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Understanding Nationalism

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EMPLOTTING THE NATION

The Narrative Structures of Patriotism

IT HAS BEEN A COMMONPLACE since at least Homi Bhabha's famous collection that nation and narration are intertwined. Nationhood, everyone now seems to agree, is inseparable from storytelling. One problem with this claim is that it is often obscure. To take a prominent instance, it is not easy to say just how Bhabha himself conceives of the relation. For example, it is not clear how one might interpret such claims as, "Nations, like narratives . . . only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye" (1). On the other hand, when writers do make clear what they have in mind, the result is often banal. Indeed, in these analyses, "narrative" often seems to encompass virtually every coherent causal sequence with human agents. Is it consequential that we do not have a sense of nationalism without a sense of causality and human action? A claim is consequential only if there is some competing theory that is contradicted by the claim. As far as I am aware there has never been a theory of nationalism that does not already acknowledge the importance of causal sequence and human action.

It does, of course, happen that writers on nation and narration consider stories in a narrower sense. But the

implications of these studies are also unclear. For example, Monroe, Hankin, and van Vechten ask how Serbian identity came to displace all other possibilities and lead to murder in Yugoslavia. They go on to specify their quandary in narrative terms, asking, "What stories were in most frequent public circulation, and how might these have precipitated violence?" (439). It is undoubtedly true that our behavior is influenced by stories. But it is influenced by many things—including images, slogans, formal political arguments, ordinary conversations, scientific reports. The important theoretical issue is whether there is some nationalist function that is specific to narrative. Looking in another direction, Simon During sees narratives as producing models for behavior (144). This, too, is reasonable. But it involves no clear theoretical implications regarding narrative *per se*. Similar problems arise in studies treating narrative and other political topics. For example, the essays in Dennis Mumby's collection *Narrative and Social Control* help to explain such topics as the operation of conformity in the workplace and the social communication of racist belief. But they do not appear to have significant theoretical consequences for the relation between narrative as such (its particular forms, structural principles, etc.) and politics or social relations.

The problem I am pointing to has not gone unremarked. For instance, John Breuilly has outlined some main tendencies in narrative accounts of nationalism. He concludes his discussion by stating that "narrative must be theorized in order to provide an intelligible account of what is happening, in order for the reader to see why nationalism and nation-state formation (but not necessarily every nationalism and every conceivable nation-state formation) are such pervasive features of modernity" ("Approaches to Nationalism" 158).

And yet, there is, I believe, something extremely important in the narrative analysis of political issues. In other words, narrative is not only a matter of personal enjoyment and interest. It is deeply consequential for our social and political lives. In particular, nationalism is crucially linked with storytelling in a nontrivial sense. The development, organization, and specification of nationalist thought and action are bound up with narrative structure, both in its general or schematic form and in its most prototypical specifications. Moreover, in each case, the emplotment of nationalism is inseparable from our emotional response, thus our motivations for action. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that nationalism cannot be understood in separation from narrative, which itself cannot be understood in separation from our emotion systems.

In the following pages, I will overview the broad connections between narrative and nationalism in four sections. The first and longest section

treats general narrative structure. In this section, I argue that human emotion systems generate distinctive features of narrative organization—narrative beginnings and endings, certain sorts of agent-oriented causal attribution, some broad patterns in the attentional selection and trajectory of emplotted events, and so forth. These features are not merely manifest in literature. The resulting narrative structure helps to guide the ways that we think about and respond to national identity. Since I cannot discuss all relevant aspects of nationalism, I will focus on one, arguably the most consequential of all nationalist actions and events—war. The second section briefly considers one component of narrative processing that bears importantly on nationalism—"development principles," the techniques that allow us to make general narrative structures into particular stories. Specifically, in this section, I consider two development principles that operate as techniques of nationalization, inhibiting subnationalism, fostering affectivity, and enhancing the sense of national durability. The third section outlines the three universal narrative prototypes, the standard narratives that are intermediate between general narrative structure and particular stories. The remaining chapters take up these prototypes, arguing that they serve to organize nationalist thought, feeling, and action in highly consequential ways. The final section of this chapter considers the theoretical issue of just how narrative prototypes operate to guide our emplotment of nationalism, which is to say, our narrative understanding of the nation and of our relation to it.

STORIES AND WARS

To explore the general features of emplotment and national conflict, it is useful to begin with a specific question about a specific case. For example, what gave rise to the recent war on terrorism? If you ask most Americans, I imagine you will be told "the terrorist attacks on September 11." What gave rise to the war in Afghanistan? Perhaps you will be told the same thing, or perhaps that the Taliban supported al Qaeda, the group responsible for September 11. What gave rise to the war in Iraq? Again, September 11 is a likely response, supplemented by Saddam Hussein's links with al Qaeda, and, of course, his weapons of mass destruction.

Beyond empirical issues of truth and falsity, several things are curious about the preceding questions and responses.[1] Perhaps most significantly,

1. Though curious, they are not at all unusual. Indeed, the same general features recur everywhere. See, for example, Angelova on Bulgarian, Serbian, and Romanian history textbooks (9).

they assume absolute and, in effect, singular origins for wars. This is curious, since it is not clear what this would mean in causal terms. Causal sequences do not begin from nothing. They are multiple and continuous. To say that the World Trade Center bombings gave rise to the recent wars is, implicitly, to suggest that these wars did not at all develop out of preceding U.S. policies. It also involves treating the bombings themselves as if they were uncaused. In fact, al Qaeda articulated several reasons for the bombings. Bin Laden argued that the United States has been responsible for numerous crimes against Muslims. These include the devastation of Iraq, the support of corrupt dictatorships in the Muslim world, and the underwriting of Israeli imperialism (see, for example, the interview by Hamid Mir). Consider Israel further. Supporters of bin Laden are likely to see Israeli imperialism as an absolute origin.[2] But Israeli policies derive from many sources, shaped by a continuous history. One element that went into the formation of Israel was, of course, the Holocaust. This too is not without a history, including the devastation of Germany during and after the First World War. In short, none of these cases really has a beginning. Any event results from the confluence of many earlier events. Nonetheless, we act as if there is an isolable point of origin.

I suspect that, as I was outlining these causal histories, some readers may have worried that I was justifying heinous acts. Indeed, opponents of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq faced this objection repeatedly. But, of course, to say that a violent act has an historical explanation is not to say that it is justified. Indeed, that is part of the point. The continuity and complexity of history justify violent acts only in rare cases, and then only partially.

This leads us to a second curious feature of the preceding questions and answers. The assumption of an absolute and singular origin is widely taken to imply a particular moral evaluation. Specifically, in the case of destructive events, the initiating action is commonly taken to define who is morally culpable *for all subsequent events*. Thus, it assumes a sort of absolute moral culpability. This idea is strange.

First, it presupposes that the situation prior to the initiating act was just or at least normal (i.e., a form of moral ordinariness undisturbed by large

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2. In "Road Map to Sustainable Ethnic Cleansing," Herman makes the same point about the Israeli side, explaining that, "since the occupation and ethnic cleansing are normalized and their results largely suppressed, and the violations of international law ignored, the propaganda system is able to make the causal force in the violence the suicide bombers, who seemingly came out of nowhere in an irrational assault on the peace loving Sharon and Israeli people."

injustices). We form our sense of moral normalcy in the same way that we form our sense of causal or any other sort of normalcy. Again, we form a prototype by weighted averaging over a set of instances. For example, we form our prototype for a bird by averaging over instances of birds. In the case of morality, we average different sets of perceived moral valence, forming prototypes of, roughly, "immoral behavior" (thus behavior that violates moral obligations) and "benevolent behavior" (thus behavior that exceeds moral obligations) for different contexts. We then judge negative or positive deviation from moral normalcy by reference to those prototypes. Following from this, a morally normal condition is simply a condition that does not trigger our prototypes for immorality.

More exactly, we do not evaluate most situations that we encounter because we see them as routine. As we will discuss more fully in the following section, we only ask why something is the case—thus raise the possibility of responding to and changing the situation—if it is in some way not routine. Put differently, judging a situation at all requires some sort of provocation. Once that provocation has occurred, we may engage in moral evaluation, particularly if the situation is aversive. To do this, we compare the causes of the situation to the relevant immorality prototypes.[3] If the causes fit an immorality prototype, that triggers our sense that changing the situation is morally obligatory. If they do not fit such a prototype, then no such obligation follows. Consider, for example, poverty. Our prototype for immorality regarding someone else's material well-being is probably something along the lines of robbery. Insofar as we isolate government or employer behavior as the cause of poverty, and insofar as this behavior appears similar to theft, we are likely to see it as immoral. Thus, we are likely to see actions to remedy poverty as morally obligatory. However, if we do not see such government or employer behavior as causing poverty or if we do not see that behavior as similar to theft, we will judge poverty to be morally normal. This is not to say that no moral issues arise in this context, for our benevolence prototypes enter at this point. Our prototype for benevolence regarding someone else's material well-being is probably something along the lines of giving money—in the case of strangers, donating to charity. In keeping with this, we are likely to see efforts to end poverty as benevolent (i.e., they will trigger prototypes for moral benevolence), though, again, not morally obligatory.[4]

3. I am leaving aside the issue of when and how we isolate causes. We will consider that in the next section.

4. As I have stressed, prototypes vary with context—our prototype for a dog in the context "Montana farm" is different from our prototype for a dog in the context "Manhattan

In the case of morality, prototype formation is almost certainly related to the triggering of emotion, as my reference to aversiveness suggests. As noted earlier, we have spontaneous empathic tendencies, derived in part from mirror systems in our brains. These tendencies help guide our moral judgments in the case of suffering (on empathy and the cognitive sources of moral development, see Blair and Prinz). For example, if we empathize with someone in poverty, we are much more likely to engage in moral evaluation of his or her condition initially. In addition, we may be more likely to assimilate the causes of that poverty to theft and more likely to see alleviation of poverty as morally obligatory. The emotions are, of course, crucial beyond their consequences for evaluation. Here as elsewhere, they provide the motivational force for action. We do not set out to maintain or change a situation based solely on abstract evaluation. We act only when we are moved to do so. We are moved specifically by emotion. As Zajonc explains, "cognitions of themselves are incapable of triggering an instrumental process, unless they first generate an emotion that mobilizes a motivational state capable of recruiting action" (47). Like other emotions, however, our empathic responses tend to decrease with habituation.[5]

Returning to the attribution of absolute moral culpability, we should note that this view has another peculiar feature. It presupposes that the (putatively) initiating act was a free and purely immoral choice, while the response was, in some sense, not free, but compelled by the initiating act.

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apartment" (see Kahneman and Miller 140). The same point holds for prototypes of morality. In the case of poverty, it is certainly possible to have prototypes other than those just mentioned. This is, in part, a contextual matter as well. If we speak of poverty in the context of money, then the preceding prototypes are very likely. If we speak of poverty in the context of food, however, our prototypes shift. We may then see unequal division of food as prototypically immoral. This is likely to have different consequences for our moral evaluation of government policies and employer practices.

5. The cognitive tendencies just discussed help to explain why it is very easy for a society to drift toward repeated military aggression or toward other morally objectionable practices of corruption and cruelty. For example, when a practice such as torture is rigorously outlawed, we are unlikely to consider it morally normal. Indeed, torture is likely to be part of our prototype for immoral treatment of prisoners. Moreover, in these circumstances, we are more likely to experience empathic pain at the thought of someone subjected to torture. However, once a society begins to practice torture, people begin to shift their sense of moral normalcy. The averaging of their experiences alters their moral prototypes and they become emotionally habituated to the thought of the pain suffered by victims of, say, electrical shocks or near drowning. (On torture in the U.S. war on terrorism, see Hajjar and citations.) This is one reason why it is crucial to stop such practices (not only torture, but military aggression, violation of the laws of war, and so forth) early on. They very quickly become normalized, which makes them far more difficult to dislodge. Moreover, they are likely to have consequences throughout the social system (e.g., the habituation to the suffering of torture victims is likely to facilitate a much broader acceptance of cruelty).

Thus, the apparent immorality of the response does not taint the group responding, but accrues to the immorality of the initiating act. Consider again the idea that the bombings of September 11 gave rise to the war in Afghanistan. Someone who accepts this view is likely to assume that the pre-September 11 condition of, say, Iraq and Palestine was just or at least morally normal. They are also likely to assume that the September 11 bombings were a purely free and evil act, thus unaffected by preceding conditions. However, since the bombings were not just or morally normal, they compelled a violent response from the United States. In consequence, any suffering produced by the invasion of Afghanistan is to be blamed on al Qaeda and their allies, not on the government actually dropping the bombs.

Of course, the positing of a singular origin for grand events, the organization of causality by reference to blame (or praise), the intertwining of explanation and emotional response—these are not simply curious features. They are narrative features. They suggest that, in treating war, we do not engage in strict causal analysis. Rather, we tell stories. Stories certainly incorporate causal relations. But they do so in particular, cognitively biased ways. In technical terms, stories select, segment, and structure causal sequences. One important result of this is that stories involve, as Aristotle put it, a beginning, a middle, and an end. Aristotle's point seems trivial. But the feeling of triviality fades as soon as one recognizes that causality in the real world does not involve such components at all.[6] Stories only have a beginning, a middle, and an end because, when we tell stories or think in terms of stories, our minds pluck out causal sequences from the complex of events (selection); bound those sequences (segmentation); and bring them into comprehensible relations with one another (structuration).

Emotional Physics: How We Understand Causes

To understand stories, then, we need to consider causality, not in itself (as we do in natural science), but as it is spontaneously construed by the human

6. The general point has been recognized by a number of earlier authors. For example, Bennington remarks on "the faith in origins and ends which narration perpetuates" (132). Similarly, Breuilly notes that "the narrative form, with its assumption of a beginning, middle and end, could actually become an important component of the national movement" ("Approaches to Nationalism" 157). However, such observations are rarely developed into explanatory accounts, or even given a detailed descriptive treatment that would lay the groundwork for an explanatory account.

mind. As writers such as Ed Tan have suggested, our response to stories is animated, first of all, by interest. Only some aspects of the world excite our interest and thus draw our attentional focus. How does this occur? We have a set of prototypes that guide our judgments of and expectations about what we experience in ordinary life. We understand and evaluate the world, first of all, in terms of the normalcy defined by these prototypes. Commonly, our attentional focus is drawn to properties of events or situations that violate these prototypes. As Kahneman and Miller point out, we ask "a why question" when "a particular event is surprising," when there is "a contrast between an observation and a more normal [i.e., prototypical] alternative" (148; see also Frijda 272–73, 318, and 386 on attention to novelty or difference from expectation). We do not pay much attention if Jones is wearing a wristwatch on his wrist. We are more likely to take note if he is wearing one on his ankle. On the other hand, our interest in difference alone may fade quickly. Interest is intensified and sustained by emotional arousal. If someone is wearing an unusual tee shirt, I am likely to notice. But, without further emotional involvement, I am unlikely to keep the tee shirt active in working memory or to keep recalling it much past the initial perception. I am more likely to sustain interest, if I find the shirt funny, angering, or embarrassing. This results from the close relation between emotion and attention circuits in the brain (see Adolphs and Damasio 32–33).[7]

Emotional arousal not only sustains interest in one's environment. It focuses that interest. Specifically, emotional arousal stimulates our concern to isolate its cause. For example, if I feel fear, I need to understand just what has triggered the fear so that I can run away from it. It may seem that we just know what has caused an emotion. But this is not true. We need to infer the causes of our own emotions, more or less in the same way some third person would have to infer them (see Nisbett and Ross 226–27). As Frijda puts it, "One knows, generally, that one has an emotion; one does not always know why, and what exactly makes one have it; and if one does know, it is a construction, a hypothesis, like those one makes about the emotions of someone else" (464). In keeping with this, we are often mistaken in our attributions.

7. This relation is actually more complex than one might initially imagine. While emotion generally directs our attention toward relevant aspects of the environment or our bodies, there are conditions in which it might direct our attention away from such aspects. Simpson et al. present evidence in support of a model wherein "a situation that is evaluated as mildly threatening triggers the direction of attentional resources away from the stimulus." However, this diversion of attention is limited. As "the evaluated threat value of the stimulus increases, attention is directed back toward the stimulus" (692). This difference in attentional focus is parallel to the difference between mood repair and mood-congruent processing (see note 8).

There are many empirical studies of this phenomenon. For example, research indicates that our general emotional state will vary with such things as day of the week. However, we are likely to attribute our feelings to more perceptually and mnemonically salient objects. As Clore and Ortony explain, "people tend to experience their affective feelings as reactions to whatever happens to be in focus at the time" (27). As Zajonc expresses the point, "If the person is unable to specify either the origin or the target of affect he or she is experiencing, then this affect can attach itself to anything that is present at the moment" (48). Damasio cites research regarding "stimulation in a region of the left frontal lobe known as the supplementary motor area." As Damasio explains, the researchers "noted that electrical stimulation at a number of closely located sites consistently and exclusively evoked laughter." What is crucial for our purposes is that "the cause of the laughter was attributed to whichever object the patient was concentrating on at the time of the stimulation" (*Looking* 75).

Of course, this is not to say that our attributions are purely random. If I am sad, I am unlikely to blame my desk or the fact that my nose itches. Such extreme misattributions are not impossible. But clearly they are the exception rather than the rule. Two factors contribute crucially to constraining our causal attributions. Neither is a matter of abstract, rational inference. Rather, both are bound up with the operation of our emotion systems.

The first factor is perceptual. We have innate perceptual sensitivities to particular features of our environment—certain sounds, spatial relations, types of motion (or motion in general, as opposed to immobility), and so forth. These innate sensitivities are most often, perhaps always, potential emotion triggers or components of such emotion triggers. As Damasio explains, "we are wired to respond with an emotion, in preorganized fashion, when certain features of stimuli in the world or in our bodies are perceived" (*Descartes' Error* 131). Even when such features are not the cause of a given emotion, our innate sensitivity to these features gives them prominence in causal attribution.

The second factor is a matter of memories, specifically emotion-congruent memories, both episodic and semantic. When we experience anxiety in a current situation, that activates episodic memories of anxiety in earlier situations. As Oatley explains, "There is now substantial empirical evidence to indicate that when happy, happy memories come to mind, and when sad, sad memories come to mind" (*Best* 201).[8] As Bower puts

8. On some of the complexities of this, see Forgas, "Affect and Information" and Eich and Macaulay. There are circumstances when we engage in "mood repair" rather than mood-

it, when one "emotion is aroused . . . activation will spread out along its connections, thus priming and bringing into readiness . . . associated ideas and memories" (389). Common properties of the current and former situations (e.g., the presence of the same person) become prominent, defining likely candidates for causal attribution. A current experience also activates prototypes of emotion causation from semantic memory. These guide our causal attributions as well.

A common example is attributing one's emotional excitation to a romantic partner when the arousal in fact results from more diffuse somatic and environmental factors. As Gilbert and Wilson point out, citing empirical research on the topic, people "may mistakenly believe that a person is attractive when, in fact, their pounding pulse is being caused by the swaying of a suspension bridge" (183). A romantic partner is a likely candidate for causal attribution, and misattribution, for perceptual reasons (most obviously, the presence of emotion-triggering secondary sexual characteristics), memory-based reasons (due to personal recollections of romantic feelings in the past), and semantic reasons (as a romantic partner is a prototypical cause of emotional arousal).

The operation of our emotion systems, including their operation in causal attribution, is bound up with their evolutionary history. In recent years, cognitivists have emphasized the adaptive function of emotion. For example, Panksepp states that "brain emotive systems were designed through evolutionary selection to respond in prepared ways to certain environmental events" (Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience* 123). A crucial adaptive function of emotion is that it usurps rational deliberation. For example, fear causes us to run rather than try to puzzle out our options, "lost in the byways of . . . calculation" (Damasio, *Descartes' Error* 172), as a predator approaches. In order for emotion to have this adaptive function, it has to simplify. One important aspect of emotional simplification is valencing. It is a commonplace of emotion research that ambivalent inputs tend to cycle through our emotion circuits, producing a valenced output. The inputs may be partially anger-producing and partially fear-producing, but the output is likely to be anger (with a confrontation response) or fear (with a flight response), not some combination of the two. As Ito and Cacioppo put it, "The affect system has evolved to produce bipolar endpoints because they provide both clear bivalent action tendencies and harmonious and stable subjective experiences" (69). One aspect of this simplification (not widely

congruent processing. These cases do not bear on our present concerns as mood repair tends to divert us from causal attribution—or it follows the same general principles of causal attribution, but with a different emotional valence.

discussed as such) occurs in causal attribution. Just as inputs may bear on different emotions, they may derive from different causes. Just as outputs tend to reduce ambivalence, they tend to limit causal attributions as well. Elizabeth Anscombe, Nico Frijda, and others have drawn a useful distinction between the cause of an emotion and the object of an emotion (see Anscombe 16 and Frijda 190). The cause is what gives rise to an emotion. The object is something toward which we direct the emotion. In these terms, the cause of an emotion may be diffuse and ambivalent. However, the object of an emotion is likely to be singular and valenced. The point is obviously inseparable from the indirect nature of causal attribution.

Consider a hypothetical example. John has a range of experiences that include enough frustration to cycle through to, roughly, anger. Many of these experiences are miniscule irritations (e.g., his shoe pinches). The most perceptually and mnemonically salient aspect of John's environment, and one of the most semantically prototypical sources of frustration, is his spouse, Jane. As a result, John blames Jane for his anger. (As Tolstoy wrote, "it is difficult for a man who is dissatisfied not to reproach someone else, and someone, too, who is closest to him, with whatever he happens to be dissatisfied" [489].) This is largely true even when John is self-consciously aware that Jane is not in fact responsible for his frustration. Higher cortical processes allow John to understand that Jane is not the relevant cause. However, the emotion systems are distinct from these higher cortical systems. The latter may exert inhibitory control over the former, but they are not always fully successful (on the inhibitory operation of the cortex with respect to the largely subcortical emotion systems, see LeDoux and Phelps, *Emotional* 165). This may be due in part to the fact that strong emotions tend to usurp attentional focus. Thus, they tend to usurp the very aspects of the (cortical) working memory system (see LeDoux and Phelps, *Emotional* 277) that would otherwise inhibit the emotion systems. Weakness of inhibition seems particularly likely when there is no strong emotional support for the inhibition, which is to say when there is no countervailing emotion currently triggered by the object (e.g., if John has no strong emotion directing his attention toward affectionate, rather than angry memories of his wife or sustaining his cortical recollection of her innocence). Thus, there is no emotional impetus to seek other explanations.[9] Finally, in the context of strong emotions, it is almost impos-

9. Neurobiologically, this may be understood in terms of conflict monitoring in a "two-part system" (Ito et al. 198). First, the anterior cingulate cortex "monitors competition between processes that conflict during task performance" (Carter et al. 748). Second, "cognitive control" may be implemented "to reduce discrepancies" (Ito et al. 198). This account suggests

sible to inhibit one attribution for an extended period without substituting an alternative. John is not terribly likely to successfully inhibit blaming Jane if he simply thinks "It's not Jane's fault." Indeed, this keeps his attentional focus on Jane in the context of an angry mood that activates his anger-relevant memories, biases his interpretation of current interactions, and so forth. He is much more likely to inhibit this attribution if he thinks, "It's my boss's fault."

While the point may apply to any emotion, the situation is particularly extreme in the case of anger, which is, again, a crucial emotion for the mobilization of nationalist action in war and related forms of confrontational or aggressive nationalism. Eisenberg points out that, "People induced to feel anger also are likely to attribute responsibility or blame to others . . . which could increase the probability of aggressive behavior" (683–84). Indeed, Berkowitz explains, "It is customary for psychologists to interpret aversively generated aggression as being directed toward the lessening or elimination of the source of the noxious stimulation." However, Berkowitz's research indicates "that the goal of this reaction is frequently the injury of the attacked target" ("Towards" 19). Crucially, this holds even when it is clear that the object of the aggression is not the cause of the anger, as in some remarkable research done by Berkowitz and his colleagues (see 19). Moreover, citing animal studies, Berkowitz points out that "pain evidently created an impulse to aggression spurring *work in the interest of obtaining a victim*" (34; emphasis added). Insofar as the studies apply to humans as well, they suggest that, once we feel angry, we are likely to look for a target for our angry aggression. This takes us beyond spontaneous misattribution to a sort of willful misattribution. In other words, in the case of anger, we are actually motivated *not* to inhibit attributions that we know are false. Instead, we are motivated to act on them. When socially coordinated, then, even private feelings of pain and frustration may contribute quite powerfully to war.

Consider, for example, Americans who blame Saddam Hussein for the September 11 bombings, with the practical consequences this has for

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that some sort of conflict must be present for the possibility of corrective processes to arise. Competing emotions with regard to a particular object would presumably produce such a conflict. The absence of such conflicting emotional inputs would, then, reduce the likelihood of corrective processes. Moreover, such processes are probably interrelated with attentional orientation and executive functions of working memory, perhaps via the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex. Kondo and colleagues have shown that "attention shifting for cognitive control" depends on the network linking the anterior cingulate cortex and the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex. Chein and Fiez cite research indicating that the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex "may contribute to domain-independent executive processes such as response inhibition and attentional selection."

supporting the invasion of Iraq. It is quite possible that many of them know that Hussein was not connected with the bombings. However, media coverage of governmental statements has repeatedly drawn their attentional focus to terrorist threats against the United States and toward Saddam Hussein. This has triggered anger (and fear) responses that are associated with Hussein and thus tend to usurp or limit attentional focus when Hussein is under consideration. Moreover, individual Americans' personal experiences of anger motivate them to seek a target for aggression. The motivation is not insignificant for, as Berkowitz points out, again citing animal research, "the inability to carry out the instigated aggression was physiologically harmful" ("Towards" 34). Finally, few Americans have any countervailing emotions that would draw attention to Hussein's innocence in these particular cases. As a result, inhibitory cognitive processes—processes that impede our emotional tendency to take Hussein as the object of anger—are unlikely to be triggered. Indeed, the victim-seeking that results from personal anger provides a motivation not to initiate or sustain such inhibitory processes.

In cases such as John and his spouse, as well as Saddam Hussein, misattribution is facilitated by another feature of our cognitive architecture. For a particular set of emotions, we tend to attribute causality to intentional agency. Speaking of cognition more generally, Boyer notes that, "It is part of our constant, everyday humdrum cognitive functioning that we interpret all sorts of cues in our environment, not just events but also the way things are, as the result of some agent's actions . . . our agency-detection systems are biased toward overdetection" (145). The point applies *a fortiori* to emotion. This sort of agency attribution is our default tendency for such emotions as anger, fear, gratitude, trust, and attachment. These emotions tend to orient our attention toward an agent, whom we are then inclined to blame or praise.

In keeping with this, as we discussed in chapter 2, a crucial aspect of both emotional response and causal attribution is our assumption that agents have a dispositional attitude toward us. For example, we fear certain animals and that fear is related to our view that they are disposed to eat us. Many emotional responses seem to rest in part on a preliminary, unselfconscious categorization of agents into benevolent and malevolent.[10] It is worth reviewing some aspects of such categorization in the present context. Again, we seem to have a bias toward categorization as malevolent, which may be overcome by familiarity.[11] The evolutionary advantage of

10. For further discussion, see my *The Mind and Its Stories,* 254–55.
11. As discussed earlier, the positive effect of mere familiarity is well attested in psycho-

this bias is obvious. There is a greater risk in underestimating threats than in underestimating opportunities for aid.

Evolutionary developments lead not only to a bias toward a default categorization of individual agents as malevolent. They also lead to a default categorization of groups. Negatively, this occurs when we recognize that certain groups, such as lions and snakes, are more malevolent or dangerous than our default. Positively, this occurs when we recognize that certain groups, such as sheep, are less malevolent or dangerous. The former allows for increased caution in critical situations. The latter facilitates the pursuit of opportunities in circumstances where a default presumption might have been overly inhibitory.

While this tendency seems largely unexceptionable in the cases of predatory animals and herbivores, it becomes much more problematic when applied to other people, particularly out-groups. The function of such categorization is the same in the case of out-groups as it is in the case of lions. However, in the case of lions, as well as snakes and sheep, the division is, first of all, a matter of species. That is obviously not the case with humans. We do not categorize unfamiliar people as benevolent or as malevolent based on identifying their species as human. In the case of humans, then, a subspecies distinction operates to perform an initial sorting into *prima facie* trustworthy and untrustworthy agents, potential enemies and potential friends. This is, of course, the fundamental division between in-groups and out-groups.

As this indicates, identity categories may very strongly bias our moral/causal attributions. As Herzfeld puts it, "ethnic and national terms are moral terms in that they imply a qualitative differentiation between insiders and outsiders"; indeed, conversely, "all moral value terms are to some extent negotiable markers for the lines of social or cultural inclusion and exclusion" (43). In some cases, the bias may be so strong that it resists the familiarity effect. Oatley reports a disturbing experiment in which subjects were shown photographs of people from different races. Their emotional responses to the pictures were monitored using neuroimaging. Oatley summarizes the results, explaining that the familiarity effect operated for whites with respect to white faces and blacks with respect to black faces, but not across races. As Oatley explains, "whereas the faces of one's

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logical research (see, for example, Zajonc 35). This is most obviously explained by a categorization bias toward assumed malevolence (or, more generally, danger). If we see someone or something many times and he/she/it invariably proves innocuous, this tends to work against a malevolent or threatening categorization. If we assume an initial neutral categorization, the ameliorative effect of familiarity would be more difficult to explain.

own ethnic group become less threatening with repeated viewing, those of another group may remain threatening" (*Emotions* 73).

This suggests that the malevolence default operates at two levels—individual and collective. In the case of in-group members, only the individual default is in place. In other words, we distrust unfamiliar members of an in-group only as unfamiliar individuals. We do not distrust the group as a whole. Thus, our distrust of an unfamiliar in-group member is overcome by familiarity with him or her individually. However, in the case of out-group members, both defaults are in place. In other words, we distrust out-group members as unfamiliar individuals and as members of a malevolent group. Moreover, the group default appears to be more emotionally consequential at least in certain cases. As a result, overcoming the individual default through familiarity may not undermine our distrust of individual out-group members as long as our out-group categorization of those individuals remains strong.

In sum, our emotion systems tend to simplify causal attribution by reducing multiple causes to a single object, frequently a single agent. This tendency is particularly forceful in the case of anger, where our monitoring for causal misattribution may be more than usually ineffective. Our attributions are often guided by prior categorizations of agents as malevolent or benevolent. Those categorizations, in turn, frequently rely on highly robust, familiarity-resistant identity categories (along with associated prototypes—which, in this case, may be stereotypes).

Back to the Beginning

We can now give some explanatory account of story structure and our causally inadequate understanding of war. Our emotion systems lead us to think of causal sequences, not in terms of the complex, interacting systems of natural science, but in terms of stories. This is because our emotion systems create interest in and focus attention on nonordinary, perceptually and mnemonically salient objects that are prototypical for a particular emotion. We then tend to attribute causality to these salient objects. This simplifies causal attribution in precisely the way that natural science tries to avoid. (As Pascal Boyer explains, "scientific activity is quite 'unnatural' given our cognitive dispositions" [321].) The result of this is an inclination toward the projection of singular and absolute causal origins.

Simplification, in this case, is a form of selection. It combines with our tendency to segment and structure the causes of events in terms of

benevolent or, more commonly, malevolent intentions. One result is the common generation of initial complications—early events that necessitate the development of the story—by the malevolent actions of some antagonist. We find this to some degree in all three cross-cultural narrative prototypes—romantic, heroic, and sacrificial tragicomedy. For example, in the standard romantic plot, the lovers are separated by an interfering parent. For our present purposes, the most important of these three prototypes is the heroic, for our emplotment of the nation generally, and of wars particularly, is first of all an emplotment in terms of the heroic prototype. That prototype manifests the malevolent initiating moment most starkly. Moreover, it does so through group-based categorization. Specifically, it sets out a malevolent attack by an out-group—usually an invasion by a foreign power—as the absolute and singular origin of the narrative conflict.

Beyond these matters, which bear directly on narrative beginnings, our cognitive dispositions have other consequences for our understanding of and our action regarding war as well. One such consequence is that we tend to experience our own emotionally guided (malevolent) response to the "initiating event" as compelled by the event, thus not morally blameworthy. This is particularly true when we have no attentional focus on the harmful consequences of our acts (e.g., enemy casualties that would trigger empathy). In contrast, we tend to see the (malevolent) actions of the out-group as deriving, not from prior events, but from dispositional group properties. Thus, their actions are immoral in themselves, and symptomatic of an underlying immorality of character. (This is, in effect, a version of our general tendency to see ourselves as responding to circumstances, while we see others as acting according to fixed character traits; see Holland et al. 222–24.)

A further result is that arguments against absolute and singular origins for conflict strike us as similar to the arguments of out-groups. Specifically, we tend to understand such arguments as positing a different origin for conflict, rather than as disputing origins per se. Due to the cognitive and affective constraints on our spontaneous causal understandings, we readily assimilate such arguments to justifications for the out-group actions. Simplifying somewhat, we might say that our spontaneous causal attributions give us two obvious alternatives—our own version of causal attribution and a parallel version offered by the out-group, a version in which we are dispositionally malevolent and engage in aggression that constitutes the absolute and singular origin of the conflict. If these are the two options, then any argument that is not of the former sort would seem to be of the latter sort. Of course, in many cases, attacks on antiwar arguments

are duplicitous. Politicians know perfectly well that, for example, antiwar protestors are not supporters of Saddam Hussein. However, the point is that their objections to protestors can be broadly persuasive—despite their falsity and illogic—because of our cognitive propensities.

Finally, insofar as they involve strong emotions, our spontaneous attributions of causality may remain at least partially impervious to our knowledge about actual causal relations. In other words, our emotion systems may continue to spontaneously project a single, absolute, malevolent origin to conflict, even when higher cortical systems have inferred that this is not the case. I have suggested three possible reasons for this. (There are undoubtedly others as well.) First, our emotional responses may usurp working memory, thus the inferential processes that should inhibit our spontaneous causal attributions. Second, we often have no countervailing emotions that would turn us toward alternative analyses (e.g., we often have no positive feeling toward the individuals or groups we are blaming). This means that possible alternatives receive little attentional focus or elaboration even when they occur to us. Moreover, we do not have any particular motivation to seek such alternatives when they do not occur to us. The point holds most obviously in situations where we do not have to seek causes at all, as when the government tells us that the absolute and singular origin of a particular conflict was the unprovoked malevolent aggression of al Qaeda, the Taliban, and Saddam Hussein. Third, in the case of anger, our propensity toward victim-seeking actually motivates us to divert attention from anything that might qualify or defer our isolation of an object for that anger.

The Sense of an Ending

I have been speaking of beginnings. But similar points hold about endings as well. For example, as I write, I imagine that most Americans believe that the war in Afghanistan has ended. There was an evil regime allied with al Qaeda. We fought and defeated that regime. Now the country is free and peaceful. But, of course, that is not the actual situation. As Christian Parenti explains, "this country of 20–25 million inhabitants is an embryonic narco-mafia state, where politics rely on paramilitary networks engaged in everything from poppy farming, heroin processing and vote rigging to extortion and the commercial smuggling of commodities like electronics and auto parts. And while the Western pundit class applauds the recent Afghan elections, the people [in Afghanistan] suffer renewed exploitation

at the hands of America's local partners" ("Who"; see also "Postcard" on the "wave of fraud and technical errors" that led to widespread denunciation of the Afghan elections as "illegitimate"). Scheer discusses the commonplace view that the war in Afghanistan has had a happy democratic outcome. He goes on to point out that "the bulk of the country is still run, de facto, by competing warlords dependent on the opium trade, which now accounts for 60 percent of the Afghan economy" ("Cultivating").[12]

Again, multiple and complex causal sequences precede any supposedly initiating event. Nothing is a true beginning. By the same token, multiple and complex causal sequences follow any supposedly concluding event— as the case of Afghanistan illustrates. Nothing is a true conclusion. Stories have endings. Social life does not. Here too, however, our emotion systems foster this emplotment. To say that the war in Afghanistan has ended is to say that there is no longer anything there to pay attention to, anything to trigger our emotional arousal and thus draw attentional focus.

To some extent, our shift in attentional focus is simply a matter of chance. As I write, the news media have not continued to report on Afghanistan to the degree that they did previously. But this is not a complete explanation. Most people seem to feel that the situation in Afghanistan has been resolved.[13] The mere absence of reporting could give rise to a sense that we just do not know what is happening; it could foster a feeling of incompleteness, rather than resolution. But our sense of an ending is much the same as our sense of a beginning. As we have seen, if there is nothing that inspires our emotional response, thus draws attentional focus, then there is, from our point of view, no event that has begun. There is, in other words, no cause. This is just as true at "the conclusion" of a sequence of events as it is at "the start" of a sequence of events. As soon as there is no longer anything that inspires or sustains our emotional response, the story is over. There are no new causes, in our subjective sense of causality, thus there are no new effects. In other words, once again, our primary relation to

12. Needless to say, these statements do not represent the entirety of the situation in Afghanistan. My point is not that the standard view of Afghanistan leaves out some peripheral phenomena or that Parenti and Scheer say every possible true thing that can be said about Afghanistan. My point is simply that research undertaken by these writers indicates that an accurate account of broad trends and general conditions in Afghanistan stands rather in contradiction with the standard view.

13. I realize, of course, that the situation in Afghanistan is volatile, and the tendencies of the news media are changeable. In consequence, one or the other may have changed very much by the time this book is in print. Unfortunately, I cannot predict the future and devise an example that will work better in a year or two, when the book is published—or for years after that when the book is read. I therefore can only ask that readers take the example to refer to the time of writing, rather than the time of reading.

causal sequences is defined by our emotion systems. Those systems cluster our causal inferences into finite sequences based on interest and emotional effect. Emotional effect is contrasted with normalcy. Causal sequences arise out of normalcy due to emotional change. Causal sequences dissolve back into normalcy when the emotion dissipates.

But just how does this dissolution into normalcy occur? Most often, it happens through the achievement of an aim. Specifically, the initiating emotional change gives rise to some aim (e.g., defeating the enemy in the war). This aim is simplified in precisely the manner that the causal attribution is simplified. Just as we tend to narrow praise or blame, isolating a single agent or a limited number of related agents, so too we tend to narrow our actional response. Indeed, there is a sort of double simplification in the case of actional response. First, there is the simplification regarding the object; then there is a further simplification regarding the action itself. More exactly, we may distinguish between the larger, functional purpose of our response to an emotionally arousing situation—a purpose of ending or (in the case of positive emotions) sustaining that situation—and the concrete goal that defines our practical action. In the case of fear, our functional purpose may be to end a current threat. Our concrete, practical action may simply be a matter of, say, leaving a dark alley, if the threat is a possible mugger; alternatively, it may be something more complex and difficult to achieve, such as getting tenure, if the threat is losing one's job. (As the second example makes clear, a concrete, practical action, in this sense, is not necessarily a spontaneous actional outcome.)

One result of this is that we may and often do form a clear idea of when an emotion episode—thus a causal sequence—is (or should be) complete. Jones feels anxiety. Perhaps it is the result of many factors. But he isolates job insecurity. He therefore plans to complete the work necessary to get tenure. The plan sets an end-point for the emotion episode (or, more accurately in this case, the recurring sequence of associated emotion episodes). Of course, in some cases, Jones will not feel the relief he expected to feel when he does get tenure. However, the crucial point is that the concrete goal provides a projected resolution to the trajectory of the emotion. As such, it defines a possible "end" to the causal sequence (as construed by his emotion systems). Put differently, it defines a possible story. Moreover, Jones is likely to believe that the earlier anxiety has ended—thus that the story has reached its conclusion—even when his anxiety returns. This is because he will probably attribute the post-tenure anxiety to a new cause. In other words, he will select, segment, and structure it into a distinct causal sequence. He will understand it as a new story. This is particularly likely if

there is some period, however brief, in which he does not experience anxiety following the tenure decision. Given the episodic nature of emotion, this is almost certainly going to be the case.

The consequences for nationalism in general, and war in particular, are considerable, particularly when we understand the ways in which emotion-defined stories bear on such events as the September 11 bombings and the invasion of Afghanistan. The United States began by blaming al Qaeda as an absolute origin for the bombings. We blamed the Taliban as well, for giving governmental support to al Qaeda. This is a standard narrative pattern. Stories commonly involve not only heroes and enemies, but sidekicks, characters who aid the hero or the enemy. The character of the sidekick, too, is inseparable from our emotion systems and from our causal attributions based on those systems. Specifically, our tendency to form in-groups and out-groups on the flimsiest pretext extends to cases where we have isolated a particular antagonist. If my attentional focus is on the harm Doe has done to me, my inclination is to categorize all other agents in relation to that harm and its consequences. Specifically, my inclination is to view other people in terms of whether they are likely to help or hinder my pursuit of the goals that arise from my anger at that harm. During an anger episode, then, I am likely to evaluate everyone else in terms of whether they are "on my side" or "on Doe's side." I, in effect, form new in-groups and out-groups based on the central division resulting from the (simplified) causal attribution of the emotion and its (simplified) concrete goals. Moreover, these new, ad hoc group definitions may interact with more stable identity categories producing more fine-grained responses. For example, when other members of an important identity category do not take my side in an anger episode, I am likely to feel betrayed, even if they are merely neutral. This is, of course, one reason for the widespread feeling in the United States that France had betrayed us over Iraq. The case of the Taliban and al Qaeda was, of course, different from that of France. The Taliban fell into an identity category shared by al Qaeda (roughly, "militant Islamists"). This served to reenforce their categorization as part of the enemy out-group, and to intensify American feelings of anger toward them.[14]

But to get a sense of the narrative trajectory of the war (rather than its character types), we need to consider our emotional aims in the war. The

14. Peter Rabinowitz rightly pointed out to me that the Taliban had formerly fallen into the category of "anti-Soviet freedom fighters." It might seem that this would make the transition to an enemy out-group difficult. In fact, this is not much of an issue. The question would be—by September of 2001, for whom did the Taliban count as anti-Soviet freedom fighters? I suspect that, by that time, very, very few Americans thought of the Taliban in this way.

functional aim of most Americans in the invasion of Afghanistan was to end the danger from al Qaeda (an aim responding to fear) and to punish al Qaeda and their collaborators, which is to say, everyone "on their side" (an aim responding to anger).[15] Our concrete goal, however, was simply to destroy the Taliban-led state. We did that. Thus, our emotional story ended. The Taliban-led state is no longer there as a danger or as an object of anger. It does not matter if the successor regime is a gang of election-rigging heroin pushers. Our emotion systems organized our thought about and response to Afghanistan in such a way as to define a concrete resolution for the war. We reached that resolution, whatever happens to be going on in Afghanistan now. Note that this is true even if events in Afghanistan suggest that our functional aims have not been met by the achievement of our concrete goals. Of course, if news coverage insistently pointed out that our functional aims have not been met in Afghanistan, it is likely that most Americans would reassess the situation. Indeed, something of that sort is occurring in Iraq. But, as the case of Iraq shows, it takes a great deal—perhaps including significant numbers of American deaths—to undermine our sense of an ending when concrete goals have been achieved.

In sum, our sense of an ending, like our sense of a beginning, is inseparable from our emotional response to events and situations. It is, again, our emotion systems that determine which deviations from (prototype-defined) normalcy initiate our simplified isolation of causes. Our emotion systems also determine how those deviations fold back into normalcy by specifying concrete, practical goals. The achievement of these goals commonly (though not invariably) results in the dissipation of the motivating emotion (e.g., anger or fear), and a return to a sense of emotional normalcy. Again, that return to a sense of normalcy defines an ending for our emotion systems, thus a conclusion to our continued focusing of attention and our isolation of causal sequences. Even in cases where the emotion does not dissipate, we often understand the continuing emotion as a new emotion episode, deriving from a new cause. In short, our emotion systems lead us to select, segment, and structure the world in the form of stories. These stories include heroes, villains, and sidekicks; beginnings and endings; non-normal conditions provoking a pursuit of concrete goals, frustration of that pursuit, then achievement or abandonment of the goals, with a consequent return to normalcy. All this is defined and organized by feeling.

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15. I say "most Americans" as it is not at all clear that these were the functional aims of the government. Those aims were much more complex, involving control of oil, establishing a right to invade enemy nations, and so forth; they may have had nothing to do with ending the danger from al Qaeda or punishing al Qaeda militants and their supporters.

But this is only, so to speak, part of the story. Our emplotment of nationalism and nationalistic events, such as war, is not merely broad and schematic. It involves levels of specificity as well. Indeed, the most consequential aspects of emplotment are not those of heroes and villains, beginnings and endings in general. Rather, the most consequential aspects are those of the standard character types and the standard beginnings and endings. For example, our simplified isolation of causes and our simplified imagination of goals do not arise from nowhere. They are most often specifications of prototypical openings and conclusions, which is to say, the openings and conclusions of our prototypical narratives (heroic, sacrificial, and romantic). Again, the general beginning for a narrative is an emotionally significant deviation from normalcy. Prototypical beginnings would include the following (for, in turn, heroic, sacrificial, and romantic narratives): (1) An invasion or other attack by a foreign country and/or a usurpation of political authority within the home society. (2) The violation of a divine or natural moral principle leading to social devastation. (3) Two people falling in love, but being kept apart by social hierarchies or antagonisms. I have already made some reference to these, as they turn up repeatedly in nationalist works. I will consider them in more detail below. Before going on to those prototypes, however, we need to consider one further constituent of narrative—development principles, the procedures that allow us to move from narrative generalities to narrative particulars.

DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES
Subnational Diversity and the Land

Individual narratives result not only from schemas and prototypes, but from techniques for particularizing and extending those schemas and prototypes. Put simply, when telling a story, we need some way of getting from the general structures to the particulars of the plot. I refer to these techniques as "development principles." There are, of course, many development principles. I would like to isolate two that have unusually significant nationalist functions. The first concerns characters. It consists in multiplying parallel characters of a certain type. The second treats the scene in which the story takes place. It maps out a particular geographical trajectory in the course of the narrative.

Though stories usually have one main character, they most often have a number of ancillary characters as well. In a heroic plot, we find a range of warriors; in a romantic plot, the love of the main couple may be mirrored

in the less central stories of a second or even third couple. In the case of nationalist narratives, this multiplication is often used for anti-subnationalist ends. The risk of having a single hero is that the peculiarities of the hero could be taken in a subnationalistic way. The hero's region, ethnicity, or class may suggest to people from other regions, ethnicities, or classes that they do not share in the national heroic ideal. This problem can be overcome to some degree if subsidiary heroes come from different regions, ethnicities, and classes. We find cases of this ranging from Greek and Sanskrit epics[16] through a number of Shakespeare's plays to modern films.

Consider, for example, the *Iliad*. The Greek heroes represent a range of locations in Greece. Telamonian Ajax is from Salamis, in the central eastern part of Greece; Agamemnon, the leader, is from Mycenae, a central location; Diomedes represents Argos and Tiryns, south and west of Mycenae; Menelaus, of Sparta, takes us still further south and further west; Nestor brings us to Pylos, as far south as Sparta, but on the western coast; Odysseus is from Ithaca, an island off the west coast and well north of Pylos or even Mycenae (see the entries in Harvey for these characters; see also the map on 476). Another example may be found in the *Rāmāyaṇa* in which the heroes who fight with Rāma include two prominent figures from the region of the Narmadā River in west central India (Dhūmra and Jāmbavān; see Vālmīki, vol. 3, 65), two from the Kiṣkindhā forest in the southeast (Sugrīva and Hanumān; see the map in Mack 836), and an ally from the island of Laṅkā to the far south (Vibhīṣaṇa)—with Rāma and his brother themselves representing the northeast. The point applies not only to fictions, but to the emplotment of real events in history, news, and popular imagination. To take a small example, Maas quotes a French nationalist on how "the soldiers of 1870" had "hastened here from all corners of the land" (219; my translation).

Again, this strategy is not confined to regionalism. It may also operate against ethnic particularism, along with such variants as clan particularism in relevant societies. For instance, in the final episode of *The Epic of Son-Jara,* several figures are celebrated in addition to Son-Jara himself—the warrior Fa-Koli (from the Kantè line, and a defector from the enemy), the warrior Tura Magan (a Tarawere), and the loyal bard Doka the Cat (from

16. For present purposes, it does not matter whether these works had anything like a national function when they began to circulate. The fact that they have been taken up for nationalist purposes is all that is needed for this regional diversity to have a nationalist function. On the other hand, the existence of this development principle does suggest that there was something like a nationalist use of such works from the outset. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain the recurrence of this sort of character multiplication, a multiplication guided by regional and other identity-based differences.

the Kuyatè line). Along with Son-Jara (whose parents are from the Kònatè and Kòndè lines), these represent and unite a range of important, distinct lineage groups.

Of course, there is always a risk in this practice. Representing regional or other differences may have the effect of making those differences more salient. However, insofar as people are already aware of such differences, their exclusion from the work most often poses a greater risk.

Again, the second important development principle concerns scene— specifically, the land. I have emphasized the importance of the relation to the national land as one distinguishing feature of national identity. The most obvious way of engendering an emotionally consequential relation to the land is through actual travel, direct experience of the land. However, the same or even superior effects may be produced by the careful manipu- lation of a reader's relation to the land in literature, or of a viewer's relation to the land in film. The idea has been widely recognized by nationalists. For example, Trumpener explains that some nationalist "Irish and Scottish antiquaries" believed that "bardic performance binds the nation together" and "reanimates" the "national landscape" (xii). Literature and film foster affective attachment to the nation in part by creating a sense of familiarity, as discussed in chapter 2. But they do so also by associating the places with the reader's feelings for the hero and for the story. For example, the deep attachment some Joyceans feel for parts of Dublin is due entirely to the treatment of those places in *Ulysses,* largely their association with Bloom or Stephen.

One of the most common techniques of narrative development is the insertion of a journey, sending the hero on some quest or otherwise making him or her travel. This is routinely put to nationalist use when the hero pro- ceeds on a tour of the national territory, passing through different regions that are united as part of a single, national story. In modern geographical terms, Rāma traces a path from northeast India, to the central west coast, then down to the southern tip, then across the water to Laṅkā (see the map of Rāma's route in Mack 836). If Rāma is not precisely the ruler of these areas, he does in effect establish his supremacy over them by defeating the "demons" he encounters or entering into alliances in which he is clearly the dominant partner. A similar point applies to the Tamil epic *Cilappatikāram.* As Peterson explains, "Like the journeys in . . . the *Rāmāyaṇa* [with respect to India more generally], the journeys of Kaṇṇaki and Kōvalaṉ [in the *Cilappatikāram*] trace a map of the Tamil land" (1249).

These national tours not only bind different regions together. When representing an ancient period—particularly in narratives that are them-

selves ancient—they also indicate that the national home and its territorial extent are enduring rather than ephemeral. An ancestral claim on the territory carries over—especially if it is bound up with a divine mandate, as is often the case. We see this clearly in the case of Rāma, an incarnation of God. A similar point holds for Israel and the story of King David (which we will consider in the next chapter). When David travels through Israel and Judah, he marks out a nation that many modern Israelis have seen as proper for their own contemporary state. Moreover, this ancestral linkage historicizes the land, and makes it resonant. By historicizing particular sites, the epic turns them into landmarks—thus places for visitation, places to which people might travel, which thus serve to render national categorial identity salient in a more concrete, active, nontextual way. Consider the epic of Son-Jara. One version of the poem urges the listener or reader to visit the landmarks of Mali, thus experiencing the geographical place, and recalling its history: "At Tigan you will find the forest dear to Sundiata. . . . Go to Ka-ba and you will see the clearing of Kouroukan Fougan, where the great assembly took place which gave Sundiata's empire its constitution," and so forth (Niane 83). Other instances of this sort include the putative birthplace of Rāma, a central point of conflict in contemporary Indian nationalist politics, or, in contemporary Israel/Palestine, the Temple Mount, the location of David's altar and Solomon's temple.

As the example of the Temple Mount suggests, one further function of national tours is the establishment of a national center. Often, the tour of the land is structured in such a way as to define a single geographical reference point. The nation is not toured as an undifferentiated and neutral geographical expanse. Rather, the national journey suggests a complex of geographical relations, often relations that point to a center. Jerusalem, particularly the Temple Mount, is, again, an obvious case, manifest, for example, in the physical orientation of Jewish prayer. As we will discuss in the next chapter, this centrality is developed in the crucial heroic narrative of David and Solomon. Another obvious instance is Mecca in the story of Muhammad—a heroic tragicomedy starting from the unjust denial of Muhammad's leadership through his exile to his triumphant return. (Though Islam obviously defines a religious identity, it has strong national elements as well, including a governing structure and a sense of in-group territory in the geographical division between *dar al-islam* and *dar al-harb,* the lands of Islam or submission and the lands of war.) Needless to say, Rome has this function in Virgil's *Aeneid,* and in the empire for which it was written. Ayodhyā takes this central place in the *Rāmāyaṇa,* and Hindu nationalists have sought to revive that function in the refashioning of Indian national-

ism. Such a central focal point allows all the diverse regions of the country, all the people from around the nation, to imagine themselves in relation to a single place. It fosters national identification by allowing individuals to locate themselves relative to one another imaginatively, by orienting them all toward an enduring, ancestral center.

PROTOTYPICAL NARRATIVE STRUCTURES
Heroic, Romantic, and Sacrificial

In the foregoing sections, I spoke, first, of the most general narrative structures and, second, of some principles that guide the production of particular stories. But, as is so often the case, the cognitively crucial level is in between. It is the level of prototypes. Considerable research suggests that prototypes guide our semantic understanding generally. If I am told that there is a bird in the backyard or if I am asked to draw a bird, I imagine a prototypical bird—roughly a robin. I do not imagine an ostrich, even though a bare definition of "bird" might cover ostriches no less than robins. The same point holds for stories. There are stories that are prototypical, just as there are birds that are prototypical. When I set out to write a story, I begin with a story prototype, just as I begin with a bird prototype when I set out to draw a bird. One might expect that these prototypes would be very diverse, across and even within cultures. In fact, they are not diverse at all. As I stressed in the introduction, only three prototypes seem common, not merely in literature, but in the emplotment of nationalism. These prototypes particularize a more general schema (which is itself more particular than a minimal definition of "story" in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions). As discussed in the introduction, that schema involves a person pursuing a goal, with some sort of emotional distress because he or she lacks the goal; it also involves a series of non-normal events and actions in the initial establishment and subsequent pursuit of the goal, events and actions that are emotionally engaging for a reader or listener; finally, it involves the return of the events to normalcy, most often by the achievement of the goal, but in some cases (tragic cases) by the recognition that the goal is not achievable. The goals pursued by the protagonists are necessarily goals that the protagonists believe will contribute toward happiness. In their most extreme forms, they are conditions that the protagonists believe are key elements of living well. But happiness goals are like anything else; their most consequential semantic forms are prototypical. The point holds particularly for narratives that are designed for a

broad public. The stories I tell my wife or that she tells me may be guided by our own individual and idiosyncratic goals. But for stories to appeal to a broader audience, the goals at issue should have broader appeal. Prototypical goals are precisely the goals that have broader appeal and that thereby define narrative prototypes.

In *The Mind and Its Stories,* I drew on both experimental studies and a wide range of canonical literature and orature from around the world to argue that there are three prototypical narrative structures generated by a few universal principles of human emotion. These are, once again, romantic, heroic, and sacrificial tragicomedy. These narrative prototypes develop out of cross-cultural prototypes for human happiness, specifically, prototypes for happiness in different contexts—personal, social, and physical. The prototypes define goals that the main characters pursue in the course of the prototypical narratives. The cross-cultural prototype for personal happiness is romantic union. Romantic union, then, is the goal of the romantic structure. Social happiness is more complex. It involves in-group domination over an out-group and individual authority within the in-group. Heroic tragicomedies develop out of these goals. Finally, the physical prototype for happiness is plenty, an abundance of what we need—particularly food and drink. The sacrificial structure takes up this prototype. I refer to the narrative prototypes as "tragicomedies" because, in their fully developed forms, they have positive resolutions, achieving their respective happiness prototypes, but they pass through a version of the corresponding prototypes for sorrow in the narrative middle.[17] Thus, the lovers are separated in the middle of the romantic plot, often with an implication that one of them has died; the rightful leader is deposed and the enemy comes to dominate the in-group in the middle of the heroic plot; and society is devastated by famine or epidemic disease in the middle of the sacrificial plot.

More exactly, the heroic plot, which is fundamental for nationalism, comprises two distinct and separable sequences. In the fullest version,

17. I have discussed the use of this term in *The Mind* (24n.3). I chose it to stress the standard structure of these works and their relation to tragedies (which, by this analysis, are roughly incomplete tragicomedies). I am not claiming that the standard structure is generically ambiguous (though this is often the case with heroic works, as we will see). Nor am I denying that there are such generically ambiguous works. I should also say that the audience need not experience the middle of the tragicomedy as sorrowful. The most prototypical versions of these structures incorporate the opposite of the relevant happiness goal into the middle in some form; for example, they may incorporate implications of one lover's death into the middle of the romantic plot. But they may do so in a way that the audience finds funny, if they know that the implications are false and that everything will turn out well in the end.

the legitimate leader of the in-group is removed from leadership by some usurper and exiled. While he or she is in exile, the home society is threatened by an enemy, commonly an invader. The exiled leader returns to defeat the enemy, often with divine aid. After routing the invading hordes, he or she is able to regain leadership. The result is the reaffirmation of the authority of the national leadership, the divinely guaranteed power of the nation, the inferiority of the national enemy, and the control of the national land.

However, there is a complication in this story. As I have been emphasizing, our categorization of people into "us" and "them" strongly biases our moral evaluations and emotional responses. Thus, in the course of the battle, we experience fear when the enemy attacks our side, not when our side attacks the enemy. However, our emotions are not entirely constrained by such categorizations. As already noted, we spontaneously empathize with suffering, especially the suffering of someone who poses no threat to us. In keeping with this, there is a peculiar twist in many heroic tragicomedies. Romantic and sacrificial tragicomedies commonly end with the achievement of the prototypical happiness goal. In heroic plots, however, there is often a sort of epilogue after the enemy has been defeated. Specifically, there is often a section in which the hero suffers remorse for the devastation he or she caused in prosecuting the war. This section appears to develop out of the spontaneous empathic identification that comes into play when the enemy is no longer dangerous (for further discussion, as well as instances, see chapter 4 of my *Mind*). The "epilogue of suffering," as I have called it, may serve to question nationalism and nationalist war, or it may show the moral scrupulousness of the national in-group, thus fostering further commitment to nationalism and war. In either case, however, it takes up what is perhaps the central emotional conflict in in-group/out-group divisions—that between categorization-based identification, with its inhibitions on empathy, and our spontaneous tendency toward compassion for those who are in pain.

The sacrificial structure begins with some communal sin. This is punished by communal devastation, often in the form of drought and famine or disease. The devastation may be reversed only through a communal sacrifice, often the sacrifice of a human life. This prototype is highly consequential for nationalism in cases where there is a widespread feeling of national devastation (e.g., after loss in warfare).

Finally, romantic tragicomedy begins with two people falling in love. However, some social conflict prevents their union. This conflict is commonly a matter of identity categories, such as race or class. It is usually

enforced by a representative of the traditional social order, frequently a parent. In the fullest version, the blocking figures include not only social authorities, but also a rival. The lover is frequently exiled and the beloved is often imprisoned or otherwise confined. Especially during the period of the lover's exile, the rival may have some temporary success with the beloved. When developed separately, this section becomes a love triangle plot. In the complete, comic version, the lover is eventually able to return, defeat the rival, and be reunited with his beloved. One common use of the plot is to oppose subnational divisions (e.g., by race or class). However, the structure tends to oppose all forms of identity division. As a result, it may just as easily be taken up to oppose national divisions. Moreover, as we have noted, individual commitment to in-group hierarchies is in part a matter of trust and in part a matter of fear or coercion. The heroic plot usually stresses (and endorses) the trust. The romantic plot in effect stresses the coercion—which, of course, it opposes. As a result, it tends to express the resentment that people almost invariably feel toward social authority. Thus, the romantic plot may be taken up for antinationalist purposes in this respect as well.

It is important to note that each of these prototypes involves not only standard characters and events, but standard ethical preferences as well. The main heroic plot particularly celebrates martial virtues, such as courage and loyalty. It is based on what I have called an "ethics of defense" (see *Mind* 136–47), an ethics of supporting one's in-group in times of conflict. The epilogue of suffering tends to value virtues such as empathy and beneficence. It is bound up with an ethics of compassion (see 136–47), an ethics of sensitivity to human pain. The sacrificial plot turns our attention toward such virtues as self-discipline and self-abnegation. This prototype establishes an ethics of self-denial. It particularly condemns self-indulgence in food and sexuality, contrasting this with the moral ideal of sacrificing one's life. Finally, the romantic prototype tends to be concerned with the degree to which social prescriptions—including common moral ideas—should be allowed to restrict the behavior of individuals, particularly in the pursuit of pleasure. It values the virtues of tolerance—or, better, nonjudgmental liberality—and independence. Thus, the romantic plot tends to express an ethics of individual freedom or personal choice.

Though I have discussed this issue at length elsewhere, it is worth briefly reviewing the evidence. For reasons already discussed, we would expect prototypical narratives to treat agents pursuing prototypical eliciting conditions for happiness. The question, however, is—just what are these prototypical eliciting conditions? Are they the same across times and

places, or do they differ? Clearly, there are differences in the precise stories that are told in different times and places and the precise goals people pursue. But do these different stories and goals manifest closely related or quite different prototypes?

Here, two lines of research suggest themselves. The first involves the isolation of happiness prototypes, preferably in cross-cultural studies outside of narrative art. The second involves the isolation of cross-cultural narrative patterns.

As to the former, different philosophical traditions have isolated something along the lines of prototypes for eliciting conditions of happiness, though using different terms. One obvious case is the ancient South Asian schema of the four goals of life—kāma, artha, mokṣa, and dharma. Dharma and mokṣa—duty or ethics and spiritual liberation—are not fundamental motivations, but, so to speak, secondary goals that inflect the basic goals of kāma and artha, so I will leave them aside here. This leaves kāma and artha as the basic or primary goals—in our terms, the fundamental prototypes for happiness. Kāma is pleasure, generally. However, in treatises on kāma, it is prototypically the pleasure of sexual union. Moreover, in literary works, it is prototypically a specific sort of sexual union—romantic union with one's beloved. Artha is material well-being, but in the treatises on artha (see, for example, the Kauṭilya or Nārāyaṇa), it is treated prototypically as a matter of power or authority.

This analysis by the ancient Indic writers is broadly in keeping with what one might expect from the European tradition. It suggests two prototypes for happiness in two distinct contexts—romantic/sexual union in the context of personal happiness; power or authority and prosperity in the context of social happiness. The former seems particularly clear in nonliterary, empirical studies. Consider research done by J. L. Freedman. Having surveyed 100,000 Americans, Freedman found that "love in marriage" is most closely associated with happiness (see Oatley, *Best* 361). Research by Conway and Bekerian on "Grief, Misery, Sadness" points toward both prototypes by highlighting their opposites. If happiness is romantic union, then sadness should be loss of a loved one, particularly a romantic beloved—precisely what Conway and Bekerian's research shows. If happiness is power or authority and prosperity, then sadness should be professional failure or impoverishment—a point also attested by their data. Indeed, almost all of their data point to one of these prototypes.

Work by Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, and O'Connor also fits here. This work considers prototypes, emotion, and narrative. There are complications with their analyses, as they do not seem to maintain a consistent level of

abstraction. For example, one of their categories is "Undesirable outcome" (1074), which seems to be at a level of abstraction above such categories as "Death of a loved one" and "Loss of a relationship" (1074; indeed, the second seems to be a case of the third which seems, in turn, to be a case of the first). But, insofar as they are concrete enough to count as prototypical, the categories they uncover are clearly in line with the preceding analysis. Thus, the eliciting conditions for sadness prominently include the two just mentioned, which are closely related to the prototype of happiness as romantic union. Other prototypes include "Discovering one is powerless" (1074), which is clearly related to the prototype of happiness as power. In relation to happiness itself, they isolate only three categories that are not overly abstract. These are "Receiving esteem, respect, praise," "Being accepted, belonging," and "Receiving love, liking, affection" (1075). The first is clearly connected with the prototype of happiness as power or authority. The third category is clearly related to the prototype of happiness as romantic union. The second category relates to both. Indeed, it relates to both in a way that bears on emplotment. Commonly, the conflicts that define the middle of a plot are resolved in such a way that the larger society comes together and there is an extension of acceptance and belonging in the end (e.g., through the reconciliation of parents and children in the romantic plot).

In short, we seem to have some good prima facie evidence for positing two happiness prototypes. The point is not confined to modern America and Europe. Clearly, there were no broad scientific surveys or controlled experimental studies of emotion in premodern societies. However, there are highly regarded discussions and widely accepted ideas—such as the ancient Indic isolation of goals—that provide converging evidence. For example, Chikamatsu, widely thought of as one of the two greatest dramatists of Japan, wrote that, "The only happiness in this broad world" is "True love to true love" (234). The celebrated Malian *Epic of Son-Jara* states that "All people . . . seek to be men of power" (Sisòkò, I. 1277–78). Euripides' Hecuba expresses both, lamenting the death of Astyanax: "if you had enjoyed youth and wedlock and the royal power that makes men gods, then you would have been happy" (200).

These literary references lead to the second line of research. In order to consider cross-cultural prototypes in narrative, I set out to read a wide range of highly esteemed works of verbal art in unrelated literary traditions. I took up highly esteemed works as it seemed that they were most likely to express common narrative and emotional tendencies in a given culture or period. One crucial feature of a prototype-based account of

narratives is that it does not claim to cover all stories. Prototypes are not necessary and sufficient conditions. We can and do tell nonprototypical stories all the time. In keeping with this, we have idiosyncratic ideas of what will make us happy individually. In small circles of friends or family members, idiosyncratic narratives involving idiosyncratic (or relatively trivial) happiness goals may be of interest. However, as the audience for stories becomes broader, extending to an encompassing culture, those idiosyncrasies are weeded out. Put differently, if a story proves to be effective with a broader range of readers or auditors, then it is not merely idiosyncratic, but manifests properties of interest to and value for people outside an individual author's circle of intimates.

In reading a wide range of highly esteemed works of verbal art from the European, sub-Saharan African, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Chinese, Japanese, and other traditions, I repeatedly came upon two structures—romantic and heroic.[18] My research on these traditions strongly

18. Some of the works that I considered include the following. From the European tradition: *The Iliad,* Aeschylus' *Oresteia,* Sophocles' Oedipus plays, Euripides' *Trojan Women, The Bacchae,* and *Phoenissae,* poetry by Pindar, Sappho, Tyrtaios, and Kallinos, Virgil's *Aeneid,* Chariton's *Chaereas and Kallirrhoe,* works of Roman New Comedy (e.g., Terence's *The Mother-in-Law*), *The Song of Roland, Beowulf, Jerusalem Delivered,* the *Niebelungenlied,* various plays by Shakespeare, Goethe's *Faust,* novels by Jane Austen, poetry by St. John of the Cross, Sidney, Spenser, Browning, Yeats's *The Countess Cathleen,* works by Kafka, Joyce's *Ulysses, Gone with the Wind,* Alain Robbe-Grillet's postmodern *La Jalousie,* and the *Star Wars* movies. From South and Southeast Asia: the *Mahābhārata,* various versions of the *Rāmāyaṇa,* Bhāsa's *Vision of Vāsavadattā,* Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam,* Śūdraka's *Little Clay Cart,* Harṣadeva's *Ratnāvalī,* Bhavabhūti's *Uttararāmacarita,* Śaktibhadra's *Āścaryacūḍamaṇi,* Ilangô Adigal's *Shilappadikaram (Cilappatikāram),* poems from Tamil and Sanskrit anthologies, Bilhaṇa's *Fantasies of a Love Thief,* Bihārī's *Satasaī,* Jayadeva's *Gītagovinda,* stories from the history of Kashmir, Kondh poetry, the Thai folk drama *Manohra,* Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve,* Santosh Sivan's *The Terrorist.* From China: the *Book of Songs,* Chêng's *The Soul of Ch'ien-Nü Leaves Her Body,* Ma Chih-yüan's *Autumn in Han Palace,* poetry by Wang Wei, Li Bo, Li Ch'ing-chao, and Du Fu, Kuan Han-ch'ing's *The Injustice Done to Tou Ngo,* Cao Xueqin and Gao E's *The Story of the Stone, Conversations from the States,* and *Three Kingdoms.* From the Middle East: the epic of *Gilgamesh, Genesis,* the *Song of Songs,* ancient Egyptian lyric poetry, works in the ghazal tradition, various psalms, Ferdowsi's *Shâhnâme,* Iranian *ta'ziyeh* dramas, Gurgānī's *Vīs and Rāmīn,* the *Sīrat 'Antar,* narratives from Muslim history, the *Book of Dede Korkut,* Niẓāmī's *Laylā and Majnūn,* various stories from *The Thousand and One Nights,* some Bedouin love poetry. From Japan: *The Tale of the Heike,* Lady Murasaki's *Tale of Genji,* several Nō dramas by Kan'ami and Zeami, several plays by Chikamatsu, Izaemon and Yūgiri's *Love Letter from the Licensed Quarter,* Namiki Sōsuke's *Chronicle of the Battle of Ichinotani,* the *Tale of Ise,* the *Tosa Diary,* works by Bashō, the *Kokinshū,* and a range of Ainu epics. From the Americas: Bororo and Arawak tales, poetry from the Abanaki, Sia, Pueblo, Hopi, Navajo, and Chippewa, the Mayan *Cuceb,* the Nahuatl/Aztec *Quetzalcoatl,* Luis Puenzo's *The Plague.* From sub-Saharan Africa: the *Mwindo* epic, various versions of the *Epic of Son-Jara,* the epic of Oziki, the epic of Da Monzon of Segou, poetry from the Bambara and Dinka, Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard,* plays by Wole Soyinka. From elsewhere:

supported the hypothesis that there are cross-cultural narrative prototypes. The recurrence of these narrative prototypes provided further evidence for the existence of two cross-cultural happiness prototypes. Conversely, the happiness prototypes helped to explain the cross-cultural prominence of the narrative prototypes. But there were several problems (as there should be in any developing research program). I will very briefly consider two here. First, the heroic structure was complex. Second, and more significantly, there were (as I have already noted) three narrative prototypes, rather than the two one would expect, given the two happiness prototypes.

From the initial prototypes, one might expect the heroic prototype to concern only individual power—thus the "usurpation/restoration" sequence in which a rightful ruler is displaced and reinstated. But this is not the only part of the heroic plot. Indeed, it is not even the most important part, which appears to be the threat/defense sequence, where the home society is endangered by an attack from an enemy. However, on reconsideration, this is not surprising. First, there are obvious reasons why the invasion of one's society by another society would be of general interest to readers. Second, the extensive research on in-group/out-group divisions suggests that our first concern for prestige and authority is probably group-based rather than individually based. Again, "when . . . subjects are asked to allocate rewards (or punishments) between ingroup and outgroup members, they do so in a manner that maximizes the differential between ingroup and outgroup even though this may reduce the absolute benefits to the experimental subjects" (Duckitt 68–69). Given this, one would expect the prototype of happiness as power and authority to be, first of all, a prototype of in-group power and authority, and only secondarily a prototype of individual power and authority. This is just what the literary cases suggest.

The issue of the third genre is somewhat more complicated. The goal in sacrificial narratives is twofold. First, there is health—basically a negative goal, since it amounts to not being ill or in pain. Second, and more positively, there is having plenty of food. This suggests a third context for happiness—physical—and a third happiness prototype, health and abundance. To a certain extent, this is simply a matter of dividing artha into power and authority, on the one hand, and prosperity, on the other. However, it is important that the prosperity at issue is prototypically connected with physical well-being in general and food in particular. Throughout

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Trobriand Island poetry, Tikopia poetry, New Guinea poetry of the Kurelu, Aboriginal poetry of Australia.

human history, the avoidance of sickness and the acquisition of food have been the primary concerns of most people. In that way, one would expect them to define a happiness prototype. At the same time, it is unsurprising that these are less salient eliciting conditions for happiness among survey respondents who live amid supermarkets and receive modern health care. There is, however, some limited nonliterary research that fits with the literary data. For example, Harris, Olthof, Terwogt, and Hardman examined eliciting conditions for emotions as reported by European and Nepalese children. The Nepalese children more often brought up "anxieties" about agriculture and more commonly linked "foods" with "pleasure" (338). The researchers report two Nepalese statements regarding eliciting conditions for happiness. One is, "With good things to eat, people feel *happy*" (334; emphasis in original).

Finally, I supplemented this literary and survey-based data with work on human emotion systems. I did this by considering the ways in which these systems might serve to explain the prominence of the three emotion prototypes. Specifically, I treated systems for attachment and sexual desire (combined in the case of romantic love), hunger or the desire to eat, and anger, with its aggressive responses to inhibiting agents. (Note that, when successful, angry aggression leads to submission responses from those inhibiting agents.) I argued that these were the most likely emotion systems to produce positive happiness (however temporary or ambivalent), rather than the mere negative relief produced by, say, escaping an object of fear or avoiding an object of disgust. In consequence, they were the systems most likely to be salient in the formation of happiness prototypes. Thus, the research on emotion systems fits well with the other bodies of data and the preceding analyses of those data.

In sum, there appears to be significant converging evidence for the enduring, cross-cultural prominence of three happiness prototypes and three associated narrative structures.[19] In the remaining chapters, I will argue that nationalism is commonly emplotted in one of these three forms. That emplotment helps to specify our understanding, imagination, emotional response, ethical evaluation, and, most important, concrete actions with respect to the national in-group and national out-groups. As noted at

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19. To avoid misunderstanding, I should reemphasize that I am not at all claiming it is impossible to tell stories with other structures (or to follow ethical principles other than those developed in these structures). We can tell other stories, and do so all the time. I am also not saying that individuals may not have different or more various prototypes. They may, and do. The point is that, over a range of people, these are the prototypes that recur, both within and across cultures. As such, they are the prototypes with the greatest social consequences.

the outset of this chapter, it has become a commonplace in recent years that nationalism is bound up with narration. The preceding analysis suggests that this is true in a profound sense. It is not simply that nationalism is enhanced by novels and movies. Rather, the way in which we think about the nation is inseparable from the ways in which our emotion systems guide our causal understanding into stories. It is the burden of the remaining chapters to further enrich our understanding of nation and narration by exploring the three fundamental narrative patterns as they operate to define three fundamental forms of nationalism.

NARRATIVE PROTOTYPES AS EXPLANATORY MENTAL STRUCTURES
A Note on Explicit and Implicit Emplotment

In the following chapters, I will consider a range of texts that, I argue, emplot nationalism by way of the universal narrative prototypes. The texts I consider may be divided into two categories: stories and nonstories. One might reasonably expect that a discussion of emplotment would treat only stories. However, my contention is that a wide range of thought and action, including a wide range of discourse, is guided by narrative structures. That guidance is most obvious in explicit stories. However, it is by no means confined to stories. Indeed, the preceding discussion suggests that, in ordinary life generally—whether we are telling stories or engaging in commentary, reasoning, or theorization—most of our complex and extended causal inferences are based on narrative modeling rather than on the abstraction of causal laws through inductive generalization. In keeping with this, we find tacit emplotment manifest in a sort of fragmented form in nonstories—political treatises, philosophical commentaries, and so on. Indeed, the most revealing and perhaps most socially consequential cases of emplotment are implicit rather than explicit, in part because those cases are not as readily open to self-conscious evaluation and inhibition. In other words, when we are unaware of the sources of our inferences, it is more difficult for us to be critical of those sources. For this reason, the following chapters concentrate on nonstories. I begin with two explicit stories—the biblical story of King David and the popular American movie *Independence Day*—straightforward heroic tragicomedies, which clearly manifest the fundamental form of national emplotment. These provide a basis from which the more complex analyses of emplotment-based nonstories may proceed.

Of course, this division is not absolute. There are mixtures; indeed, most cases are probably mixtures. Political treatises commonly include explicit stories while novels and plays include sections of reasoning. Moreover, there are intermediate cases. These are important as they often reveal the intertwining of emplotment and inference very clearly. A prominent instance of this sort is history. As Hayden White has emphasized, histories are emplotted. Moreover, they are more obviously emplotted than, say, metaphysical arguments or treatises on politics. Put simply, histories commonly concern agents pursuing goals through a series of non-normal events (e.g., wars, independence struggles, and so on). On the other hand, histories are not always as obviously emplotted as, say, fiction films. For example, they necessarily treat broad social trends in income distribution, voting preferences, and similar matters that at least appear to be a matter of data and explanatory inference alone. Lyric poems may present another transitional case, though one where the narrative contribution is perhaps less overt. I have argued in *The Mind and Its Stories* that lyric poems most often focus on moments of particular emotional intensity in larger narrative sequences ("plot junctures," as I call them, following Sanskrit narrative theory). Think, for example, of the number of poems that treat love in separation, or love in reunion, or the fall of someone in battle—all key (junctural) moments in prototypical narratives. On the other hand, these encompassing narratives are implicit.

Again, I begin the chapter on heroic emplotment with explicit stories. I have not included any explicit stories in the chapters on sacrificial or romantic emplotment. However, I begin both with intermediate cases— Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself.* While Hitler's *Mein Kampf* is not solely historiography, it does include a good deal of that. *Song of Myself* is, of course, not a pure, isolated lyric poem. However, that only means that it includes more explicit, developed narrative sequences than is typical of lyric poetry.

Finally, collections of testimonies may be viewed as an intermediate case as well. On the one hand, they are made up of stories. However, these stories are necessarily to some degree personal. Thus, they are more likely to be idiosyncratic, less likely to be prototypical. In addition, they are necessarily to some degree fragmentary. Indeed, many of them are less appropriately characterized as full-fledged stories than as subnarrative incidents or episodes, focal moments that may suggest a larger story without spelling it out explicitly.[20] Moreover, they do not, in themselves, define a broader

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20. Using the definitions of stories set out in the introduction, we may say that accounts

trajectory for the entire collection. That is presumably given by some other set of principles for selection and organization by the editors. These principles may or may not be story based. In other words, some sets of organizational principles will tend to create a story out of the incidents. Other sets of principles will not. I conclude chapter 5 with a discussion of tacit narrative organization in *The Winter Soldier Investigation,* a collection of testimonies regarding atrocities committed during the Vietnam War.

Though my analyses of implicit and explicit emplotments ultimately move in the same direction and toward the same goal, they face different, if complementary problems. Specifically, an analysis of emplotment in nonstories may seem forced or fanciful. An analysis of emplotment in stories may appear trivial. We may face both problems for the intermediate or transitional cases—the former in some parts, the latter in other parts. Put differently, an analysis of nonstories in terms of narrative prototypes must achieve the status of a *plausible explanation.* In other words, it must indicate how the narrative prototypes may have guided the premises, inferences, conclusions, foci of concern, rhetorical force, or other elements of the work that are not otherwise readily explained (e.g., by the author engaging in simple induction from uncontroversial data). An analysis of stories in terms of narrative prototypes must achieve the status of *reportable (or nontrivial) interpretation.* In other words, it must indicate how the prototypes reveal patterns, implications, or other nonovert meanings in the work. Obviously, explanation and interpretation are closely related processes. Indeed, generally, interpretations should include at least partial explanations. For example, if a cognitive prototype serves to reveal patterns in a work, then it should simultaneously explain those patterns. Similarly, explanations will often point toward nonobvious patterns in a work, thus fulfilling an interpretive function. (The main exception to this convergence of explanation and interpretation occurs when the interpretive method we are using is purely heuristic. In those cases, there should be some explanatory theory that indicates not only why the interpretive patterns are present, but also why the heuristic device reveals those patterns.)

But these are the ordinary tasks of explanation and interpretation. They are, in principle, no more difficult to achieve here than elsewhere.

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of isolated combat atrocities—the particular concern here—rarely constitute full stories even in the minimal sense. This is because such accounts rarely emerge out of or return to something we would refer to as "normalcy" (except in an entirely context-relative way, with "normalcy" defined by, say, a certain combat mission on a certain day). Nonetheless, they often imply larger narratives—in this particular case, I will argue, narratives with the structure of the epilogue of suffering.

(Obviously, it is up to readers to determine whether or not I have suc-
ceeded in particular cases.) A more serious problem arises, however, when
something beyond plausibility and reportability is demanded from theo-
retical analyses, as sometimes occurs in literary study. Specifically, there
is a common view that interpretation should not only be reportable, but
creative and even counterintuitive. Moreover, in this view, an analysis of
nonstories should achieve not only plausible explanation, but creative and
counterintuitive interpretation as well. It is important to respond to this
view before continuing.

The "counterintuitive interpretation" criterion for evaluating theories,
though commonplace among literary critics, is misguided. Specifically, one
often hears something along the following lines voiced as an objection to
a theory: "Well, we could have gotten these interpretations without the
theory" (or "without any of the theoretical mumbo jumbo" or some other
variant along the same lines). But this is simply not a reasonable objec-
tion to a theory. The problem with this is twofold. First, it assumes that the
evidence for or against a theory is solely or primarily to be found in the
interpretations it generates. Second, it assumes that this evidence supports
a theory only or primarily if those interpretations are radically novel. As to
the former, literary theories, like theories in any area, receive support from
the convergence of evidence from many sources. A cognitive theory of
narrative, for example, will receive support from the isolation of patterns
across stories, from psychological research on cognitive structures, from
findings in semantics, and so on. More important, the component of the
evidence that derives from literature cannot be the result of radically novel
or entirely counterintuitive interpretations—or, more precisely, interpreta-
tions that we could not get without the theory. On this second point, then,
the common view has things precisely backwards. A theory may or may
not generate radically new interpretations. However, insofar as a theory's
interpretations cannot be generated except by assuming the theory, those
interpretations cannot count as evidence for the theory. It would be circular
to derive them from the theory, then count them as evidence for the theory.
In other words, the only interpretations that can count in favor of a theory
are interpretations that can be arrived at by other means.

Consider my account of narrative universals. Once I have isolated,
say, sacrificial tragicomedy, I may be able to interpret (and explain) some
works in surprising ways as covertly deriving from the sacrificial structure.
In the extreme case, it may be that the structure is visible in a given work
only through the theory. A sacrificial interpretation of that work may be
valuable and valid. However, it cannot count as evidence for the theory, at

least not as primary evidence. Rather, the primary narrative evidence for the theory has to come from works where we can recognize the sacrificial structure without presupposing the theory.[21] The primary evidence has to come from such narratives as the Christian story of the Fall and redemption of humankind. Even readers who reject the theory can acknowledge that this story involves a sin that displeases a deity, leading to general social punishment, requiring a sacrifice in reparation, and so on.

In short, we should not want theories that radically alter the way we interpret most narratives. Rather, we should want theories that are largely consistent with our extratheoretical understanding of narratives in a wide range of cases.

The point is perhaps clearer if we think of the physical sciences. Imagine that someone objected to the theory of universal gravitation along the following lines: "We already knew that objects fall to the ground when dropped. The theory predicts that objects fall to the ground when dropped. We want a theory that tells us something new about objects, that gives us a novel interpretation." I believe we would all recognize that this gets things backwards. We want a theory of gravitation that is consistent with things falling to the ground—and doing so at a particular rate that is ascertainable outside the theory. The same general point holds for narrative and other literary theories.

As this suggests, I would not consider it a significant objection to the preceding account if it turned out that my discussions of the story of King David and of *Independence Day* merely show the uncontroversial presence of the heroic structure. Indeed, this is particularly the case, given that the point of these analyses is to provide a basis for the subsequent treatments of less straightforward cases.

On the other hand, I too am a literary critic and I therefore hope, not only to provide evidence for the theory, but also (if secondarily) to reveal aspects of these works that we would not ordinarily notice. As I have already indicated, an interpretation is not reportable if it isolates only trivial or obvious patterns in a work. In consequence, an interpretive theory, however valid, may be of no great value if it delivers only unreportable interpretations. In the following pages, I do not aspire to reveal aspects of works that we "could not see without the theory." Again, that would render

21. This is not to say that the actual procedure of discovery has to occur without the theory. The theory may lead us to notice features of a number of works, and we may then count those features as evidence for the theory—as long as there are means of isolating the features without the theory. The point is that we can acknowledge those features without the theory, not necessarily that we actually did isolate them prior to the theory.

those interpretations irrelevant as evidence for the theory. I do, however, hope to reveal aspects of the works that have commonly escaped viewers and critics. My purpose in interpretation (and explanation), then, is (usually) not to say either "no" or "yes, but" to accepted basic understandings of works. It is, rather, to say "yes, and"—where the "and" includes both a reconfiguration of what has been accepted into a different frame (the one provided by narrative prototypes) and the drawing out of elements of texts that the accepted readings have not sufficiently attended to. The result is not a radical overturning of what we thought the texts were about but it is a substantial revision of how the texts work and what their readerly appeals are.[22]

Consider, for example, *Independence Day*. I will argue that, scene by scene, the film builds up a standard heroic emplotment of nationalism. This includes, for example, a unifying representation of ethnic and geographical diversity. Virtually no viewers of the film will fail to recognize that the film includes European American, Jewish American, and African American characters. In other words, if asked, they would no doubt say that there are such characters. However, they may not find this ethnic diversity salient (e.g., they may not remark on this feature if they are not asked). The same point could be made even more strongly for the geographical diversity of the film. More important, few viewers are likely to recognize that the systematic representation of ethnic groups—including interethnic friendships—and of different geographical regions is part of the unobtrusive nationalist operation of the film. Put differently, they may recognize that the president's Fourth of July speech has nationalist elements, probably even salient nationalist elements. However, they are unlikely to integrate these salient features of the film with nonsalient (but accessible) features of geographical diversity into the encompassing structure of nationalist heroic tragicomedy. Similarly, they can hardly miss the world leadership role of the United States in the coalition against the invading aliens. However, it is unlikely that they will recognize this as a particular American specification of the heroic emplotment, thus a standard and to some degree distinctive aspect of U.S. nationalism. An analysis of the film in terms of heroic emplotment does not create the basic textual properties (e.g., the ethnic diversity). In this way, it does not yield an interpretation that would be impossible to arrive at without the theory. However, it does make a wide range of such properties salient and it integrates these into an

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22. I am indebted to Jim Phelan and Peter Rabinowitz for this formulation of my goals. On this issue, they expressed my aims better than I was able to do.

encompassing structure. In this way, it produces an interpretation that (insofar as it is successful and valid) broadens our understanding of the work.

Much the same points hold for the explanation of nonliterary and (overtly) non-narrative texts. Consider, for example, *Mein Kampf.* My account of this text does not seek to make it something radically different from what it seems to be. However, it does, I believe, explain some important features of the text—for example, its conclusions about Jews and communists. It may seem perverse to ask how it is that Hitler comes to reach his conclusions about Jews and communists. Ordinarily, we devote close interpretive and explanatory attention to authors who, we believe, have something to teach us. Needless to say, no decent person believes that Hitler has anything to teach us. But *the fact of* Hitler clearly does have something to teach us. The horror of Nazi Germany is something that we cannot ignore. It is in this context that it becomes important to ask how *Mein Kampf* reaches its conclusions. It is clear that it does not reach those conclusions based on the weight of evidence or the rigor of its reasoning. Yet the work was enormously successful, influencing many people and contributing to inconceivable cruelty and destruction. How could it possibly be the case that a badly argued book could have this sort of effect? My contention is that, among other factors, it had this effect because it is in fact deeply coherent, and coherent in a way that people can directly and unreflectively understand and respond to. However, its coherence is not argumentative, but narrative. That narrative coherence fits our cognitive predispositions well. This is not to say that the narrative structure itself leads to anti-Semitism, for example. It does not. However, prototype-based narrative organization may lead to anti-Semitism when that organization is specified in particular ways, in a social context where there is considerable anti-Semitism already, and in social circumstances that widely foster a type of emplotment that is amenable to identifying an "internal" national enemy. *Mein Kampf* took the sacrificial structure and specified it in such a way as to place Jews in a particular narrative role, a role that seemed to make them responsible for the national devastation that followed the First World War; it did this in a context where there was considerable anti-Semitism; and it did so in historical circumstances that fostered sacrificial emplotment of just this sort for a broad range of Germans. Obviously, this account does not explain everything. It does not explain the historical condition of Germany at the time; it does not explain the prior anti-Semitism; it does not even explain a wide range of features of Hitler's text (e.g., his attitude toward his father). However, it does provide a plausible account of

how Hitler could come to think that he was actually presenting a case for his conclusions and how at least a certain set of readers could come to be convinced by this case (again, despite its argumentative inadequacy).

Parallel points apply to the other nonstory texts considered in the following chapters. For instance, contrary to common views, Gandhi's relation to violence was somewhat ambivalent, and at points his statements about violence and nonviolence are ambiguous. Moreover, he made statements about a range of issues (e.g., the relation between some natural disasters and the moral culpability of affected populations) that do not seem to derive logically from his ethical philosophy or political program. Given these problems, one is left to wonder at Gandhi's appeal as well. How could people become motivated by a political program that appears ambivalent on its central practical and ethical principle (of nonviolence) and that involves in some ways inscrutable causal sequences (e.g., that a belief in untouchability may lead to earthquakes)? The anomalous quality of Gandhi's statements disappears, however, once one comes to see them as guided, not by logic and evidence, but rather by an underlying sacrificial emplotment embedded within an interrupted heroic narrative. Moreover, the appeal of his work becomes much more readily comprehensible as well, since that work embodies one of our fundamental, shared structures for understanding, anticipating, and enacting or affecting causal sequences. Moreover, the social and political conditions of India at the time made that structure salient to an unusual degree for a broad range of people.

More briefly, we might note that Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself* has a number of curious features. One prominent instance is its evocation of a sort of pansexuality. We see this particularly in the array of forbidden sexualities he explores, explicitly or implicitly, prominently, including interracial marriage and even interracial homoeroticism. Just what are these doing in a poem that is, at least on the surface, a celebration of the nation? Surely at the time the United States was not a place where interracial homoeroticism was considered one's patriotic duty. Beyond this, Whitman's poem is nationalist, but it seems to move continually away from nationalism, drifting to a sort of universalism, before being pulled back to its nationalist concerns. How are we to understand this drift and rectification? My contention is that both points make perfect sense when we see the poem as an instance of romantic emplotment particularized in the context of a nation divided by subnational racial oppositions. Here, too, the explanation in terms of a standard form of emplotment helps to account for peculiarities of the work—peculiarities that are isolable without the theory. In addition,

it helps to account for the poem's strong and enduring impact on readers, including its elevation to the status of a national epic.

Emma Goldman's work is not so much anomalous as diffuse. She is generally not seen as a systematic thinker and the topics covered in her writings seem diverse with no particular underlying pattern. On the other hand, readers of Goldman are likely to feel continuity in her thought, a consistency that is not the result of a well-articulated, fully developed political platform or the rigorously logical working out of the consequences of well-grounded philosophical principles. We might be inclined to refer to this unity vaguely as a matter of "voice" or "attitude," or even "personality." However, the unity of Goldman's work seems best understood by reference to a tacit romantic emplotment, the guidance of her concerns, arguments, analyses, and programs by a romantic narrative prototype. This helps to account for her appeal as well—obviously not in any way comparable to that of the other writers we are considering, but not insignificant.

Of the overtly non-narrative works considered in the following chapters, the speech by President George W. Bush is likely to be the one that many readers—at least many American readers—will find the most difficult *not* to understand. What I mean by this is that many readers are likely to feel that there is nothing interpretively problematic about Bush's speech. But, in fact, it is a highly anomalous speech. It is simply difficult to recognize the anomalies if the heroic narrative prototype is already active and guiding one's processing of information about global and domestic events. To take a simple example, for Bush, the September 11 events constituted an act of war. Of course, that is exactly what they are when incorporated into the threat/defense scenario of the heroic narrative. However, as a number of commentators pointed out, it makes more sense prima facie to see them as a terrible criminal act. Obviously, one is always free to argue that we should see them as an act of war rather than as a criminal act. But Bush did not do that. Rather, he simply assumed that they were an act of war. Moreover, he projected the prosecution of a war as the U.S. response to those events—not a criminal investigation, not an attempt to preserve (or restore) peace by developing more productive international relations, not any number of other possible responses. Again, one is always free to argue for one course of action over another. However, Bush did not do this. His speech proceeded as if there were no options other than war. Moreover, people widely accepted this. That widespread acceptance suggests that the non sequiturs and absence of alternative analyses in the speech are not a simple matter of, say, stupidity (a standard left-liberal response to Bush). Rather, they resulted from a widely accessible manner of thinking

about the events of September 11 and possible responses to those events; they resulted from some model that was not alien to Bush's listeners. That model is the heroic narrative prototype. This prototype allows us to make explanatory sense of what Bush said, what he did not say, and, to some extent, why people responded positively to what he said. Finally, in this case too, social conditions made the heroic prototype particularly accessible and thus oriented people cognitively toward heroic emplotment even before Bush began his speech.

After Bush's speech, I briefly consider *The Winter Soldier Investigation* of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War. As already noted, this text records testimonies regarding atrocities committed in Vietnam. The soldiers who testified in these hearings were admirable, humane individuals who wished to put an end to the terrible human suffering caused by the war. I do not in any way wish to diminish the value of what they have done—any more than I wish to diminish the value of Whitman or Goldman. Indeed, these Vietnam Veterans are collectively one of the three heroes of this book, along with Whitman and, above all, Goldman. (After all, if I am right, then this book too must involve some elements of tacit emplotment—though, of course, I hope that it proceeds primarily by logic and evidence.) Nonetheless, like the works of Whitman and Goldman, *The Winter Soldier Investigation* has its own unexplained patterns. Most obviously, there is the issue of just why the editors selected these particular testimonies and organized them in this way. No doubt this is in part a matter of chance, idiosyncratic personal preference, the need for breadth of coverage, and so forth. However, once put in the context of the epilogue of suffering, at least certain aspects of the selection and structure begin to appear more systematic. Note that this would not be a matter of any self-conscious decision on the part of the editors. Rather, the prototypical structure—along with its associated emotional propensities—would simply tend to render some types of actions (e.g., the killing of individual children) and certain sorts of experience (e.g., seeing the face of a dead child) more salient; moreover, they would tend to produce a bias toward organizing the events in a certain way. We see instances of this general sort not only across testimonies (thus operating on editorial decisions), but within testimonies as well (thus operating on the storytellers' decisions). Unsurprisingly, these are imperfect instances, given the constraint of the narrative structure by actual events and the necessarily fragmentary nature of the individual testimonies. But they are recognizable instances nonetheless.

Another important aspect of this text, given our purposes, is its evident ambivalence about nationalism. Some of those involved in the investigation are opposed to nationalism; many simply leave it aside. But many clearly wish to affirm U.S. national identity—and even the U.S. position as the global leader of nations, the same position set forth in *Independence Day.* They wish to do this even as they are denouncing U.S. war crimes. At one level, this simply suggests a difference of opinion among the editors and among the witnesses giving testimony. However, it also fits very closely with the most common uses of the epilogue of suffering. On the one hand, an epilogue of suffering may serve to castigate the nation for its war crimes; on the other hand, it may serve to rehabilitate the nation, to reassert the legitimacy of the society and its leadership. Or, rather, it may serve to partially rehabilitate the nation, for the reassertion of national legitimacy is almost invariably ambivalent. It is rare for an epilogue to fully convince readers that there has been, or that there even could be, fully sufficient atonement for the crimes of war. In some cases, the superficial resolution that concludes the epilogue barely deflects our attention from an underlying sense of remorse bordering on despair. We find that ambivalence, too, in *The Winter Soldier Investigation.*[23]

In sum, the following interpretations and explanations serve first of all to provide evidence that we do routinely emplot nationalism and we do so most consistently in terms of the universal narrative prototypes. Our default mode of national emplotment is heroic. However, in particular conditions, we may shift to a sacrificial or romantic narrative, commonly embedding that sacrificial or romantic story within an ongoing if temporarily suspended heroic plot. (The primary exception to this comes from the romantic narrative, which tends to reapply from the subnational to the national level, thereby ultimately undermining heroic emplotment and, indeed, nationalism.) At the same time, the interpretations aim to make unremarked features of nationalist works salient and to help us recognize

23. This feeling is undoubtedly reenforced by the fact that the war was continuing at the time of the testimonies. In fact, for this reason, some readers have objected to the idea that *The Winter Soldier Investigation* could be organized by an epilogue of suffering at all, since the word "epilogue" suggests that the war is over. It is true that the term is somewhat misleading in this case. However, there really is no problem once one recognizes that this is an enduring prototypical structure that can guide our thought and action in a broad range of contexts, including the middle of a war. Indeed, some prominent instances of the epilogue occur in the middle of wars—an obvious case being that of the *Iliad.*

the organization of those features. In parallel with this, explanatory analyses take up and try to account for anomalous features of those works. Collectively, they suggest that prototypical narrative emplotment is central to the organization and orientation of nationalist ideology, to the acceptance of that ideology, and even to the enactment of that ideology,[24] generally and in the distinctive particularities of these consequential works.

24. Of course, the last point holds only to the extent that action is, in fact, produced by the ideology, rather than being produced by other factors and then merely rationalized by an appeal to ideology.