POLITICAL EVOLUTION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND AUTONOMY: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF AN "AXIAL" MOMENT

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ABSTRACT

Recent scholarship in neo-evolutionary sociology has rejected stage-models in favor of multilinear theories that shift the study of sociocultural change away from teleological arguments toward those that emphasize selection pressures and macrodynamics. The paper below adopts a neo-evolutionary frame to revisit one of the most epochal moments in human sociocultural evolution, the urban revolution (about 5,000 years ago in Mesopotamia, China, Egypt, and perhaps the Indus Valley) and the rise of the first political units. Shifting the analysis from conventional perspectives, this paper asks the question why the polity was the first autonomous institution besides kinship and what consequences did this have on the trajectory of the human societies, and more generally, human sociocultural evolution. By doing so, a slightly different historiography is presented in which institutional autonomy corresponds not with stages,

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but rather an historical "phasing" that emphasizes the role that institutional entrepreneurs have played in driving institutional evolution via structural opportunities and historical contingencies.

INTRODUCTION

Recent trends in neo-evolutionary sociology have rejected stage-models in favor of multilinear theories that shift the study of sociocultural change away from teleological arguments in favor of selection pressures and macrodynamics (Abrutyn & Lawrence, 2010; Chase-Dunn & Hall, 1997; Sanderson, 1994; Sanderson, 2007; Turner, 2010a; Turner & Maryanski, 2009). This shift can be seen in the hybrid tradition that blends "historical" institutionalism (e.g., Malinowski, 1922; Radcliffe-Brown, 1965) with "evolutionary" institutionalism (Abrutyn, 2013; Abrutyn & Turner, 2011; Turner, 2003), where scholarship has moved away from functionalism to emphasize the types of historical forces conditioning qualitative macroinstitutional changes (Abrutyn, forthcoming; Nolan & Lenski, 2009) and the way these changes feedback on other institutional domains (Turner, 2003). For scholars in this tradition, institutions, or perhaps more aptly institutional domains, are conceptualized similarly to Weber's (1968) *macro social orders*, Spencer's (1897) *institutions*, Parsons' (1951) *subsystems*, or Luhmann's (1982) *function systems* – that is, *macro structural and cultural spheres of social action, exchange, and communication constituted by individual and corporate actors (as well as conglomerations of actors commonly called fields or niches), who are distributed within divisions of labor, and whose actions, goals, and decisions are facilitated and constrained by their position and the structural and cultural systems of integration, legitimation, and regulation.* Some consensus exists around the most basic and ubiquitous institutional domains: kinship, polity, religion, economy, law, and perhaps education (Turner, 2003).[1]

In a sense, institutional domains are reservoirs of structural and cultural solutions, while actors, resources, and rules reflect previous adaptive efforts as well as current ones. Eschewing functionalist needs as explanatory tools, evolutionary institutionalists have begun conceptualizing institutional change in terms of exigencies, selection pressures, and entrepreneurship (Abrutyn, forthcoming; Abrutyn & Lawrence, 2010; Chase-Dunn & Hall, 1997; Sanderson, 1999; Turner & Maryanski, 2008; Wilson, 2002). That is, sociocultural evolution is a process by which macrolevel forces put pressure

on groups, with the resultant solutions being etched into the structure and/or culture of institutional domains (Nolan & Lenski, 2009; Runciman, 2009; Turner, 2003; Turner & Maryanski, 2009), which eventually feed back as second-order selection pressures (Turner, 2010a).

In addition to the introduction of selection pressures and contingency, work on institutional evolution has shifted away from classical, unidirectional (and seemingly teleological) processes like differentiation (for a review, see Sanderson, 2007) to emphasize retrogressive processes like dedifferentiation (Rueschemeyer, 1977), the multilinearity of changes wrought by institutional entrepreneurs and the unpredictable responses by elites and by various other strata (Colomy, 1998), the struggle entrepreneurs engage in for independence and the right to carve out autonomous cultural domains (Abrutyn, 2009), as well as the tenuous nature of their independence and, thereby, the autonomy of the domain (Abrutyn, 2013), and, finally, the cultural (Abrutyn & Turner, 2011) and emotional (Turner, 2010b) dimensions of institutions long ignored or vaguely conceptualized by functional institutionalists (e.g., Luhmann, 1982, pp. 138–165; Parsons & Smelser, 1956) as well as new institutionalists (Nee, 2005).

The shift from the mesolevel (fields or niches) back to the macrolevel of reality (institutional domains) and the push for the return to a historical sociology that includes *all* societies represents an important break with Bourdieu's field analysis (1992), which is overly reproductionist, ignores premodern societies and institutions, and opts for conceptual ambiguity (Abrutyn, 2013; Calhoun, 1993). This shift also moves away from recent iterations of field theories that have made tremendous advances (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012), but could be supplemented by a more clear macro-historical theory of institutional domains. Despite these theoretical advances, there have been fewer attempts to apply these processes and dynamics to actual institutional change.[2]

This paper looks to revisit one of the central moments in human history through the lens of this type of neo-evolutionary institutionalism: the initial evolution of political autonomy. Scholars across a diverse set of social sciences believe the so-called urban revolution (Adams, 1966; Yoffee, 2005) – 5,000 years ago in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and probably the Indus Valley, and about 2,000 years ago in Peru and Mesoamerica – was as "axial" a moment as any in human history (Eisenstadt, 1963; Johnson & Earle, 2000; Sanderson, 1999). Yet, modern sociologists rarely examine the disembedding of the political sphere from the kinship sphere, marking the first moment in human history that a distinct institutional sphere had acquired some degree of autonomy and, therefore, reconfigured physical,

temporal, social, and symbolic space in qualitatively meaningful ways (Abrutyn, 2013). More commonly, contemporary political sociology either focuses on the rise of the nation-state (Tilly, 1990), comparisons between different types of modern nations (Evans, 1995; Skocpol, 1977), or examines the urban revolution strictly through an economic lens (Frank & Gills, 1996; Sanderson, 1999), which takes away from the discrete logic of polity and *power* (Mann, 1986; Nolan & Lenski, 2009; Parsons, 1963).

Thus, the goals of this paper are as such: to delineate the central dimensions of polity through the lens of autonomy; to treat political entrepreneurs as historical forces of change and architects of institutional evolution from the *inside-out* (Abrutyn, 2009; Colomy, 1998; Eisenstadt, 1964); to ask and answer the questions: "why was the polity the first institutional to evolve autonomously in human history?" such that a slightly different historiography that considers the "historical phasing" of institutional autonomy is introduced into the sociological discourse; and why was the polity's evolution an "axial" moment.[3] Ultimately, the analysis looks to make explicit the process by which the earliest polities become increasingly autonomous, while shedding light on the types of forces facilitating and constraining contemporary political, and instiutional, evolution. Though we will draw from myriad scholars interested in the rise of the first states, the discussion will hone in on the general process of political autonomy and the subsequent consequences this process had for human societies. Our first task is to assess whether polities were indeed the first autonomous domains.

INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Was the polity the first autonomous institution? Perhaps there is no better illustration of the distinction between *differentiation* on the one hand and *autonomy* on the other than the evolution of polity. For instance, religious differentiation – for example, shamans – likely preceded or co-evolved with political differentiation – for example, chiefs (Radin, 1937 [1957]; Turner, 2003). In addition, archaeological evidence suggests that temple-centric economies predate palace-economies (Lipinski, 1979; Liverani, 2006). But, autonomous institutional space is different from differentiated roles or organizational units (Abrutyn, 2009). For one thing, it is questionable how much differentiated religious organizations, like these temples, penetrated the lives of villagers whose existence remained primarily oriented toward

and organized by kinship (Abrutyn, forthcoming; Liverani, 2006; Stark, 2007). Moreover, as temple personnel's duties and responsibilities expanded, and their desire for more penetration grew (as it brought more human and material resources to realize their goals), "priests" became increasingly burdened by *political activities* like keeping track of grain rations, engineering and coordinating irrigation and canals, and resolving disputes between nonkin. Differentiation, then, is more superficial in the sense that people and groups become identifiably different in their functions and goals, but autonomy implies a deeper cognitive-cultural distinction between the physical, temporal, social, and symbolic spaces of one sphere like polity and others like religion or kinship (Abrutyn, 2009); a distinction that reconfigures how humans orient themselves and understand the everyday reality with which they must contend.

Thus, as religious actors exert more effort in penetrating the realities of non-religious actors, exigencies or problems universally associated with polity, governance, and *power* become equally, or in most cases more, salient than those typically related to religion, the supernatural, and *sacredness/piety*. Polity become the first autonomous institutional domain because of the ubiquitous problems that occur whenever population growth drives heterogeneity and, concomitantly, resource scarcity: collective binding decisions must be made; production and distribution must be controlled and coordinated; conflicts in which traditional kinship remedies are inefficacious must be resolved; and, *power* and the legitimate use of force or violence is struggled over, monopolized, and then requires legitimation. More concretely, polities emerge because of the pragmatic problems that inevitably arise when groups of disparate people or social units engage in recurrent social interaction (Abrutyn & Lawrence, 2010) such as (1) managing economic resources – for example, centralizing storage to protect against drought (Johnson & Earle, 2000), (2) coordinating labor to intensify production and support larger populations (Lipinski, 1979) and to build public works and monuments (Postage, 2003), (3) coordinating and maintaining the (often inequitable) distribution of resources among social units (Lenski, 1966), and (4) defending the group from external threats (Carencro, 1970). These roles are characteristic of polities, as we find somewhat undifferentiated functions in chiefdoms (Earle, 1991). But, autonomous polities differ from chiefdoms because the former are *autonomous* structural and cultural spheres of action, exchange, and communication in which behavior, attitudes, value-orientations, norms, goals, strategies, narratives, and the like all become mediated by discrete symbolic generalized media (i.e., *power* versus *love/loyalty*) that *thematize* and drench the physical,

temporal, social, and symbolic reality of one domain vis-à-vis all others (Abrutyn & Turner, 2011; also, Luhmann, 2012).

Institutions, however, do not just become autonomous. Rather, autonomy is a continuum predicated on the level of success entrepreneurs have in (1) identifying real or perceived problems and finding short- or long-term solutions (Eisenstadt, 1964); (2) articulating a resonant frame of (a) what types of problems exist, (b) why extant solutions are not working and/or are immoral/unjust, and (c) why their solutions are superior (Colomy, 1998); (3) leveraging their innovations and solutions for greater shares of human and material resources and, ultimately, some degree of indispensability via power-sharing agreements with elites and power-dependency with other strata (Abrutyn, 2009); and (4) using their mobility to carve out discrete physical, temporal, social, and symbolic space for the realization and expansion of entrepreneurial interests and goals, as well as further innovating to resolve new problems, expand their influence, and deepen their position in society (Abrutyn, 2012, 2013).

One of the reasons religious domains did not become autonomous before political counterparts rests on the differences in entrepreneurship: the latter pursued monopolies over physical force, which could coerce autonomy, whereas the former initially pursued intellectual or cognitive activities like writing and astrology, which were important activities to be sure, but "affordable" only by political entrepreneurs (Oppenheim, 1975). Religious entrepreneurs would eventually need to "find a marketable function other than simply selling their knowledge" (1986:178), because their skills were "so complex and cumbersome" the cost could "only be borne by ... ruling groups" and, hence, religious entrepreneurs in these early years were "far from establishing an independent cultural ... base [and] simply continued to *serve the ruling group*" (Machinist, 1986, p. 202). Essentially, then, their monopolies were kept secret and remained obscure to the masses (Stark, 2007), while political entrepreneurs actively sought to inculcate political roles for the masses and penetrate their daily lives (Scott, 1998). Indeed, it was through political entrepreneurship that the realities of entire villages (and the trajectory of human history) were reshaped and not initially through religion. Essentially, by way of military conscription and warfare, the erection of defensive measures, redistribution of resources during public rituals, creation of public law and agents to enforce it, corveé labor and tribute, and the construction of monuments and public works on scales previously unimaginable, political entrepreneurs penetrated the realities of urban dwellers and villagers in radically new ways (Adams, 1966; Carneiro, 1970; Yoffee, 2005).

The Rise of the First States

Polities do five things (Abrutyn & Lawrence, 2010): (1) defend against real or perceived external threats (Carneiro, 1970), (2) create and maintain internal order (Yoffee, 2005), (3) sustain and protect privileged interests (Fried, 1967), (4) manage and transform economic production/distribution (Evans, 1995), and (5) provide various services to the population (Service, 1975). Polities do other things, but these five "functions" appear ubiquitous to all polities (Earle, 1991; Johnson & Earle, 2000), although (a) the degree to which these functions are monopolized by political entrepreneurs, (b) entrepreneurs' efficacy at each function, and (c) the centrality of each function in respect to entrepreneurial projects varies case-by-case and, in part, is shaped by the particular polity's level of autonomy. For 95–99% of all human societies that have existed, these functions were deeply embedded in kinship in that the logic of politics remained inextricably linked to the logic of kinship (Turner & Maryanski, 2009). Protoentrepreneurship occurs with the appearance of "big men" and chiefs – or, the first differentiated political actors who, through the invention of redistributive exchange systems, were able to change the structure and culture of society. There is much to learn from their emergence, as evidence suggests humans resisted subordination for a long period of human evolution, suggesting pressures for political differentiation must have been great enough for people to accept the costs (Boehm, 1999). Not surprisingly, the types of pressures Johnson and Earle (2000) identify as generating protoentrepreneurship – managing risk and capital (including human); "foreign" trade; central storage of resources; and mobilizing human resources for protection, fighting, and raiding in times of threat – are very similar to those that would create conditions ripe for true political entrepreneurship (Eisenstadt, 1963, 1964). That is, these conditions produced opportunities for pursuing and obtaining monopolies over the legitimate use of violence – *the key criteria distinguishing political entrepreneurs from other types of entrepreneurs and social units.*[4]

Three key forces appear central to political entrepreneurs securing this monopoly: (1) continuous, intense *warfare* (Spencer, 1897), (2) *geographic circumscription* (Carneiro, 1970), and (3) the presence and growth in magnitude of one or more *exigencies* – for example, population pressure, resource scarcity, rapid heterogeneity, internal instability, and so forth – sufficient enough to exacerbate conflict, become locked in a feedback loop due to circumscription, and surpass thresholds in which qualitatively new structural and cultural solutions are required to resolve the problems lest

the society collapse or be conquered from without (Abrutyn & Lawrence, 2010). As groups grow bigger and get locked into feedback cycles in which solutions to existing problems eventually create new problems or exacerbate older ones, they become increasingly susceptible to shocks like natural disasters or threats from hostile neighbors; this vulnerability creates emergent opportunities to centralize and consolidate power through strong decision-making, raise a loyal army, and create a patronage system that ties landed elites to the rapidly expanding urban center (Flannery, 1972). Meanwhile, political entrepreneurs use administrative, economic, and ideological sources of power to link the peripheral villages and peoples to the center and make the polity something real for village life (Liverani, 2006). When certain thresholds were reached in the population-circumscription-resource scarcity feedback, all that was necessary was a trigger event to make entrepreneurship a viable endeavor and, in reality, a necessary one if the settlement was to survive.[5] In essence, it is this process that produces the first political collectives committed to political activities like war and defense, long distance trade, administration of territories, and conflict resolution.

Political entrepreneurship and political autonomy require the reconstruction of the social world, often through a mix of coercive force, incentives, and ideological chicanery. The institutional project of political autonomy, then, is tenuous and unstable because political entrepreneurs must hide many of their motives and intentions from other strata by elevating the interests of the collective more than nominally. It is through the creation of a generalized system of exchange that political entrepreneurs can integrate a greater proportion of the population into the autonomous political sphere (Lawler, 2006), facilitate and constrain political action, exchanges, and communication via generalized symbolic media (*power*) (Abrutyn, 2013; Luhmann, 1976, 1982; Parsons, 1963), and make political goals and decisions collectively binding (Eisenstadt, 1963). And though political entrepreneurship has significant costs for many strata, it was *evolutionarily advantageous* to human societies to have political entrepreneurs struggle and gain independence (Flannery, 1972). Though one may feel free to pass normative judgment on this, the objective position is as such: If societies were to grow larger, become more culturally complex, and continue to evolve to the point that we are at now, political entrepreneurs and their success in creating autonomous polities was a necessary condition. Thus, it is undeniable that polities were the first non-kinship domain to attain moderate to high levels of autonomy; the question, then, is what is political autonomy and what does it mean to human societies?

Political Autonomy

In one sense, the process of political autonomy is about centralizing the five political functions listed above in a physical, temporal, social, and symbolic sphere. However, autonomy is more than just centralizing functions, as it also means entrepreneurs monopolizing force and consolidating issues and problems related to the production, distribution, and use of generalized symbolic political media: *power*. As autonomy increases, polities grow to be the central locus for collective binding decision-making, resolving supra-kin conflicts, protecting the interests of some strata over others, and interacting with other societies. Political entrepreneurs must not only consolidate and centralize power to the best of their ability, but they must also *generalize power*, as a symbolic resource, such that it transcends situations while shaping specific actions, exchanges, and communication. It is through the generalized symbolic medium of *power* that political entrepreneurs build discrete physical, temporal, and social political space in which political actions, exchanges, and communications are *predominantly* organized by and around *power* (Abrutyn & Turner, 2011; Luhmann, 1982, 2012; Parsons, 1963; Parsons & Smelser, 1956). Political goals, for instance, differentiate from other types of goals because of their relationship to *power*, "political criteria and by considerations of political exigency," while the decision makers and wielders of *power* grow "independent of other groups" (Eisenstadt, 1963, p. 19) Through the control over *power* as a symbolic medium, political entrepreneurs reconstitute the reality of a significant proportion of the population by creating a specialized language and culture that impose new collective meanings with new vocabularies of motives, ideological lenses through which action and attitudes are filtered, value-orientations and norms, in addition to structural changes such as new organizational units with specialized functions (e.g., tax collection), new mechanisms of integration (e.g., domination based on relative access to *power*), and a set of resources that reconfigure exchange relations (e.g., *power* as expressed through *franchised authority* given and withdrawn by political expediency and criteria). For our purposes, autonomous polities are defined as *the institutional domain that is the central locus of actors, resources, and rules organized by and around the production, distribution, and use of* power *through which certain actions, exchanges, and communications become distinctly political in objective and subjective reality.*

If political entrepreneurship is about monopolizing *power*, and autonomous polities become the central locus of its production and distribution, then political autonomy must evolve in the face of pressures related

to *power*. On the one hand, political entrepreneurs, as they struggle to secure monopolies over *power*, create second-order problems that can only be resolved through greater political autonomy. In particular, three interrelated second-order problems undergird political entrepreneurship: (1) to achieve political goals, whether collective-oriented or self-interested, political entrepreneurs strive to employ power to *coordinate* and *regulate* other strata, which creates (2) a need for *legitimation* of power-relations and a relatively common meaning structure that makes sense of these new relations, while also demanding (3) new sociocultural and structural mechanisms of political *integration*. Any one of the three puts pressure on the other two, as *regulation*, *legitimation*, and *integration* can only be achieved through the reconstitution of a heterogeneous society via an autonomous political sphere. On the other hand, entrepreneurs strive for independence as they recognize their own interests and see institution-building as a means to securing, maintaining, and expanding these interests as well as new ones that arise organically. That is, entrepreneurs deal in *power*, which often becomes an end in itself.

The consequence of these pressures and the growing ambitions of political entrepreneurs was the appearance of *institutional projects* (Colomy, 1998), or entrepreneurial efforts to resolve real or perceived crises that "crystallize broad symbolic orientations in new ways, articulate specific goals, and construct novel normative and organizational frameworks to pursue their institutional ends" (Colomy & Rhoades, 1994, p. 554). Reflecting the intersection of second-order pressures with ambition, projects are dualistic in goals, which explain their relatively high failure rate as well as the tendency for adjustments midproject to accommodate contradictory pressures (Colomy, 1998). Projects tend to tenuously balance a collective-orientation with the self-interested goals of entrepreneurs as political innovations are centered around integrating disparate social groups, providing a common meaning structure that facilitates exchanges between nonkin actors, and coordinating action to create public good, while also hiearchicalizing relations, centralizing/consolidating the flow of resources toward the center, legitimating authority and power, and unevenly distributing resources across strata. The more successful a project(s) is/are, the more entrepreneurs become the architects of institutional autonomy, the "switchmen" of history, capable of qualitative, meaningful change through the reconfiguration of physical, temporal, social, and symbolic space in qualitatively meaningful ways for a significant proportion of the population. In short, success is measured by creating distinct physical and cognitive spheres of political action, exchange, and communication that reduce the salience of

second-order problems and allow political entrepreneurs to survive, expand their influence, and reproduce their cultural elements.

Ultimately, political autonomy is a struggle; it is tenuous and it is not always willfully accepted or necessarily beneficial to all citizens. That being said, political evolution is not an inevitable "unfolding" process, but rather the result of Lamarckian-like evolution, or what has come to be called *Spencerian* selection after Herbert Spencer's evolutionism (Turner & Maryanski, 2008). Spencerian selection pressures emerge where there are no existing structural or cultural mechanisms to handle exogenous or endogenous exigencies, causing entrepreneurs to "develop new sociocultural formations" – e.g., institutional domains and their internal mechanisms of integration, legitimation, and regulation – as a response to "the absence of adaptive structures" (Turner, 2010a, 2010b, p. 24).[6] Thus, in these earliest societies, the differentiation of polity and political function from kinship and kinship organization produced new problems related to regulation, integration, and legitimation – or problems based on *power* and its production and distribution (Eisenstadt, Abitol, & Chazan, 1987; Lenski, 1966; Mann, 1986). As political entrepreneurs pursued distinctly political activities, they engendered resistance, contention, and competition from their kinship counterparts (Yoffee, 2005). Furthermore, the unintentional consequence of political actors drawing lines between themselves and other actors is that kinship actors, who had hitherto taken for granted their existence because there was nothing else, become aware of their own boundaries, goals, and interests. The salience of nonpolitical corporate identities is compounded by the danger the earliest political entrepreneurs faced in delegitimizing kinship authority: They needed local kinship authority to both support the state and maintain order at the local level, as the apparatuses of domination had not been perfected (Yoffee, 2000). This precarious situation had to be balanced with political entrepreneur's need for resources to be "freed" from ascriptive circuits, the ability to create public law, and the elevation of regional/city deities over local religions (Eisenstadt, 1963, 1964).

Out of this stream of pressures came some amazing innovations. For instance, Sargon the Great (*c.* 2334–2279 BCE) – the first known conqueror in history – was faced with integrating the northern Semitic Mesopotamians and the southern Sumerian ones (who were culturally, politically, and economically more developed) into a larger polity, legitimating his claims to *power*, and regulating, at the very least, local governors (van de Mieroop, 2004). One of his earliest political projects involved the erection of a new capital (Akkad) that demonstrated his "god-like" power of building cities

where they had never stood such that the old traditional orientation to local cities was broken and the flow of resources rerouted (Liverani, 1993). His innovations were also intended to pull his support actors out of their ascriptive anchorages, isolating them and compeling loyalty to him and not their territorial associations. Later, his grandson Naram-Sin would be faced with even greater second-order problems rooted in the expansion of Akkad to the point that extant transportation/communication technology became inefficacious. Pragmatically, he did things like standardize weights and measures, while ideologically he declared himself a god (van de Mieroop, 2004).

The more successful the efforts to carve out autonomous political domains, the more entrepreneurs' ambitions grow. Eventually they differentiate internal specialized organizational units charged with handling various political problems. Internal differentiation is both a means to better efficiency and a plan to increase entrepreneurial power by penetrating the lives of greater numbers of people (Lenski, 1966; Mann, 1986; Rueschemeyer, 1977). The consequence of this strategy also amplifies second-order pressures as political entrepreneurs are not only dealing with kinship actors, but now must legitimate their authority, regulate the activities of politically differentiated specialists, and integrate these disparate political support actors. Hence, second-order problems are produced by the fact that specialized corporate units sometimes pursue contradictory goals, struggle for their independence, or, sometimes, make political entrepreneurs highly dependent upon their services in ways that alter the power equation (Michels, 1911 [1962]). Indeed, one of Sargon's principal problems evolved from his decision to not replace local governors with loyal Akkadians (van de Mieroop, 2004); as is true in politics today, local leaders are often more concerned with local problems, as well as their own survival, even if this conflicts with the desires and goals of their superiors.

Partial Polities

Considering the fact that political autonomy is a process beset by struggles and conflict, two important qualifications must be made. First, autonomy, especially in the earliest stirrings of political entrepreneurship, is never full – that is, polities had become disembedded to a high degree relative to all previous societies, but they remained entwined with kinship. Second, autonomy, then and now, waxes and wanes over time as entrepreneurial innovations fail, new unanticipated exigencies challenge previous