and 21st century individual has the right to ignore norms previously regarded as "universal" at least within the boundaries of his or her culture. This was only exacerbated by the liberal mythology of democracy where each person's voice is presumed to be equal to all other voices. Those establishing themselves as subjects within the *political realm* are accustomed to accepting different rationalities, and to constitute themselves as publics both inside and outside of traditional institutional guarantees—they are used to assuming roles conforming to institutions implementing standard norms.

All the advertisers have to do to discard one system of norms and implement another is show their audiences that the norm is based on faulty reason—they are here held into place by use and custom, not institutional force. The results can be startling

[11] Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and other Essays*, (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1962), p. 41.

breaks of logic. For instance, cigarettes could be marketed to women based on the suffragist movement. The association of voting and smoking would allow a female smoker to feel a sense of liberation with every puff she took, even if those puffs had no direct impact on the *political realm*; even if those puffs served only to expend money, give her a buzz, and accelerated her approach toward her own mortality. The norms against women smoking withered away just as the norms repressing women have lessened—the imagery helped individuals claim the agency of subjectivity, based entirely on group decisions. Market forces of course supported the sexual liberation; sex sells, prudery does not.

Such movements of norms in the *economic realm* do not, however, have to be negative, but they are always fragile and subject to abrupt shifts of taste and practice—publicity can alter norms. For example, a political speech today that spoke of Heracles' heroics would be received by laughter. Strangely enough, at the same time, that same audience might find a speech talking of the heroics of three captured soldiers reasonable. During the war against Yugoslavia it was announced, on April 1, 1999, that three U.S. soldiers accidentally wandered into Yugoslavia from Macedonia. They were captured and beaten in the process. After being fired upon without returning fire, the three men surrendered to the Yugoslav army. They put up no resistance and they were not on any sort of dangerous mission.[12] The three men blundered into Yugoslavia and the US press and government spoke of them as heroes. US citizens put up yellow ribbons. Public

[12] "Captured U.S. soldiers face military court in Yugoslavia" *CNN*, April 2, 1999, accessed April 4, 2017 http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9904/01/nato.attack.05/.

opinion polls, media discussions, presidential speeches, and threats of retaliation all followed. Was this an April Fool's gag? What is amazing is the belief that these men become heroes, in the US media. They were each given purple hearts and five other medals. For what? What did they do to earn any of those medals? The inability to read maps (stupidity) and quickly surrendering (cowardice) has somehow become equated with heroism in the US. They unintentionally crossed an international border; they did nothing that saved the lives of civilians; they did not fight off the enemy, yet they have been transformed through media spin into icons. Spectacle gets more people tuned in. Indeed, this is an example of the power that the economic realm has over the normative realm. The very term "hero," so critical in our understanding of history, myth, and stories of the self ala Joseph Campbell[13], has been distilled down by a news media eager for ratings and a government eager for propaganda to no longer have any meaning whatsoever.

But the *economic realm's* invasion of the other two realms has done more than just rewrite and erode the *normative realm* in such cases. It has gone so far as to replace the *normative realm* with a reified economic version of itself. People who would have pursued meaning through God, art, war, mysticism, or some other non-rational meaning structure in the medieval or ancient world are today more likely to pursue economic means, such as a career. In this sense, the *economic realm* has become itself confused with the *normative realm* as far as meaning generation goes. That *normative realm*, the

[13] Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1949).

realm of meaning and raison d'être, in turn, emerges as a means to an end. In other words, the *normative realm* only serves as a means when it is used to justify the application of the *political* and *economic realms*.

Such reciprocities are not random; I posit them as indicative of the epistemology of the *normative realm* when it is opposed by a potentially equally forceful economic epistemology, controlled by acts of signification, like advertising or declarations of heroism.

To reinforce this point, let's consider a person who ideologically falls into the conservative category of the New Right[14] who by current definition espouses lessening government regulation and overturning *Roe v. Wade* (1973). Such a person might be loathe to have the government regulate the safety of a product, because such regulation puts a burden on profit as well as limits potential market size. Yet, such a person might at the same time be inclined to have that same government regulate the reproductive rights of a woman. Indeed, overturning *Roe v. Wade* would actually necessarily result in an increase in regulation to force the practice of abortions to stop in conservative states. Such contradictions between normative value systems are resolved only from within various systems at play. One norm system is the faith in the market's ability to sort out defective products or at least discourage their production; the other norm is the belief that their God told them to control female sexual organs.

[14] John W. Sloan, *The Reagan Effect: Economics and Presidential Leadership*, (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1999) pg. 58-59.

And here we arrive back at the question of rationality correlated with the *normative* and *economic realms* of public decision-making. It is too easy to assume, in cases such as advertising, that it is non-rational when subjects believe narratives with specific norms drawn from the rationalities of the *economic realm*. For instance, there is this non-rational "myth" that honor will somehow overcome greed in the market place. Such narratives can and do guide individual choice, even though capitalism easily transforms itself into a system that rewards greed and not honor, thereby promoting greed as its chief virtue. But such conventionally *non-rational* narratives can be absorbed into the *normative realm*. Indeed, in order for a consumer to discover what products are better in a system without regulations, they would have to expend resources on trial and error and possibly even risk life and limb. In actuality, then, government regulation may increase the efficiency of the market by regulating it, but such realizations have little bearing on the ideology of the kind of conservative market rationality at play here (in this case, free unregulated markets).[15] People do not search for the most rational set of values and then construct their ideology to be rational. The more likely scenario is that people have preferences and construct an ideology that serves to justify those preferences after the fact. "Markets are to remain free, even if they are not always efficient (in sorting out bad versus good products, for instance)," says this system of norms, drawn from the principals of market economics. The other norm at play in this situation concerns the regulation of a woman's reproductive ability. This assumption is based on a set of

[15] John Braithwaite, "The Limits of Economism in Controlling Harmful Corporate Conduct," *Law & Society Review*, Vol. 16, No. 3. (1981 - 1982), pp. 481-504.

religious norms that to a degree relegates women to the status of incubators (that is to say: if they get pregnant, they no longer have personal choice over that status). This phrasing is intentionally prejudicial because it helps to clarify how norms based on ideal values are transacted before they acquire distinctive institutions.

With this, then, we return to the fundamental association of the *economic realm* with individual choice in decision-making. People seek a *raison d'être* in their lives, in order to make sense of all the essentially arbitrary fortune, misfortune, talent, handicaps, and virtue that they practice and encounter. They find in the narratives of the three realms such *raisons d'être* and guide their choices and lives. People need some cause to be, some meaning to accept mortality as a reasonable end to it all, and motivation to get up in the morning. Norms help to construct narratives directing choice and self-understanding, helping us to make sense of a world of experience that would otherwise be filled with irrationalities or non-rationalities. We understand our lives in terms of "reasons" that derive from narratives in the three realms: "I live so that…" In the era of advanced capitalism, the economy has become a source for such narratives, much as a game with a scoreboard, rules, referees, and cheaters. The non-rational and arbitrary rules and enforcement of those rules can be taken as norms, and in this way, they help us pretend that we are all rational participants in public life. But in the era of neoliberalism, instead of the economy being used to give us the means to fulfill our goals, the economy has in itself, become our goal. As in the case of advertising, economic behavior has come to guide lives: I work not to have money to buy those things that I need, but rather I work not just so I can buy things I need but also so that I can accumulate money and goods

(whether used or not). With the help of advertisers, the *economic realm* becomes the backbone for new narratives in the *normative realm* and for political decision-making it that realm, as illusionary and fleeting meaning is attached to them through narratives.

As Marx noted over a century ago, this commodity has a dual, fetishized nature. The car is not merely a tool to get to work and to serve my traveling needs, it is in fact why I work — I work to have a car. By having a car, I can get to work, but that is for consumer-subjects in the *economic realm* not the reason why I have the car (a convenient but essentially expensive tool for getting places). We have come to put value on those things (in the form of commodities in the *economic realm*) that are actually means to ends as if they were the ends themselves.

Here, I also recall how economic narratives colonize not only the *normative realm*, but also the political one. Situations like the US invasion of Iraq can be rationalized as protecting the US economy (meaning the supply of oil at reasonable prices). That commodity-based set of norms help the public look away from war deaths and from effects of sanctions on the civilian population in Iraq. Older norms like national sovereignty or the morality of civilian deaths in wartimes simply are not applied to understand the war: even the anti-war protestors are too invested into the system to break away from the oil/economy narrative and discuss human rights and sovereignty. John Locke's philosophy anticipated these point: so "[t]hat every Man, that hath any Possession, or Enjoyment, or any part of the Dominions of any Government, doth thereby give his tacit Consent, and is as far forth obliged to Obedience to the Laws of that

Government, during such Enjoyment, as anyone under it."[16] That is, to truly break support with the state, those in opposition to the state would need to give up benefits from that state, an act that Locke surely must have known was intractably difficult. Thus, even the most ardent of war resistors is trapped by Leo Strauss' esoteric discovery that Locke was more Hobbesian than previously thought.[17].

My point here is again that historical evidence supports my theoretic point about the ability of the *economic realm* to generate norms and act as a new political space. The way we have currently configured our society and its overwhelming reliance upon petroleum moves morality into the *economic realm*, with the result that divesting from petroleum seems essentially the same as divesting from the social contract. In the minds of those constructing their lives and political choices on the basis of narratives from the *economic realm*, resistance to "big oil" is not like giving up your favorite drink or boycotting a shoe company. Giving up petroleum would mean having to give up everything gained from civil society: our food, our transportation, our goods, our services, and our information network, to say nothing of the roles it plays in our houses, our clothes, or our medicine. All in all, then, it is *entirely* possible to reconfigure our individual internal scripts for political agency around such scripts from other realms.

I believe it is worth also stressing how completely situationally bound such options are—they are neither non-rational nor irrational, but systematic rethinkings of the narratives inherent in different realms' political thinking. A historical example can

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[16] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, (Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 348.
[17] Patrick Coby, "The Law of Nature in Locke's Second Treatise: Is Locke a Hobbesian?" *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 1. (Winter, 1987), pp. 3-28.

underscore the *rationality* of choices that are completely functional within one realm as a decision-making narrative, but possibly almost incomprehensible within another. At the core of the Iroquois Confederacy's *Great Law* is the belief that, "in our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."[18] That kind of long-term thinking used as the basis for political thought could indeed serve as the motto for many, if not all environmentalists, while looking non-rational to supporters of the economic narratives of big oil. The Iroquois Confederacy uses as its fundamental narrative for political choice a consciously normative law, with political and economic implications. It dictates to the Iroquois that they cannot create laws without considering the impact of those laws for at least the next 140 years or so. Indeed, it tells the Iroquois that, when they legislate, those future generations must be in counsel with them even though they may not yet be born. They are to consult with the unborn who will be affected and yield decision-making power to them.

Such a system is not a rational law, if rationality means "complying with best economic principles" for today's political choices, since much in it is speculative. Clearly, there is no way to know what the world will look like in 140 years, let alone to consider in any realistic sense the implications of those laws passed today for the next 140 years. Even extrapolations from known facts are based more on faith than reason, in such time frames. For example, we can understand that global warming exists now, and that, over

[18] For the Iroquois Confederacy constitution or *Great Law* see: http://www.constitution.org/cons/iroquois.htm. For more on the historical impact of the *Great Law* see: William N. Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010).

coming years, if nothing is done to reverse ongoing trends, water levels will rise even further as the polar ice caps continue to melt, the ocean temperatures will rise, coral reef systems will be destroyed, bodies of water will have their oxygen and salt levels drop, fish populations will shift and some will die off, etc. We can even imagine a world where major coastal cities are partially submerged (New Orleans or Venice) or parts of Europe, currently inhabited, under a new glacial ice cap.

But environmental science is in its infancy for such speculation on the global scale, and randomizing factors might intervene in those scenarios. What if we are on the verge of another ice age, because a giant volcano might throw dust into the air that lowers global temperature for decades (something that has indeed happened, such as in the case of Krakatoa)? In this case, the plant might win a reprieve: a convergence of misfortunes might cancel each others' effects out. Even with modern technology, we are dealing in projections far beyond what the Iriquois might have expected. We may use meteorology, chaos theory, complexity theory, very sophisticated computing, and very high-powered computers to perhaps create a fairly reasonable model of our environment, but then model sunspots, orbital perturbations, and countless other factors might intervene. Even with tools like climateprediction.net,[19] science comes down to a probabilistic embrace of dominant assumptions—as climate-change deniers remind us all the time. As individuals,

[19] "Climateprediction.net is the largest experiment to try and produce a forecast of the climate in the 21st century. To do this, we need people around the world to give us time on their computers - time when they have their computers switched on, but are not using them to their full capacity." (http://Climateprediction.net).

we will not be held accountable for such "accidents," but only for our normative political decisions about the "right thing to do."

Such decision-making strategies and debates about long-term effects and randomness are *not* troubling within the Iroquois framework for generating politically necessary rationalities. Their narratives *require* them to think long-term as well as short term. Thus, for them, it was *logical* not to strike an alliance with Great Britain in the revolutionary era, because such treaties might have guaranteed short-term peace, but in their calculation, ten years later it might have led to disaster (a surrender of sovereignty would more likely produce long-term significant effects for the Iroquois than the British). This is not a political choice based on short-term situations, but on longer-term narratives about identity and responsibility to those coming after us. Of course, this is a speculative situation: when the Iroquois Confederacy created its *Great Law* somewhere between 1,000 and 550 years ago, they had not crafted it to answer to such modern considerations of war and dominance, but that does not mean that they could not use to *Great Law* as normative in dealing with a rapidly changing chaotic world. This law was intended to force its legislative body to deal with those uncertainties within defined parameters of desired rationality, and it was intended to be taken literally, even though it could not possibly predict such misfortune as the coming European invasions.

Such examples suggest again that "non-rational" laws might appear as such only to out-groups, to those espousing narratives from *different normative realms*. This law serves a purpose just by being a basis for the *vita contemplativa*, even if it cannot truly be applied, by the judgment of European diplomats who might have thought the Iroquois

were behaving irrationally. Yet it gives the Iroquois a sense of a future that guarantees the meaningfulness of their own laws: even in situations with clear short-term loss predictions, they feel secure in their actions if they consider the seven generations. Following that law increases legitimacy of the Confederacy's rulers and increases the over-all sense of community and continuity within this political community. Even if sacrificing a present for that future seems a folly to outsiders, that political choice may still, even if by accident, lead to better legislation within the Iroquois community because it helps define the community's purpose and identity in a narrative sustaining a difficult but necessary perspective.

The self-interests involved clearly differ; the economic and *normative realms* are not configured similarly. If the Iroquois Confederacy's law were applied today, it would require that we create a law that would force us to dramatically cut our fossil fuel consumption. This is an action that, considering how dependent we are on petroleum in the US, could potentially harm our economy, lead to massive unemployment, malnutrition if not starvation (the US dependency on petroleum for food production is enormous), and maybe even cause civil unrest or wars. But even if it were in our long-term interests, we would not be able to avail ourselves of this option, given that we exist in a realm where economic norms dominate all other.

Here, we return to the crux of the matter for the latter twentieth century. The *economic realm's* conquest of humanity is not confined to the *normative realm*, it has also invaded and subordinated the *political realm*. What roles advertising plays in securing norms based on economics also transfer almost seamlessly to a *political realm*

guided in terms of campaign financing, political advertisements, and lobbyists. Indeed, the system of corporate influence and corruption through economics in the United States has become so fine-tuned that campaign finance reform has remained unresolved on Congress' agenda for the entirety of the twentieth century and so far into the twenty first.

In 1907, the Tilman Act was the first attempt at some sort of campaign financing reform. Even that early in the century, Congress made it a crime for corporations to make financial contributions to candidates for federal office.[20] Laws were passed in 1910 and 1911 creating spending limits for Congress. Then came the Federal Corrupt Practices Act (1925), and it was then that the dominant political science position on the matter was formulated by Louise Overacker in her book *Money in Elections*.[21] In it, she argued that the solution was not banning corporate money, but rather making sure that everyone got some of it. In effect, banning the corporate money just meant that there would be more unaccounted for corruption and those with fewer resources would be less capable of getting funding. More campaign financing came in the form of an amendment to the Hatch Act of 1939, the Smith-Connally Act (1943), Taft-Hartley Act (1947), the Federal Elections Campaign Act (1971), and, most recently, the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (2002).

But what has all this accomplished? We have not been able to rid the political system of economic influence; all we did was regulate it (perhaps in hope of mitigating

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[20] Robert H. Sitkoff, "Corporate Political Speech, Political Extortion, and the Competition for Corporate Charters," *The University of Chicago Law Review*, Vol. 69, No. 3. (Summer, 2002), pp. 1103-1166, p. 1103.

[21] Thomas E. Mann, "Linking Knowledge and Action: Political Science and Campaign Finance Reform," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1. (Mar., 2003), pp. 69-83, p. 70.

the influence of moneyed interest). It is possible to see this as simply an evolution, as many scholars do:

> There were two major factors: a substantial increase during the 1960s in the costs of campaigning, especially those associated with media advertising, and the emergence of wealthy, self-financed candidates. Since both developments threatened incumbents, members of Congress began to consider new regulatory initiatives. The Revenue Act of 1971 created a presidential public-financing system funded with an income tax checkoff.[22]

Yet such an analysis, I contend, ultimately missed a central part of the dynamics between the economic and *political realms* as we know them today. It is generally assumed that, without some sort of government finance system (like those in Maine and Arizona),[23] politicians would likely not win election without corporate assistance; Here, we must, however, return to the question of the *economic realm* actually re-scripting the *normative realm*. It is not that campaign financing necessarily determines who wins and who loses. In fact, several studies have shown "that funding source impacts are of a much lower level of magnitude, although still relevant in the heated competition of an open seat House race when even a slight edge matters."[24] A study by Brad Alexander found that:

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[22] Thomas E. Mann, "Linking Knowledge and Action," p. 71.
[23] Arizona's Citizens Clean Elections Act of 1998 "created full public funding of campaigns to qualified candidates who wish to run for statewide and legislative offices" (http://www.ccec.state.az.us/ccecweb/ccecays/home.asp). As such, it is an attempt to draw politicians away from corporate money. Maine also has such a system of election management (http://www.maine.gov/ethics/mcea/index.htm) and in 2005 Connecticut enacted similar legislation.
[24] Brad Alexander "Good Money and Bad Money: Do Funding Sources Affect Electoral Outcomes?," *Political Research Quarterly,* Vol. 58, No. 2. (Jun., 2005), pp. 353-358, p. 356.

> campaign spending has an extremely small impact on election outcomes regardless of incumbency status… An extra $100,000 (in 1990 dollars) in campaign spending garners a candidate less than 0.33 percent of the vote. Controlling for candidate quality and district fixed effects reduces estimates of the value of challenger spending to only one tenth of the level typically obtained in previous cross-sectional studies. Despite relatively small standard errors on the estimates, I am unable to reject the null hypothesis that campaign spending has no effect on election outcomes. Second, while I find challenger spending to be marginally more productive than incumbent spending, the difference is greatly reduced compared to previous studies.[25]

In fact, Levitt goes on to endorse a "Floors without Ceilings" type of public financing that was endorsed 80 years ago by Overacker. His reasoning goes along the lines of since spending at the top has little impact on the election campaigns, by creating minimum funding the effects of money in campaigns would be lessened.[26]

Of course, one is left wondering, if money does not make a difference in election outcomes then why is there so much money spent on them? Levitt offers one possible explanation:

> Perception, however, is everything. The belief that money is the key to electoral success is almost as damaging as a scenario in which money really does matter. As long as conventional wisdom views money as critical, the patterns of behavior that have led to widespread criticism will remain.[27]

Indeed, there is a debate about whether campaign financing is a bribe or extortion—a *moral*/*normative* debate, rather than an analysis based in numbers. Do donors give to politicians to change or influence the votes of legislators, do donors give to support the

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[25] Steven D. Levitt "Using Repeat Challengers to Estimate the Effect of Campaign Spending on Election Outcomes in the U.S. House," *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 102, No. 4. (Aug., 1994), pp. 777-798, p. 780.
[26] Ibid. p. 794.
[27] Ibid. p. 796.

politician that they prefer, or do donors give because the politicians demand it? If the money does not make that much difference, then the politicians are not as vulnerable to the influence of corporate interests. In any case the effect is the same. If politicians need the money, then they change their votes to suit their donors. If the politicians don't need the money, but they are holding their votes ransom, then they still change their voting once the money is in their hands.

The reality is that our politicians have everything to gain from campaign finance strategies, no matter where the money comes from. The ultimate point is *normative*, rather than *economic*: the perception that the money is corrupt forces them to occasionally address public concerns. This they do with occasional campaign finance reform that does not, at the end of the day, get rid of corporate backing. Rather it allows the *economic realm* free access to humanity's scripts from the *normative realm*, for a perpetual redrafting of the differentiation between "corrupt" and "honest" politicians. By definition, however, corporate finance of elections will alter politicians' behaviors, no matter which side of the corrupt/honest script they lie on. We must understand, therefore, that the three realms have now achieved some kind of parity: the norms that defined the *political realm* in the early modern periods have come to be defined as much by the *economic realm*, and the *political realm* has taken on a dual face, thoroughly colored by economics.

What, then, remains of the value of three realms for analyzing decision-making and rationality of individuals making choices, political or otherwise?

Some Conclusions: The Three Realms and Rational Choice Theory

What I hope to have shown here is that the "game theory" of rational choice cannot be modeled as a closed system based on interests taken as a set of relatively consistent abstractions. To assume that, means ignoring that myths are at the core of any state's symbolic structure, and hence of the definitions of "interest" that are at play for the state or individuals in it.

The examples I have provided suggest that stories a people tell of their origin and needs are certainly as important as the stories they tell about their activities. These stories need not be factual, they must simply serve as narratives to impel and unify scripts that can be shared by individuals and groups. They can, in some cases, legitimize actions from the *political realm* by creating illusions of *norms*. Yet even Machiavelli already realized that, when a civilization's symbolic structure falls into decline, the state's political legitimacy itself must also fall into decline.[28] And when the stories that provide norms and guidelines for behaviors and expectations fail, "[t]he inevitable result is the phenomenon of 'being lost' in a world that has no more fixed points in the myth."[29]

In the modern world, the *normative realm* has lost some of its force in generating stories, because hegemonies have been called into question—the stories about rights and legitimacy fail. This has long been a rallying cry for the right. For instance, Michael Oakeshott, in his "Tower of Babel" essay, equates education, art, tradition, and habit with the development of morality, as institutions inculcating the narratives of acceptable

[28] Machiavelli, *Discourses,* p. 250.
[29] Vogelin, *Anamnesis,* p. 26.

rationalities. In "Rationalism in Politics," Oakeshott cries out that our "moral ideals are sediment; they have significance only so long as they are suspended in a religious or social tradition, so long as they belong to a religious or social life."[30] Rationalists decrying the downfall of the *normative realm* have constructed a new moral ideology that is based on "the reflective observance of moral rules" in order to fill the vacuum created in the *normative realm*. [31] As they see it, in effect, hyperrationality has removed from the *normative realm* the magic and the non-rational and as a result has left morality, as sediment, to fend for itself, which Oakeshott believes it cannot do. The *normative realm* has lost its validity because it "was derived from the experience of a world which no longer exists and which cannot be recaptured because it is in a strict sense invalidated by technological society."[32]

As I have traced it, the loss of power of the *normative realm* has transformed the *political realm*, as well. This, we see especially in the transformations of the electoral process, which is no longer driven by a sense of urgency and duty:

> U.S. elections now routinely draw only half of the electorate to the polls on election day. Perhaps even more startling, elections without the presidency at stake attract voters at a rate ranging from less than 40% when Congress is at the top of the ballot to under 20% for municipal or primary elections.[33]

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[30] Michael Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics and other Essays, p. 41.
[31] Ibid., p. 472.
[32] Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p. 58.
[33] David Niven, "The Limits of Mobilization: Turnout Evidence from State House Primaries," *Political Behavior*, Vol. 23, No. 4. (Dec., 2001), pp. 335-350, p. 335.

If we regress election years on voter turnout as a percentage of the eligible voting population since 1840, we get an adjusted R-squared of 0.675[34]—a simplistic model that suggests, some 67.5% of the decline of voter turnout is explained by a loss of narratives.

Other explanations have been offered for this particular decline in the *political realm*, reaching beyond the idea of compelling symbols and narratives in the *normative realm*. According to Dugan and Taggart, there are two schools of thought that explain the decline in voter turnout. The first explanation is that "the introduction of the secret ballot, state registration laws reduced the extent of fraudulent voting practices (graveyard and repeat voting) and increased the cost of voting for peripheral voters, thereby lowering recorded levels of turnout."[35] Additionally, giving women, who were not in the habit of voting, the right to vote (1920) at least temporarily lowered voting levels.[36] It is also plausible that extending the franchise to other groups in general has similarly contributed to the overall decline since such populations may have felt left out, not had a culture of voting, or merely just needed to warm up to the prospect of it. Such incidents include the extension to non-whites, especially newly freed slaves in 1870, the residents of the District of Columbia in 1961, poor and non-whites again in 1964, and in 1971, 18 to 20-year-olds. "In contrast, the second approach contends institutional reform reflects a broader political environment responsible for shaping qualities of the electoral system in a variety of profound and permanent ways, including aggregate levels of turnout. The

[34] I merely looked at the election turnouts since 1840 and regressed the data.
[35] William E. Dugan and William A. Taggart, "The Changing Shape of the American Political Universe Revisited," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 57, No. 2. (May, 1995), pp. 469-482, p. 469.
[36] Philip E. Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," *The Human Meaning of Social Change*, ed. A Campbell and P. Converse (New York: Sage), 1972.

causal factor is not legal reform but the party system functioning as an instrument of social organization and representation."[37]

As I have suggested, the rise of capitalism can also contribute to the marginalization of the electorate. Motives from the *economic realm* may either modify or supplant those in the *normative realm*, introducing different rationalities for choice (political or otherwise). To be sure, narratives from the *normative realm* are often more easily passed down from generation to generation because they *are* narratives, stories that can transcend the life of an individual operator. In contrast, stories from the *economic realm* exist so long as they are profitable (that is, conform to experience), while *normative realm* motives can exist as narrative rationalities, even if they are completely harmful or contrary to experience—non-rational or irrational. Thus, as vulnerable as the *normative realm* is to rational scrutiny, the *economic realm* is doubly so because of its ties to the rationality of experience. An actor can keep to the narrative of an irrational norm if for no other reason than he or she probably embraced the norm for non-rational causes to begin with. On the other hand, if an *economic realm* activity proves itself unprofitable and hence non-rational, it can likely be ended immediately with little sentimental attachment—its narrative will be less compelling.

In other words, the narratives in these realms will not carry with them the same force of persuasion. A populace that acts and creates meaning out of *economic realm* rationalities is likely not going to be able to maintain its symbol systems for long. On the

[37] Ibid.

other hand, the *normative realm* operators will be able to sustain their system so long as they can pass on their culture of narrative rationalities—the two realms enact rationalities in different time scales:

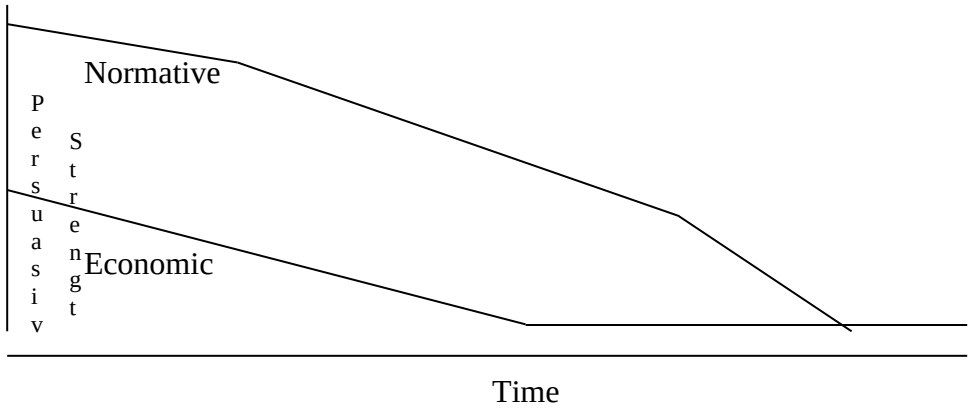

Figure 7: Longevity of and Persuasive Value of Economic and Normative Symbols

Effectively, the *economic realm* has for it a built-in bottom limit—that of survival. On the other hand, norms can completely cease to drive behavior.

A last consequence presents itself: the *economic realm* is the least social of realms, because it is driven by narratives whose logic can lay outside the realm of social consensus. As the *realm* responsible for the basic necessities of life, the *economic realm* is itself ultimately private, even if done with others. Indeed, the Greek division between the public and private spheres puts the *political realm* into the public and the *economic realm* into the private sphere, with the *normative realm* straddling the two. This distinction has come down to us in many variants, with the private sphere eventually coming to be gendered female, and thereby marked as somehow less able to generate

norms because it is more concerned with survival. Women were relegated to the role of cleaning, shopping, mending, and cooking; men instead took up the role of builders, politicians, warriors, carpenters, and those sorts of occupations that created works that lasted over time. Marx's idea of alienation of labor from the products of its work only exacerbates this split; advertising in capitalism is aimed at reifying a least common denominator of the now gendered images in them. Yet Aristotle has the last word here: "[u]tility is an impermanent thing: it changes according to circumstances. So, with the disappearance of the ground for friendship, the friendship also breaks up, because that was what kept it alive."[38] If our only connection to the world and each other is through utility, we reify one another and try to make use of one another as we would make use of a tool. In contrast to the rationality of the economic sphere, then, reason in the narratives of the *political* or the *normative realms* reify rationalities that serve the community.

And here we return to where this project began: with "rational choice theory." The critique of such theories now has a straightforward form: they have embraced rationalities of instrumentality and superimposed the *economic realm's* behavioral paradigm onto the *political realm*. What I have been tracing, however, is the necessity to look at the basic scenarios of rational choice theory and realize that individual rationality must be seen as embedded in realms of narrative that overwrite individual scripts with *other* rationalities.

Survival is the primary goal of the *economic realm*, but that is easily achieved in 1st world states. The *normative realm* has been eroded in the twentieth century, because

[38] Aristotle, *Ethics*, p. 262.

laws are no longer described the way Locke described them[39]: we are willing today to both invent and scrutinize laws:

> Good reasons must be given for prevailing practices as they must for potential improvements or reforms. They must be shown to be well-fitted to the ends in view. The very object of Enlightenment rationalism, the point of the ideal of individual detachment in liberal thought, was to assure that customs and usages [sic] were not simply taken for granted, but were constantly reassessed against criteria of inherent purpose.[40]

Modernity screams for us to have purposeful behavior (instrumentality). It tells us that non-rational behavior, non-instrumental behavior, or behavior that cannot be justified through reason is behavior that should be improved upon or discarded and replaced.

These are the fundamental assumptions of rational choice theorists that all behavior is rational or serve some utility (it must be instrumental). Yet as our initial case studies suggests, that version of the narratives in the *normative realm* can shift. The irony is Feyerabend's charge that rationality "is now destroying non-Western cultures."[41] What we find, however, is that rationalities destroy laws and traditional narratives, even as they introduce alternate narratives that instantiate new rationalities to guide individual and group choice.

When the *normative realm* ossifies, the *political realm* and the *economic realm* have the possibility of introducing new rationalities to motivate behaviors. In the case of Venice, economics came to redefine the *political realm* and in modern campaign

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[39] Patrick Coby, "The Law of Nature in Locke's Second Treatise: Is Locke a Hobbesian?," p. 4.
[40] Charles W. Anderson, "Pragmatism & Liberalism, Rationalism & Irrationalism: A Response to Richard Rorty," *Polity*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Spring, 1991), pp. 357-371, p. 368.
[41] Feyerabend, p. 102.

financing, economics created a new set of norms against which political actors are measured (according to their possible corruption).

In conclusion to this discussion, I will again address a contemporary situation of political action that exemplifies how considering choice not as a static, instrumental rationality, but as a shifting play of the power in the three realms to generate new and competing rationalities that require choice to be redefined, is the more dynamic terms embraced here.

CONCLUSIONS:

Understanding the *Occupy* Movement

If the example with which I introduced the problem of rational choice theory was a case in which political action was guided by anything but instrumental rationality, I close with an example of economic/market rationality—an example from the *economic realm* that has colonized the *political realm* in new ways.

In establishing the three realms model, I referred to different formulations of the economic human. In contemporary political action, the capitalist *homo faber* has emerged as a critical figure: the person who creates a product through destroying "natural" resources. Capitalist rationality rests on a specific kind of truth: to create lumber a forest must be destroyed. To rue the destruction of the forest would make the capitalist hesitate, and hesitation equals the loss of profit. In the last decades, however, that logic has come under investigation, with an emphasis on capitalism as a group motivation. In a real sense, we now realize that capitalism is akin to Hobbes' *State of Warre:*

> Force, and Fraud, are in warre the two Cardinall vertues. Justice, and Injustice are none of the Faculties neither of the Body, nor Mind. If they were, they might be in a man that were alone in the world, as well as his Senses, and Passions. They are Qualities, that relate to men in Society, not in Solitude. It is consequent also to the same condition, that there be no Propriety, no Dominion, no Mine and Thine

> distinct; but onely that to be every mans, that he can get; and for so long, as he can keep it.[1]

In the most extreme reading, capitalism becomes equated not only with the destruction of natural resources, but also with fraud and the corruption of value. Hobbes, however, points out an additional feature: capitalism operates in terms of social virtue in the public sphere—it creates its own set of norms that can become reified, just as religion had done a millennium ago. He finishes the quote by pointing out that, in effect, capitalism does not reward according to a public sphere virtue, but according to what *gets defined* as private sphere concerns. The capitalist desires, whether by market forces or the "use of Violence [e.g. the US wars against Iraq], to make themselves Masters of other men, persons, wives, children, and cattell,"[2]

The norms of what hard-working people "deserve" (in a prescription clearly alluding to the values of neo-liberalism) have in the last years come under scrutiny, because neither traditional economic-realm narratives nor normative-realm ones adequately describe what is at stake in this kind of political action or choice. Control of the *economic realm* has been ceded to capital interest, much as it was in Machiavelli's Venice, but with a much more conscious attempt to colonize the *normative* and *political realms*. To many, it may seem that we are in a condition more akin to that of Hobbes' State of Warre, where people have no sovereign to keep them safe. A condition where every moment is one of peril, should you be a member of the working class that is.

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[1] Hobbes, p. 90.
[2] Ibid, p. 88.

The case study that I look at now is a movement that acknowledges that peril, that comes from the sense that the political and *normative realms* have been completely colonized by the *economic realm*, rather than simply being modified by it. The Occupy Movement was arguably the longest and largest US act of "political" activism in the United States since the Civil Rights Movement, and it is characterized by what seems to be affective responses to an extreme situation of capital concentration rather than to any extensive rationality. Occupy made demands for student debt relief, for the overturn of Citizens' United (a Supreme Court that arguably opened the door for the complete colonization of the *political realm* by big capital), and for stronger banking regulations (so that consumer protections would not be further eroded).[3] Yet the activist face of this movement did transcend affect and protest and made a concrete difference. Activists, for instance, helped homeowners battle unfair foreclosures across the country.[4] For instance, with the help of Occupy, 78-year-old civil rights activist Helen Bailey was allowed to stay in her home indefinitely after facing foreclosure.[5] There was also a more small-scale communitarian impulse within Occupy, a desire for less alienating and more human-focused forms of social organization. This was very evident in the affective behavior of the leadership in Occupy Austin (which I observed personally) and in the way they managed the organization.[6]

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[3] See http://occupiedmedia.us

[4] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/09/occupy-wall-street-foreclosures_n_1412771.html

[5] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/07/helen-bailey-foreclosure_n_1260078.html

[6] I was the person who organized and invited the speakers for the teach ins for Occupy Austin. I believe that there was one professor who came, who was not part of our group. I brought in professors from UT Austin, St. Edwards, ACC, and the University of Houston. We numbered about a dozen and did about two dozen speaking events. I personally gave five. I have included the url for one such event as an example

Whether in Austin or in Zucotti Park, both impulses—the activism and the communitarian impulse—seem evident on the pages of The Occupy Wall Street Journal.[7] But perhaps the most important characteristic of the Occupy movement is that it happened under conditions of "governmentality" against the backdrop of a neoliberal system. At this point, an analysis from the point of view of the three realms begins to show how the movement was actually the emergence of considerably more nuanced rationalities behind choice.

The rationalities at play at the start of the Occupy Movement ranged broadly across the *economic realm*. As Wendy Brown has pointed out, "neoliberalism is not just a series of economic policies; it is not only about facilitating free trade, maximizing corporate profits, and challenging welfarism."[8] Rather "neoliberal rationality, while foregrounding the market, is not only or even primarily focused on the economy; it involves *extending and disseminating market values to all institutions and social actions*, even as the market itself remains a distinctive player."[9] I want to argue here that Occupy was a protest against this pervasive market rationality *as it aimed at colonizing and*

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PW_hhYZxBZU. My role was to invite speakers and then coordinate with the Education Magnet, the person democratically elected to serve in that capacity by Occupy Austin. This was sometimes a messy process. On occasion Bob Buzzanco (UH) was double booked and on another occasion Harry Clever (UT Austin) was stood up. It is unclear what sort of an impact the teach-ins had, but it did provide for some measure of critique of market rationality, neo-liberalism, and the role of the government. For me it provided a window into how Occupy operated. It was an extremely democratic process. It intentionally avoided created leadership positions and prohibited people from speaking for more than five minutes. To conduct teach-ins we had to get Occupy to break that rule, which it allowed, so long as we did the teach-ins on the periphery of the City Hall. One of our explicit goals was to get Occupy to more clearly spell out is political objectives. This is something that I believe we ultimately failed to achieve.

[7] See http://occupiedmedia.us

[8] Wendy Brown, "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy" in *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 39.

[9] Brown, "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy," 39-40.

destroying other forms of normative rationality. Occupy was a reaction against and rejection of neoliberal governmentality *as a norm-generating concept precluding all others*.

Such extreme cases of market rationality are what I earlier called the colonization of the lifeworlds by the economic world. This way of being in the world exceeds particular positions on particular issues because of how pervasive it became. Its colonization of the *political realm* undergirds important features of not only the Republican Reagan-Bush and especially the G.H.W. Bush years, but also the Democratic Clinton and Obama decades. It is a rationality that not only reflects the model of individuality and autonomous sense of the self championed by rational choice theory, but it also positions the individual in a context of "governmentality" based on the instrumental logic of capitalism. I remind you that as a mode of governance, governmentality has become extreme, encompassing but not limited to a single state-form that *produces* subjects, forms of citizenship and behavior defined almost entirely by that logic. The very term "governmentality" points to a fusion of the economic and political spheres in this content: it refers to a new organization of the social, through a government's cooptation of practices (mentalities, rationalities, and techniques) through which subjects are governed. It is the way governments try to *produce* the citizens best suited to fulfill those governments' policies, using its own tools (laws, policies, funding decisions).[10]

[10] For more on governmentality see Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," *trans. Rosi Braidotti and revised by Colin Gordon, in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds), The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 87–104.*

Governmentality is not a new theory or paradigm in the study of the state, social institutions and their relationship with the citizenry. Governmentality, like Orientalism,[11] is that paradigm-shifting lens through which things can be gazed at, as they seem to appear on the ground. This new lens, I believe, wishes to interrogate the very different rationalities that colonize our presuppositions about the gaze, about the *normative realm*: how is it possible to utter true statements about persons and their behavior? How are "truths" put into practice and by whom, through which conflicts, alliances, blackmails, forms of violence, seductions and subordinations, and as alternative to what other "truths?" Governmentality is the *institutional* side of what I have been presenting as a question of how choices are structured for voting publics, allowing those publics to *transform* the reality created by the governmental side by reinventing, contesting, and operationalizing new rationalities, thus altering behaviors inherent in governments' colonization of the realms of public norms, politics, and economic rationalities by re-scripting behaviors.[12] In short: Occupy tried to upend the strategies by which our neoliberal reality gets constructed by working within the three realms together to transform consciousness of choice, not just to protest the ground of governmentality constructed by neoliberalism since the late twentieth century.

The Occupy movement was born into an ailing *political realm.* As Brown has also shown, neoliberalism resulted in a "powerful erosion of liberal democratic institutions and practices in places like the United States"—what she calls a "neglected dimension"

[11] For more on Orientalism see Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Pantheon, 1978).
[12] (Rose, 1999: 20).

of neoliberal rationality.[13] This *political realm* and its democratic ideals of liberty, equality, self-determination and justice for all are "submitted to an economic rationality where not only is the human exhaustively configured as *homo economicu*s but all dimensions of human life are cast in terms of market rationality." In this way of being, "every action and policy" has come to be submitted to considerations of profitability, where "all human and institutional action" is produced in the hopes that it manifests as "rational entrepreneurial action conducted according to a calculus of utility, benefit, or satisfaction against the microeconomic grid of scarcity, supply and demand and moral value-neutrality."[14]

What is important for our purposes in Brown's analysis of neoliberalism is that neoliberalism becomes a constructivist project which perpetuates itself forward by rewarding those who live by its code. This market rationality Brown speaks of is not an ontological givenness of all domains of society. Since there is nothing natural about market rationality, Neoliberalism sees itself charged with the task of developing, disseminating and institutionalizing this way of being in the world.[15] Part of this development, dissemination and institutionalization is rewarding folks who feel at home in the neoliberal system, and doing so by naturalizing scripts for norms and political action that favor the hegemony of the market inherent in the *economic realm*. The market colonizes the *political realm* by insisting on concepts like rational choice to analyze how individuals behave, which, in turn, create norms and scripts for behavior that consistently

[13] Brown, "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy," 38.
[14] Brown, "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy," 40.
[15] Brown, "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy," 40-41.

foster choices that encourage individuals to engage in political action that actively undercuts their best interests of being-in-the-world—to take on untenable debt, to maximize profit, to allow the destruction of national natural patrimony like national parks in the name of jobs that are defined by the corporations and which do not sustain communities over the long run (e.g. pipeline construction, which concentrates jobs in a region for a few years, then falls back to a small number of local maintenance workers at considerably lower wage).

From this perspective, perhaps the most important effect of market rationality is how it erodes democratic ideals and the moral call which strives to restore it in the public sphere. The pervasiveness of neoliberal rationality, the sense of moral autonomy which is measured by the capacity of each political actor for "self-care" (in opposition to caring for the community's needs or a communitarian understanding of the self), the drive to service one's own ambitions, and provide for one's own needs, this push to make every individual fully responsible for her- or himself, stunts ethical action and by extension political action taken to restore ethical modes of operation to the state and its institutions—it stunts the evolution of new norms for action in the *normative realm* to meet new community, individual needs, and various forms of sustainability. If the only rational action is self-serving and driven by a calculus of profitability, then anything else would be considered a mismanaged life—and a violation of "good government" as reified in an all-encompassing *political realm*.

Consider the early days of Occupy. The opening salvo was a declaration of war by the bottom 99% (or so organizers hoped) against the ruling 1 %. The 99% attacked the

top 1 percent's golden calf—wealth distribution. Yet it is hard to imagine a more powerful victory for the plutocracy than the *Citizen's United v FEC* (2010) ruling. That corporation-sponsored ruling targeted campaign finance—a euphemism for legal regulated bribery—and deregulated it. After the *Citizen's United* ruling, it became permissible for the wealthy to legally purchase members of Congress without any real restrictions—for the powerful in the *economic realm* to completely colonize the *political realm*, without meaningful opposition. This gap between the rich and poor political actors was made even wider after the economic crash of 2007-2008 and signs of what seemed like an impending doom for the 99% were everywhere to be seen. The "new norms" of capitalism were discussed by Occupy leaders as *damaging* the interests of the 99%: mortgages that improve housing but which cannot be paid, corporate profits that purportedly trickle down into the economy but actually only accrue to stockholders, and tax breaks that will "return" funds "seized" by the government (at the rate of a few hundred dollars to ordinary working families and billions for corporations).

It is significant that this revolt against such an absolute collapse of the three realms was not modeled from within Western capitalism. The impetus for Occupy had been decades in the making, but the inspiration finally came from the Arab Spring and the Fall of Mubarak in Egypt and all its non-Arab outgrowths, such as the Indignado Movement (May 15, 2011) in Spain.[16]

[16] For more on the Indignado movement see: Marcos Ancelovici, Pascale Dufour and Héloïse Nez, *Street Politics in the Age of Austerity: From the Indignados to Occupy*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016).

The lesson learned from Egypt's attempts to rescript its *political realm* was that a new narrative might emerge if a group grabs a single location and then occupies it. On September 17, 2011, after two months of planning, protestors began a permanent occupation of an area of Manhattan near the Wall Street financial center. The occupation of Tahrir Square, the brief Wisconsin capital occupation, and the Spanish Indignato (Indignant) occupations collectively taught the protesters one thing about the political sphere: it is public and can function the same way advertising does. Once you are in the streets and occupy a specific strategic location, it is critical that your movement maintain a permanent and fearless presence. If you go home for the evening, the result will be that security forces can themselves go to the location and occupy it, preventing the protestors from returning by removing the *publicness* from their potential in the *political realm*. That is, the community aspect of the event would get disrupted which, in turn, would hinder the evolution of "shared new narratives" about the norms and values appropriated for a capitalist state and about who should count as political actors. What is important for this study is that these "shared new narratives" needed a consideration of the other two realms in relation to the *economic realm* but in ways not completely colonized by it.

The path for US citizens to discover these truths was not straightforward, Although, the Madison, Wisconsin capitol occupation in February 2011 was somewhat inspirational as one of the first conscious Occupy events, its real role was to indicate what not to do in later attempts to build narratives. First, the protestors got nervous. They chose to occupy the capitol building, as the Egyptians had done in Tahrir, but when the state indicated that it would not allow for a permanent occupation, organizers feared

retaliation. In effect, they were not ready to go all the way, but their symbolic action had connoted more: capturing the symbol and location of the government. Their choice of action was not adequate to the symbolisms they were evoking. In contrast, those occupying Tahrir Square captured the cultural and transportation center of Cairo as well as the symbolic center for Egypt's previous two revolutions (1919 and 1952). The people in Wisconsin had pulled off something grand, but then proved that they did not have the stomach to maintain the fight. They had not yet understood what their claim to new choices implied for the *political realm*.

The second mistake that the Wisconsin occupiers learned was that their occupation very quickly became associated with one of the two political parties—the Democratic Party. As such the movement seemed to be configuring itself as anything but an alternative, because the occupation seemed to be taking place within inherited norms defining appropriate political action. This meant that the leadership began to worry more about their own political careers and their own personal safety, above and beyond the movement itself; they reconstituted themselves as political actors in terms of a political domain that served corporations better than citizens. As the 2016 elections showed in another way, the Democratic Party is not exactly a revolutionary party, it is in fact a status quo party, albeit one that espouses some liberal norms for human rights so that capitalism has a few brakes on it.

Wisconsin's Democratic Party, however, suddenly found itself as a member of the regime influencing a potential revolution. Although such elements within a local Democratic Party may wish to reform parts of the US economy, at the end of the day,

those elements remained part of the regime (part of a party establishment answering to the entire national party establishment, not only its local constituents), and thus they have a vested interest in making sure that the regime remains intact, as the institution in the *political realm* that sponsored their identities. In other words, such a national party, by definition, does not see itself charged with the task of exiting market rationality, but rather with making life more livable within its confines.

A movement affiliated with the Democratic Party was not capable (without other encouragement) of making the kind of radical shift in affiliations that redefined the role of the soccer hooligans I began this project with. The Wisconsin demonstrators made the mistake of aligning themselves with members of the very government they were protesting against, instead of embracing a radically different narrative of identity. The Democratic Party talked the Wisconsin protestors into seeking recall elections on Republican politicians in office rather than pursuing their movement. In all likelihood, it was this redirection/misdirection by the Democratic party establishment that defeated the Wisconsin movement, leaving the narratives essentially intact that should have redefined political action, norms against which action was to be evaluated, and the rationalities of the *economic realm* in the twenty-first century.

But this was by no means the last act in the Occupy Movement; the US equivalent of the soccer hooligans and their radical questioning of available public narratives was yet to come. The Occupy Movement in the US spread to many major and even minor municipalities, once it learned not to associate itself with the Democratic Party. In fact, subsequent protestors actively talked about the Democratic Party with disdain and

resisted the party's desire to co-opt it. Yet ultimately, even the more effective events in the Occupy Movement more or less failed. Occupy's goal was, of course, to create a sustainable movement, and hence a new vision of the choices that need to be made in *political realm* and its relation to economics and to "American values," but this did not happen.

The specific history of the Austin, Texas, Occupy Movement events is indicative for understanding the dynamics here. During the teach-ins in Austin, there was talk of a new constitutional convention, how to create new regulations for corporations, or perhaps getting rid of corporations altogether. University faculty from several Austin-area institutions began to conduct Teach Ins, attempted at making the movement more coherent and at consolidating narratives which would redefine individuals' choices of political action. Occupy Austin held around two dozen teach-ins in October and November of 2011. Part of their message was clear: the one thing most of the teach-ins had in common was a direct assault against market rationality and neoliberal ways of being in the world as unsustainable models for human activity, on both moral and ecological grounds.

It did not help that the most important media event of the national Occupy Movement had its symbolic or iconic power destroyed. After just fifty-nine days, on November 15, 2011, in New York City, police using riot gear and tear gas removed the protestors from Occupy Wall Street (OWS) and their Hooverville tent city from Zucotti Park, effectively ending the occupation which was so symbolically critical to the larger evolution of the movement. There was an attempt on December 31st to retake the park.

However, police using riot gear and pepper spray cleared the park again. On March 17, 2012, protestors again attempted to retake the park. Again, the police responded with violence, and apparently, the violence was the worst the OWS had ever seen.[17]

One May 1, 2012 a mass demonstration took place in NYC, and then again on September 17, 2012 protestors attempted to retake Zucotti Park. Again, police responded with violence. While the movement managed to fight for 367 days, the last 308 were only sporadic. The movement failed partially because, although it was against corporate greed, corporate corruption, and government complicity with that corruption, the general public could not be brought to support it—its narrative about the need for a new ethical norm for capitalism did not convince them. To be sure, the market crash and bank bailouts had given the public a whiff of the rotted core of the Capitalist system, but a public steeped in their rational entrepreneurial calculations, their market rationality, conducted according to a calculus of utility, benefit and odds of success, were at best having trouble connecting the dots because they could not step outside their neoliberal mindset, the very deeply entrenched place they found themselves occupying in the *economic realm*—a space that left little breathing room for the other realms. The public couldn't be brought to care for those hurt most by the crash because they were trained in market moral value-neutrality. Occupy was an effort to resist market rationality and overturn the *economic realm's* colonization of other life-worlds, and it was the general public's inability to step outside of this same market rationality that brought about its failure.

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[17] Ryan Devereaux, "Occupy Wall Street demonstrators march to protest against police violence," *The Guardian (London),* March 24, 2012, accessed April 7, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/25/occupy-wall-street-protest-police.

The absolute control of the narratives by the *economic realm* at the time can be fairly reliably confirmed by a parallel case. Contrast Occupy with the Tea Party Movement, which had been created to demonstrate against Obama raising taxes and thus to hold the current *economic realm* norms in place. During the campaign, it was revealed that his tax plan would have lowered taxes for everyone making $625,000 or less. In other words, the Obama tax plan would have given tax relief for the bottom 99%, and only raised them for less than 1% of the very wealthiest taxpayers.[18] Nonetheless, the normative, neoliberal, self-interested discourse against taxes still shaped people's outrage against Obama raising taxes. Raising taxes for those most imbued in market rationality was enough to blindside the Tea Partiers to the fact that the majority were getting a tax break. Punishing the 1% was equivalent to questioning the American way of life—and of course it was. The outrage was so great that it led to a movement even though Obama was *cutting* taxes. Although they admittedly played a minor role in the 2016 election, the Tea Party was a force to contend with, at least up until 2014; it was and remains a major *narrative* force influencing (non-rational but rational) choices made by individual taxpayers who are actually voting against their own best interests and for those of the big capital that, in another narrative, exploits them.

The Tea Party Movements (TMP) thus had a message that fit in better with the prevailing market rationality the public is immersed in. The main objective of the TMP was to cut taxes, and it brought to the political discussion a well-formed symbolic

[18] See http://taxfoundation.org/blog/monday-map-percentage-taxpayers-agi-over-500000.

narrative based on an economic calculation that was not what it was presented as. This was to enable each individual to spend their money as they themselves saw fit instead of abandoning it to a corrupt government which would waste it. This narrative of how to best choose politically follows along closely with the rules of self-interested rationality inherent in capitalism's version of the *economic realm*, even though it flies in the face of how taxes actually work to consolidate money to provide services. If no one paid taxes to the government, there would be no revenue and the state would not have the ability to provide adequate services that benefit the many who could not provide services for themselves. But the narrative of norms underpinning a *normative realm* colonized by neoliberal economic rationality dictates that each person is fully responsible for themselves and should not need assistance—anything less, and they would be accused of mismanaging their lives.

Also, the question of control of public political space here arises—the question that was raised above in questioning the role of public image-making endeavors like advertising. Admittedly, the TPM has not received the sort of violence that Occupy endured, enabling it to consolidate its messages without seeming dangerous, but it is worth pointing out that the TPM has received much funding from the kind of rich donors which Occupy largely lacked, and that the major media focused in on the violence as much or more than on the potential new scripts that Occupy offered. Thus, there are also other causes for the failure of the Occupy Wall Street Movement. In the end, however, a better analysis of Occupy's failure comes from awareness of the role of narratives in the three realms. Simply summarized: while Occupy’s aim was to step outside of the market

paradigm, the TPM goal was to not only to stay within the neoliberal paradigm, but to perfect it. In the former, new narratives were needed, but there were no soccer hooligans to make the kind of visible public gesture that could have consolidated and distributed a new narrative through the media. The normative and *economic realms* remained impervious to the model of new political action.

But perhaps that may not be entirely true. Although Occupy seems to have fizzled out today, and the ultimate success of what began in Zuccotti Park may be up for debate. It's hard to deny that Occupy Wall Street brought attention to many issues that are now at the forefront of American politics. Income inequality, for example, has become a hot-button political issue, in part, thanks to exposure brought by Occupy. While the movement's seeming disintegration has been blamed on infighting and the lack of a clear set of demands, we cannot deny that the rhetoric of the "99 percent" was loudly reflected in Bernie Sanders' campaign. The Occupy Wall Street Movement found its voice in Bernie Sanders' social democratic platform and the TPM, while playing less of a role in 2016, found a champion in Donald Trump. Even though both movements appear to be on the decline, they have now become part of mainstream party politics. That is, it may be the case that the *economic realm* has lost some control over the *normative realm*. It is, in this light, no accident that Trump has received support from the TPM (his running mate Michael Pence was a direct beneficiary of the TPM when he was running for governor of Indiana), and Bernie Sanders was fully endorsed by the Occupy movement, while both of them ran atypical candidacies, when it comes to economic support from the powers that be. Trump took no money from the Republican National Committee until late in the race;

Sanders, while no stranger to corporate money, consolidated his support from small donors.

In effect, then, we may be looking at a profound shift in norms away from money *per se*: the Tea Party Movement successfully took over the Republican Party, despite the best efforts of establishment Republicans in 2014[19] and 2016. The Occupy Movement, or its ghost, came dangerously close to capturing the Democratic Party in the primaries, in the form of the Bernie Sanders campaign. However, it is difficult to imagine how either movement could truly win, when it has not found a way to consolidate rationalities of action in the *political realm*. Control of Congress is closely divided for the 115th congressional session, and as a result, the US will likely face more divided government and gridlock regardless of who actually became President.

The choices made by many voters in the 2016 election seem irrational to the mainstream, but that is because that mainstream, as charged by many, is still thinking within the largely *economic realm's* narratives: why would one vote for a candidate who promises to take away the benefits you yourself are using? The answer not heard by the neoliberal economic establishments of both parties lies in the persistence of scripts in the *normative realm*: "real America" is there defined as entrepreneurial, not requiring help from pooled public assets, and the dupes of politicians who treat the average flat-state, rural American as somehow requiring a nanny state. There is scarcely a counter-narrative in place in the normative sphere, because even calls like Bernie Sanders' for free public

[19] E.g.: http://www.cnn.com/2014/05/07/politics/gop-establishment-tea-party-fights-ahead/

education and universal health care are only partially heard because they do *not* factor in a narrative about economic interventions into the political sphere. Even the newest of narratives do *not* inform the average rural voter, for example, that his or her state quite likely gets more money back in taxes from the federal government than they pay in; at the same time, the average urban voter pays in more than they receive, but many do not understand the economic traps creating the urban poor or the moral imperative of choice calculated not around individual prosperity, but around the need for a prosperous shared environment of well-managed resources rather than "warre" (war and economic competition).

Some Final Considerations

With this, I reach the end of this experiment in how alternate philosophical texts might inform our models for politics, especially by overcoming the limitations of rational choice decision-making. What philosophy since 1945 offers is a panoply of models for alternate rationalities that may well better explain what Rational Choice Theory has declared irrational or non-rational. There remains much work to be done in incorporating not only the persistence of narrative as political force, as I have done here, but also the dynamics of forces like infrastructure (Foucault's work) or identity politics (Lacan's and Kristeva's) or globalization (Harvey's work that shows the limits of thinking within the nation-state) or center-periphery encounters or counter-publics.

What I hope to have shown, first of all, is that static choice networks, no matter how often refined, will never be able to model the dynamisms inherent in the public

spaces I identify here and map (partially) in the three-realm model. I began this project with the goal of explaining why nonpolitical actors (as those with little or no-self-interest in particular political issues) nevertheless undertake political action. I want to summarize here my result: that if we use the device of the three realms of action and its rationalities, we can conclude that it is in fact active ***meaning generation*** in the Normative Realm that moves political actors.

Normative rationality has not been treated like market rationality, as a source of self-interest that can in fact motivate political action. Yet new normative rationalities did indeed drive both sets of actors that I discuss—Ultras and the Occupy folk—out of their inaction—in one case, because of the relative failure of market economy in Egypt, and in another, because the economic realm had so successfully colonized the normative realm that their separation had become impossible. From the perspective pursued here, it is thus no accident that RCT has assumed the parallelism between Economics and Political Science in the modern era: they both fail to exhaust motivations for political action in our era. Yet one hopes that the general public experiencing the Occupy Movement saw the limits to modern capitalism, as is suggested by the widespread approval of social democracy and Bernie Sanders amongst Millennials and the Z generation. Perhaps, this may be an indication that the economic realm's dominance over the normative and political realms has loosened somewhat—or at least it suggests that these realms need to be considered in a more dynamic relationship to each other.

Publicly, however, we have not reached these conclusions: the Occupy Movement failed to counter the generalizing effects of the Tea Party Movement, which managed to

hold the current capitalist *economic realm* norms in place. Their narrative demanding outrage against any tax raises whatsoever suppressed the reality that Obama's tax plan would have lowered taxes for everyone making $625,000 or less. In other words, the Obama tax plan would have given tax relief for the bottom 99%, and only raised taxes for less than 1% of the very wealthiest taxpayers.[20] But TPM members still see no value in any taxes: punishing the 1% was, in their belief system, equivalent to questioning the American way of life (an attack on the *normative realm* heavily aligned with an economic realm defined by laissez faire ideology).

The US had not yet reached the utter disenchantment of Egypt, where Medan Tahrir successfully moved enough of the Egyptian population to topple Hosni Mubarak, and so the Occupy movement fizzled out: its seems that Egypt is populated with many fewer believers in market rationality (à la Wendy Brown) than the US population is. The democracy of the Occupy organization never found an equivalency in a new picture of American "democracy" and individual responsibility that included structural economic biases rather than individual failure to thrive. In Egypt, failures of neoliberal economics were evident, and so did not need to be challenged.

Yet I hope in this dissertation to not only have provided a model for understanding such situations better than we have to date as scholars and researchers. I hope also to have constructed a model that can contribute in a small way to political action itself. In effect, by seeing that the three realms can be freed from each other, we

[20] See http://taxfoundation.org/blog/monday-map-percentage-taxpayers-agi-over-500000.

may also discover opportunities for them to compete with one another—we may see the importance of new narratives from three realms in motivating individuals and group political action.

This is not to completely dispense with older models for political action: even Adam Smith could not have foreseen was the power of the economic realm, or its ability to colonize both norms and inherited norms for political action. Or perhaps he thought more of individuals' abilities to resist the suasions of campaign financing, propaganda, and bribery, and their institutionalized corollaries in education and acceptable public speech and acts. Yet it is critical to pursue, both in research and teaching, the fact that, today, the least compelling of all rationality—that of market rationality—has replaced the potentially deeper rationalities of the Political and Normative Realms.

Said more simply: instead of letting the mind and the heart rule, we have in effect surrendered ourselves to the stomach. In the case of the US, middle class was, in 2011, simply too steeped in market rationality to overcome it and join the Occupy Movement in sufficient enough numbers to make it sustainable. However, in Egypt the weakness of market rationality allowed the Arab Spring to enjoy more widespread support—for a time, at least. The challenge, then, that still remains for scholars of political action is to nuance our own analytic models, especially by somehow uncoupling the economic realm from its domination of our models, or at least by countering its power by looking for motivations in the other realms that can and do influence voters to become political actors (as in the 2016 presidential election).

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