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The bulk of Mannheim's writings on intellectuals—which he usually refers to collectively as the intelligentsia—is contained within three volumes published in a six-year period: *Ideology and Utopia*, Mannheim's most systematic treatment of the sociology of knowledge, first published in Germany in 1929; *Essays on the Sociology of Culture*, a collection of essays written in the early thirties while Mannheim was yet in Germany, but subsequently revised after Mannheim had emigrated to England; and *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*, a book primarily devoted to sociopolitical issues originally published in Holland in 1935. His specific remarks about the intelligentsia must be seen in the larger contexts which these books provide.

One of these larger contexts is found in the distinction Mannheim makes between a static society and a dynamic one. This distinction is tied very closely to the distinction made in his earlier essay, "Historicism," between static and dynamic thought. According to Mannheim, static thought is characterized by a certain rigidity which cannot assimilate points of view or conceptions of truth alien to it, whereas dynamic thought adopts an essentially historicist view of knowledge in which truth is seen as being dependent upon the age in which a particular idea is set forth. While Mannheim's own preferences seem to side with dynamic thought, there is a polarity between static and dynamic thought which, in his estimation, cannot be entirely resolved. For him the fundamental problems between the two are

...whether Reason is to be regarded as dynamic or static, whether the theory of knowledge possesses a structural priority over the philosophy of history, whether the final concept of truth, i.e. the distinction of the absolute and the relative, is conceivably only in one single form—and, in general, all the criteria which have a bearing upon this controversy—and depend on the attitude one takes toward reality and on the particular field one prefers to invoke.⁽¹⁾

These are problems which Mannheim thought could be properly treated by the sociology of knowledge. What is initially of particular importance, however, is the distinction Mannheim makes between these two types of thought and the bearing this distinction has on Mannheim's sociological analysis of intellectuals.

This distinction is important for Mannheim because, in *Ideology and Utopia*, he links the two types of thought with his remarks regarding a distinction between static and dynamic societies. In a static society, Mannheim suggests, one world-view predominates, while in a dynamic society there is a plurality of world-views. Every society, according to Mannheim, includes individuals whose business it is to interpret the world for the society in which they are members. These are the

individuals Mannheim refers to as the “intelligentsia.” In Mannheim’s view, “the more static a society is, the more likely is it that this stratum will acquire a well-defined status or the position of a caste within that society.”⁽²⁾ For Mannheim, one such society with intellectuals functioning in such a way existed during the Middle Ages in Europe. The general attitude of Mannheim is that society in the Middle Ages was essentially unified in its world-view and intellectuals were enlisted in that society to further that world-view. Most of these intellectuals were in the service of ecclesiastical authorities, and hence they occupied relatively high positions in medieval society.

The modern period, by contrast, is in Mannheim’s estimation devoted to dynamic thinking. One of the sociological factors which caused this to come about was what he called “the breakdown of the unitary world-view,”⁽³⁾ that is, the breakdown of the unified world-view of the Middle Ages. This breakdown, Mannheim thinks, contributed to the decline of a socially-privileged intelligentsia and caused a “free intelligentsia” to arise. Consider this passage from *Ideology and Utopia* :

From a sociological point of view the decisive fact of modern times, in contrast with the situation during the Middle Ages, is that this monopoly of the ecclesiastical interpretation of the world which was held by the priestly caste is broken, and in the place of a closed and thoroughly organized stratum of intellectuals, a free intelligentsia has arisen.⁽⁴⁾

As a result of what Mannheim sees as a breakdown in a monopoly by the priesthood in intellectual matters, he states that the new “free intelligentsia” were recruited from various social strata and no longer simply from the higher classes. Moreover, the fact that the new intelligentsia was no longer responsible to ecclesiastical authorities made it possible for there to arise from their midst a plurality of new ways of thinking. These also received more attention from other intellectuals and from the educated public at large, because the commitment to the single world-view of the Middle Ages had been shattered. Hence, it was possible for there to be “...a sudden flowering of an unexampled intellectual richness.”⁽⁵⁾ It seems fairly reasonable to say that Mannheim had the achievements of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment in mind when he made this statement.

Hand in hand, however, with the rise of a notion of competition in economic matters, brought about by the ascendancy of a merchant class, there also came about the necessity for intellectuals to compete for the attention of those who had an interest in intellectual matters. No longer could it be assumed by intellectuals, as the priestly-intellectuals of the Middle Ages could more or less assume, that the educated public would give their ideas a hearing solely on the basis of their position in society—which was anyways considerably lower than that of priestly-intellectuals in the Middle Ages. More importantly, however, the new intellectuals had to gain a hearing solely through their own efforts, whereas the priestly-intellectuals of the medieval period could rely upon the generally shared world-view of society at large. Competition in intellectual matters was partly responsible for an increase in intellectual production, but it also caused the intellectuals, in their quest for a responsive audience, to produce a wider variety of modes of thought, each competing for the attention of the public and each being played off against the other to show the superiority of one’s

own mode of thought.

Mannheim summarizes this situation in *Ideology and Utopia* as follows :

When one considers...that with the renunciation of the monopolistic privileges of a caste type of existence, free competition began to dominate the modes of intellectual production, one understands why, to the extent that they were in competition, the intellectuals adopted in an ever more pronounced fashion the most various modes of thought and experience available in society and played them off against one another. They did this inasmuch as they had to compete for the favour of a public which, unlike the public of the clergy, was no longer accessible to them without their own efforts.⁽⁶⁾

While intellectuals were interested in the subject of religion, and while the Reformation brought about a proliferation of religious sects which hastened the fragmentation of the “unitary world-view” of the Middle Ages, post-medieval society also saw the rise of various competing political outlooks which further affected the intellectually fragmented state of society at that time and posed additional problems for intellectuals. Mannheim notes that whereas the priestly-intellectuals of the medieval period relied upon “irrational articles of faith” and only provided rational formulations of doctrine for the clergy and the lay intellectuals, intellectuals in the modern period attempted to align their political ideas with a political philosophy.⁽⁷⁾ As science developed and came to have a larger amount of influence in society as a whole, intellectuals increasingly sought to support their political claims with evidence from science. While Mannheim feels that science itself prospered from this relationship, he also notes that it perhaps made politics unduly dependent upon theoretical insights. Moreover, it became relatively easy for an individual to elicit the support of science for political ideas which were in fact merely useful for that individual’s own political aspirations. Seeing the problem in this way led Mannheim to embark in *Ideology and Utopia* on an analysis of what the actual prospects are for a scientific politics which is not limited to the specific political aspirations of one particular social group. As shall be seen shortly, Mannheim felt that intellectuals could have a role to play in this process.

First, however, we must attempt to evaluate those ideas which have been presented thus far. Mannheim’s distinction between static and dynamic thought seems to have a certain amount of plausibility so long as the polarity between them is not construed as being absolute. Within any society one can find both static and dynamic elements of thought. Mannheim caricatured the Middle Ages somewhat by insisting that individuals within medieval society were totally united around a single “unitary world-view.” Dynamic elements of thought were present in medieval society both with respect to a plurality of religious views, even though the Church had the power and authority to suppress any religious views which it regarded as heretical, and with respect to political aspirations—a fact attested to by the various conflicts which arose both between the Church and secular authorities and between various rivals among the secular powers themselves. These facts suggest that not all intellectuals in the medieval period were in the service solely of the ecclesiastical authorities, and somewhat blur the distinction which Mannheim wished to draw very

clearly between the role of intellectuals in medieval society and their role in modern society. If adequate sources were available one could determine statistically whether the proportion of ecclesiastically-supported intellectuals to those whom Mannheim designates as the “free intelligentsia” has actually changed all that significantly since medieval times. Even should such evidence be found, it would not justify Mannheim’s claim that since the medieval period had a so-called “unitary world-view,” intellectuals of the period would always be found to be in support of that world-view and the authorities who backed it.

The same could be said of Mannheim’s view of competition between intellectuals. Competition in intellectual matters undoubtedly existed prior to the Renaissance, but since it was relatively easier for the Church to suppress competition, the fact that competition still existed between intellectuals may not be readily noticeable. On the whole, however, Mannheim’s remarks on competition between intellectuals do seem to point out the problem which intellectuals of every age face—namely, finding a receptive audience for their ideas. The extent to which this causes a proliferation of world-views which might not otherwise arise still remains questionable, though. Having constructed the situation in the way Mannheim did, however, led him to think that there were very specific problems which only intellectuals in the modern period face. To Mannheim’s view of these problems we turn next.

In a section from *Ideology and Utopia* entitled “The Sociological Problem of the ‘Intelligentsia,’” Mannheim maintains that an intellectual can make one of two responses to the various competing political ideologies which exist contemporaneously with him. Either the intellectual can affiliate himself directly with one of the existing parties or classes, or he can come to recognize his own social position as an intellectual and, in Mannheim’s words, “the mission implicit in it.”⁽⁸⁾ Mannheim’s remarks on the consequences of each choice should be seen in light of his remarks on the prospect for a scientific politics, briefly introduced above. Intellectuals occupy a unique position in modern society, Mannheim argues, because of their relative unattachment to a particular social class. Intellectuals as a group cannot be regarded as constituting a separate social class, and sociologies which tend to regard them as such will not recognize the variety of political views which can be nurtured among intellectuals. Yet, while intellectuals do not constitute a special class, they can nonetheless be studied collectively. What unifies them as a group, according to Mannheim, is their “participation in a common educational heritage [which] progressively tends to suppress differences of birth, status, profession, and wealth, and to unite the individual educated people on the basis of the education they have received.”⁽⁹⁾

What makes the intelligentsia socially unattached as a *relatively* classless stratum in society—and Mannheim emphasizes the word *relatively*⁽¹⁰⁾—is their commitment to the broadest possible perspective on all issues, including political ones. This again distinguishes the modern intellectual from the priestly-intellectual. Because such a broader perspective has been acquired by modern intellectuals, they are more in a position to decide which political aspirations will be best for their society as a whole. Mannheim writes,

A group whose class position is more or less definitely fixed already has its political viewpoint decided for it. Where this is not so, as with the intellectuals,

there is a wider area of choice and a corresponding need for total orientation and synthesis. This latter tendency which arises out of the position of the intellectuals exists even though the relation between the various groups does not lead to the formation of an integrated party.⁽¹¹⁾

Intellectuals, then, must decide, as mentioned earlier, between aligning themselves with an existing political party or class, or maintaining their independence of thought with the hope that by doing so they will have some positive effect on society.

The synthesis referred to in the just-quoted passage was for Mannheim the goal of any scientifically-grounded politics. One cannot read *Ideology and Utopia* without getting a feeling for Mannheim's strong sense of the conflicts which can and have arisen not only between "ideologies" and "utopias," but among the various political groups which espouse differing attitudes as to how their particular "ideologies" and "utopias" can be effected. It is these conflicts, in Mannheim's view, which make any prospects for a scientific politics problematic. But Mannheim holds out the hope that intellectuals, who are or should be capable of rising above these conflicts in order to obtain a larger perspective, will be able to offer many instructive insights as to how a scientific politics could be established. Mannheim offers this image of what a synthesis based upon such a scientific politics would be like :

A true synthesis is not an arithmetic average of all the diverse aspirations of the existing groups in society. If it were such, it would tend merely to stabilize the *status quo* to the advantage of those who have just acceded to power...On the contrary a valid synthesis must be based on a political position which will constitute a progressive development in the sense that it will retain and utilize much of the accumulated cultural acquisitions and social energies of the previous epoch.⁽¹²⁾

We have thus far been considering Mannheim's sociology of intellectuals from a "macroscopic" point of view. We began by tracing Mannheim's view of the intellectual's place in history, then considered the position of intellectuals in modern society according to Mannheim, and finally presented Mannheim's hope for intellectuals in the future. Much of this material is duplicated in Mannheim's *Essays on the Sociology of Culture*, actually in a much more comprehensive fashion. We have not focused on Mannheim's more detailed account in his *Essays* of the associations which have been formed by intellectuals in the past, in order to concentrate on some of the more general points made by Mannheim with regard to the intelligentsia as a whole. The *Essays* do, however, contain a rather striking picture of the individual intellectual from a somewhat more intimate point of view, and to this we turn next.

How can what Mannheim calls the "aloofness" of intellectuals and their "inclination to withdraw from the practical concerns of society"⁽¹³⁾ be explained? Mannheim notes that while it is generally true that the intellectual is somewhat remote from life, this is also generally true of all individuals who live in a highly-differentiated society. When there is a highly-differentiated division of labor

in society, each individual becomes preoccupied with his own specialized area of concern and loses sight of what Mannheim calls the “overall scheme of things.”⁽¹⁴⁾ This is as true of the working person as it is of the professional. The intellectual is also susceptible to this problem, but Mannheim maintains that the intellectual, by virtue of that same aloofness, which actually gives him a broader and more detached perspective, is still able to grasp more of a total picture of life and society. Yet, there are dangers which still remain for the intellectual. When the thinking of an intellectual becomes increasingly more abstract, the intellectual faces the problem of focusing on ideas which have no real consequences. In Mannheim’s view, this can give the intellectual a false sense of his real importance in society and can lead him to think that the ability to think and converse about complicated intellectual problems automatically entails a mastery of those problems.

Mannheim lists four factors which contribute to the intellectual’s aloofness. First, a sufficient amount of leisure time is required for the pursuit of intellectual matters. This leisure time can only be acquired by one who has the financial resources to support it, that is, by one who does not have to engage in typical work. This puts the intellectual out of touch, in Mannheim’s view, with the great majority of people who must “work for a living” at mundane occupations. Mannheim states, “...a leisure-class existence is in itself a source of estrangement from reality, for it conceals the frictions and tensions of life and invites a sublimated and internalized perception of things.”⁽¹⁵⁾

We may comment initially on this position that whereas it may have been true in the past that intellectuals were members of a so-called “leisure class,” intellectuals of the present are employed in a variety of occupations which do bring them into contact with the “frictions and tensions of life.” We need only think of those intellectuals who are employed in universities, private research institutions, government-sponsored projects, etc. One may further remark that most intellectuals of the present (with the exception perhaps of those who are engaged in highly personal and individualized intellectual pursuits, such as writers and artists) are not the isolated individuals of the past who supported their intellectual activities with their own financial resources. There has in fact been a tendency in the modern era for, say, scientists to pursue their research within institutions which not only provide them with a place to work and with adequate equipment for their experiments, but which also provide them with a salary for their labors.

A second factor which in Mannheim’s estimation contributes to the aloofness of an intellectual is his book learning. Mannheim writes that “while books expose the student to situations to which he has no direct access, they also create a false sense of participation—the illusion of having shared the lives of peoples without knowing of their toils and stresses.”⁽¹⁶⁾ Yet, again, Mannheim does not seem to recognize the fact that intellectuals have life-situations of their own which require their participation and which involve unique “toils and stresses,” even though when reading they may participate only vicariously in the life-situations of others.

The third factor Mannheim notes is the tendency of intellectuals to wish to preserve their privacy. To the extent that an intellectual pursues his research in isolation (though as mentioned above, this is increasingly ceasing to be the case in many intellectual occupations), he needs and desires privacy to do so. Furthermore, according to Mannheim, the intellectual sees a need to “...withdraw certain concerns from public exposure.”⁽¹⁷⁾ This is the reason Mannheim gives as to why intellectuals center themselves in urban rather rural areas. In our own words we may say, to explain what

Mannheim might have had in mind, that the “anonymity of the city” affords more privacy than does life in “gossipy” rural areas where everyone knows everyone else. The attachment of intellectuals to urban environments is a phenomenon which is not easy to explain. But it may be that intellectuals are attracted to city-life not because of the privacy it affords, as Mannheim suggests, but because of the opportunities which an urban environment offers intellectuals, both with respect to the cultural centers which are located there and with respect to the chances an intellectual has for meeting other individuals with interests similar to his own.

The final reason Mannheim gives for the aloofness of intellectuals is their tendency towards introversion, which Mannheim somewhat melodramatically adds “is fertile ground for the growth of . . .schizothymia.”⁽¹⁸⁾ There is, according to Mannheim, a critical tension in the intellectual’s life between his inner and outer worlds, and this leads to a difficulty in establishing and maintaining normal social relationships. The intellectual nurtures private experiences rather than partaking of those experiences which are collective in nature, such as most social functions, for example.

Mannheim’s view of intellectuals seems to be that they are for the most part—or at least have the propensity to become—socially maladjusted individuals who cannot find a place in society because society shuns them and because they in turn shun society. Mannheim’s remarks on the “introversion” of intellectuals seems to suggest that there are few, if any, “extroverted” intellectuals. These are labels which can be applied to various individuals within society besides intellectuals, and the linking of introverted personality types with intellectuals is not only an exaggeration, but a false claim. Are intellectuals really, then, the lonely, isolated, socially inept individuals Mannheim makes them out to be? Individual intellectuals may possess quite the opposite characteristics which Mannheim gives them, and to generalize in the way Mannheim does seems to go beyond the dangers of oversimplification. Intellectuals have unique personalities and the personality traits they possess as individuals are shared by other members of society. The categories Mannheim uses to describe intellectuals include some, though not all, intellectuals, just as they include some, but not all, individuals in society at large.

Somewhat more helpful are the categories Mannheim uses to distinguish the place which intellectual concerns have in the life-situations of various individuals. These categories are three in number, and they also point to the three types of intellectuals one can find in modern society: (1) the vocational intellectual who makes a career and a livelihood from engaging in intellectual activities, (2) the leisure-time intellectual who works in traditional forms of employment, but who occupies himself in his free time with intellectual concerns, and (3) the individual for whom a concern for intellectual matters is a passing phase in his life. The first two categories are relatively self-explanatory, except that one may note that the distinction between them is fluid: a professor, for example, may take on administrative responsibilities at a university which occupy more of his time than intellectual concerns do, or a writer might support himself with non-intellectual work until he is successful enough to pursue his writing fulltime. However, since the third category is comprised to a significant extent of adolescents and young adults, Mannheim uses it to launch into a discussion of the relationship between youth and intellectual concerns.

Adolescence, Mannheim states, “...presents the most powerful impetus toward an intellectual agitation. It is an age of uncertainty and doubt in which one’s questions outrun the scope of one’s

inherited answers.”⁽¹⁹⁾ Mannheim calls the desire to expand one’s knowledge and awareness beyond the limited confines of his own position in society the “transcending impulse.”⁽²⁰⁾ It is characteristic for all intellectuals to possess this impulse and one finds it particularly strong in youth. In the first stage of this process, according to Mannheim, the youth becomes aware of his own cultural heritage and of the competing forces within it. He begins to question the assumptions of his own inherited cultural outlook and begins to realize that the competing forces in culture offer alternatives to the views he has been brought up to have faith in. The awareness of divergent points of view leads the youth to gain a certain amount of detachment from his own culture and this detachment may be accompanied by attitudes of self-assertion and defiance. Genuine education has the possibility of beginning at this point, Mannheim states, if the transcending impulse is not squelched by forces within an individual’s immediate environment.

The second phase is marked by a certain amount of confusion. In contrast to the first phase, Mannheim writes, “the second phase takes the opposite direction: it reveals uncertainty and the tendency to drift from one viewpoint to another.”⁽²¹⁾ An interest in intellectual matters apparently cannot be sustained merely in terms of a rebellion against the social environment of one’s youth, although Mannheim suggests that some individuals at this point do in fact adopt a permanent “revolutionary” posture. Others may go through such a phase and then return to the original views with which they were brought up. In Mannheim’s view, both of these solutions, however, mark the termination of a genuine transcending impulse which will lead to fruitful intellectual inquiry, because they are solutions which are proposed by those who, in Mannheim’s words, “...cannot bear to live in a state of multiple possibilities and grope for a firm footing.”⁽²²⁾ Yet others, Mannheim thinks, may be able to cope with a “state of multiple possibilities,” and under the proper conditions these individuals have the best chance of making significant intellectual contributions to society. Mannheim writes,

Some find it possible to endure and even to relish an open horizon, a state of suspense without final certainty, and continuing exposure to the alternatives which are inherent in a culture. This suspense, too, is a feasible course. With some it is an episode of youth, while others adopt it as a way of life.⁽²³⁾

The most important of those who succeed in “adopting it as a way of life” are those who Mannheim claims can “preserve the productive core of their scepticism,”⁽²⁴⁾ and use it to seek out genuine knowledge which is not marred by hypocrisy and self-deception.

It is difficult to assess Mannheim’s views on these subjects because they obviously touch on problems which some intellectuals face in their personal lives. For some the process of breaking with inherited ideas is relatively smooth; for others more difficult. And one could admit of exceptions, such as the case of John Stuart Mill, who was raised in a liberally-educated family and who very productively carried on the traditions he was taught.

In connection with our discussion of Mannheim’s view on intellectuals in *Ideology and Utopia*, we mentioned the transition Mannheim saw between the position of intellectuals in medieval society and the position of intellectuals in the modern period. With this background in mind, we can

proceed with Mannheim's more specific analysis of modern intellectuals in *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*, the most topical of Mannheim's books. Mannheim's comments on intellectuals in that book are primarily devoted to intellectuals in the present—remembering that *Man and Society* was first published in 1935—in what Mannheim calls “democratic mass society.” (Mannheim employs a number of variations in this phrase to mean the same thing.) Mannheim describes cultural life in such a society as being “...ruled mainly by the laws peculiar to an unregulated social order, whereas in a dictatorially governed mass society it is the institutions which have the greatest influence on social life.”⁽²⁵⁾

What is the function and what are the problems of intellectuals in such an “unregulated social order?” Intellectuals, according to Mannheim, belong to a social elite which is comprised not only of intellectuals, but also of political, organizing, artistic, moral, and religious leaders.⁽²⁶⁾ Political and organizing leaders have the task in their society of bringing into relative harmony the individual wills of the persons who comprise that society. Mannheim groups intellectual, artistic, moral, and religious leaders under the heading of “creative elites,” and states that their function in society is to sublimate those energies in a society which have not been exhausted by the routine tasks of life, that is, those energies which involve introversion, contemplation, and reflection. This, for Mannheim, represents the ideal. However, this ideal increasingly is being threatened by forces operative in democratic mass society. Thus Mannheim writes,

The crisis of culture in liberal-democratic society is due...to the fact that the social processes, which previously favoured the development of the creative elites, now have the opposite effect, i.e. have become obstacles to the forming of elites because wider sections of the population still under unfavourable social conditions take an active part in cultural activities.⁽²⁷⁾

Let us now outline what Mannheim conceived those social processes as being and show how Mannheim thought they affected intellectuals. The first factor in a democratic social order which affects intellectuals is an increase in the number of elites. An increase in the number of elites at first, Mannheim states, has a positive effect on society because it contributes to a variety of outlooks which a small elite is incapable of furnishing. But as these outlooks and the elites which support them come increasingly into conflict, they have the effect, according to Mannheim, of cancelling one another out and of making it impossible for any one elite to have a significant influence on the whole of society.⁽²⁸⁾

Secondly, the increase in the number of elites, Mannheim argues, leads to a situation in which the former exclusiveness of the elites is compromised. As the public at large in a democratic mass society comes to participate more and more in activities which had been reserved formerly solely for elite groups, it becomes impossible in Mannheim's estimation for guiding principles to be formed regarding cultural productions. To provide an example of what Mannheim might have meant by this, one can notice in modern art, for instance, a tendency to put a premium on originality at the expense of aesthetic standards. An attitude is fostered that each individual can formulate his own aesthetic standards apart from those which otherwise might be more generally recognized by a

larger group. One can see “democracy” at work in this, in that each individual artist has a “right” and the “freedom” to develop his own mode of expression apart from any external authority. Moreover, those who view art objects can decide more or less on whatever grounds they please the aesthetic value of an art object. It becomes debatable whether these attitudes have actually caused better art to be produced or not. One can see, however, a link here between Mannheim’s views on the negative effects of not having an exclusive elite and the remarks we examined earlier which he made with regard to competition between intellectuals. The notion of competition, in which intellectuals compete for an audience, categorically excludes the possibility of there being any objective standards by which the value of an intellectual achievement can be assessed.

As a third factor in democratic mass society which affects intellectuals, Mannheim cites a change in the principles by which elites are chosen. In the past, Mannheim observes, there were three elements which were taken into consideration in the selection of elites: blood, property, and achievement. Mannheim adds that bourgeois society eventually added another criterion, namely that of wealth, which favored the intellectuals insofar as wealth was required for an education and for the pursuit of intellectual concerns in one’s leisure time. Referring to the three principles of blood, property, and achievement, Mannheim makes some remarks which seem very curious from a more recent standpoint:

Seen as a whole, modern democracy is a selective machinery combining all three principles. Its elites are a medley of successful men and women who have attained their positions by means of one or more of the three principles.⁽²⁹⁾

One would expect that while the criteria of blood and property would have a significant amount of force in an aristocratic society, it is difficult to see them persisting in a democratic society. It is also difficult to surmise exactly what Mannheim meant by drawing this conclusion. It would certainly seem to make sense to say that the laws governing inheritance, for example, which are still in force in democratic societies, do make it possible for, say, a son to inherit property from his father, or for a son to eventually take over his father’s business. One could even say—though this may be stretching Mannheim’s own view somewhat—that the success of a father breeds success in his son. Mannheim does offer statistical evidence⁽³⁰⁾ which seems to suggest that individuals who are successful in a certain field had fathers who were successful in related fields.

The ideal of democratic society, however, is for the selection of elites (perhaps one should say “leaders” since the word “elites” is more or less alien to democratic thinking) on the basis of achievement. It again becomes curious to hear Mannheim further say,

We have no clear idea how the selection of elites would work in an open mass society in which only the principle of achievement mattered. It is possible that in such a society, the succession of the elites would take place much too rapidly and social continuity, which is essentially due to the slow and gradual broadening of the influence of the dominant groups, would be lacking in it.⁽³¹⁾

Achievement, as one basis for the selection of elites obviously seemed important, however, to Mannheim. In fact, the danger in society as it was known to Mannheim—and here we may surmise that he had the racist policies of National Socialism foremost in his mind—is that elites would be selected on the basis of blood, or more specifically, of race alone. Mannheim writes,

...in many countries even the least important members of a given group wish to be regarded as superior not out of recognition of any achievements but simply by virtue of their biological descent.⁽³²⁾

We may question Mannheim's perspicacity in saying that blood and property are essential components of democratic society's selection of its elites (especially from the viewpoint of more recent times), except as a description of how far democracy still is from its own goal. But we may agree with him that achievement should be one of the principle tests by which leaders are selected, and that it seems wrong for persons of mediocre ability to rise to critical positions of leadership on some other basis.

We now turn to the fourth and last factor cited by Mannheim which affects intellectuals in democratic mass societies, and that is a change in the composition of the elite. The carriers of a high culture, according to Mannheim, have always been those who have had a cosmopolitan, international attitude. In contrast to this, there have been various movements which have emphasized a more local and regionalized outlook. Whereas the elites had formerly been those with cosmopolitan perspectives, the elites which have gained ascendancy in Mannheim's day, he states, are those with more regionalized perspectives. Mannheim obviously assumes that a cosmopolitan culture is superior to a regionalized one, but not without reason. A cosmopolitan culture is capable of a broader view than is a regionalized culture. Furthermore, a cosmopolitan culture emphasizes lasting achievements which can be appreciated not just by one particular group in society, but by societies other than one's own. The standards for quality in a culture will therefore be much higher.

One can see how this view ties in with Mannheim's other views previously mentioned. If high standards are to be maintained, that is, those standards which are not based solely upon the arbitrary opinions of those in democratic society, a cosmopolitan culture is required. Moreover, the selection of elites must be conducted in such a way that society can be assured that they are obtaining the best leadership their society has available. One can see all three of these factors present in this passage from *Man and Society* :

Whereas, in the past, the normal mechanism of selection had tended to bring the bearers of cultural values to the top or else educated the ascending groups as they rose, at present negative selection gives a position of preeminence to those who were unable to live up to the standards of modern culture and were deficient in the mastery of their impulses and in self-control.⁽³³⁾

We have been discussing Mannheim's view of elites, keeping in mind that intellectuals form one type of an elite, according to Mannheim. Therefore, what has been said about elites in general now

must be applied to the case of intellectuals in particular. The intellectuals have suffered too because of an increase in their numbers, Mannheim states. Hence, there are more intellectuals in the labor market seeking employment than society needs or is capable of supporting. This ultimately leads to a state in which the value of intellectuals and the value of their products decreases. Moreover, whereas in the past intellectuals were situated in and recruited from the higher strata of society, the modern intellectual, Mannheim thinks, neither occupies a high position in society nor is typically recruited from families which have a high position in society. Since modern intellectuals are not members of “high society” they no longer feel it necessary to comply with the restraints of that society. In the past, these restraints had their negative effects, Mannheim notes, in that they prevented free intellectual inquiry. But the modern tendency of recruiting intellectuals from all strata of society, whether high or low, has also had negative effects. Referring to the modern selection of intellectuals, Mannheim writes,

This selection, made on an increasingly broader basis, had an adverse effect, however, when with the increase in the supply of intellectuals, the classes from which they were selected became more and more barren for purposes of cultural creation.⁽³⁴⁾

Furthermore, he notes,

Whereas in an aristocratic society in which a very small minority was culturally active, the low average level of culture of the less fortunate classes was confined to their own sphere of life ; now as a result of large-scale ascent, the limited intelligence and outlook of the average person gains general esteem and importance and even suddenly becomes a model to which people seek to conform.⁽³⁵⁾

Mannheim’s essential argument, then, is that not only have the lower middle classes gained a considerable amount of political power which had hitherto been inaccessible to them, but they have also molded culture to their own tastes—tastes which in Mannheim’s view are relatively inferior to those cultivated in a society which places a premium on higher standards of quality. However, Mannheim states that the attempt by the lower middle classes to impose their standards on society at large will not be met without resistance. Hence—and this is really the central thrust of Mannheim’s argument—it is inevitable that force will be employed for the imposition of these standards, eventually culminating in a dictatorship. According to Mannheim, an unregulated democratic mass society has within it the very forces which breed dictatorships.

To circumvent this tendency, Mannheim advocated a policy in which the pitfalls of both an unregulated democracy and a dictatorship could be avoided. He called this policy “planning for freedom.” Planning is necessary even in a democracy, since an unregulated democracy has the propensity to ultimately lead to a dictatorship. For Mannheim, such planning would involve regulating the more objective aspects of a society, such as those of economic production, while giving relatively free reign—if it still avoided the negative factors we have been discussing here—

to cultural and intellectual pursuits. One of the strengths of democracy, Mannheim notes, is its ability to accommodate criticism, and while this is not true in a dictatorship, any attempts at a planned society along the lines Mannheim advocated, must reserve a place for such criticism. For there to be such criticism, the creators of culture, including intellectuals, must be given sufficient amounts of freedom.

Throughout this paper we have seen that Mannheim placed a good deal of hope in intellectuals. As was suggested in our discussion of Mannheim's views on intellectuals in *Ideology and Utopia*, Mannheim thought that, because of their relative detachment, intellectuals had the least tendency to be caught up in particular ideological struggles. Mannheim does not go so far as to say that good government will not be achieved until philosophers become kings or kings become philosophers, but he does suggest that intellectuals can have a significant role to play in the shaping of a better society because of their commitment to a rationality which transcends ideological and cultural differences. We can agree with Mannheim that rational pursuits can be best facilitated when intellectuals are given a healthy measure of freedom, and we can deplore with him the view which is still present to some degree in modern society that culture should be produced on the principle of a "least common denominator," that is, that the standards of the least appreciative members of society become the standards for culture as a whole. Intellectual products need not and should not be reduced to the "level of the masses" if significant achievements are to be accomplished. This does not mean, however, as Mannheim seems at times to want to say, that significant intellectual achievements cannot be produced by members of the lower strata of society; it is the quality of the product and not the social standing of the producer which matters most. And, we can disagree with any view which suggests, as Mannheim's sometimes seems to do, that social progress can only be achieved through an intellectual elite. Each member in a society, whether he be a working individual or an intellectual, must contribute what he or she is able to in the forming of a better society.

NOTES

- (1) Karl Mannheim, "Historicism," in *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, ed. Paul Kecskemeti (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952), p. 93.
- (2) Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1936), p. 10.
- (3) *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- (4) *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
- (5) *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- (6) *Ibid.*
- (7) *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- (8) *Ibid.*, p. 160.
- (9) *Ibid.*, p. 155.
- (10) *Ibid.*
- (11) *Ibid.*, p. 161.
- (12) *Ibid.*, p. 154.
- (13) Karl Mannheim, *Essays on the Sociology of Culture*, ed. Ernest Mannheim and Paul Kecskemeti (New York :

- Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 159.
- (14) *Ibid.*
- (15) *Ibid.*, p. 160.
- (16) *Ibid.*, p. 161.
- (17) *Ibid.*
- (18) *Ibid.*, p. 162.
- (19) *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.
- (20) *Ibid.*, p. 164.
- (21) *Ibid.*, p. 165.
- (22) *Ibid.*
- (23) *Ibid.*
- (24) *Ibid.*, p. 166.
- (25) Karl Mannheim, *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction: Studies in Modern Social Structure*, trans. Edward Shils (London : Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1940), p. 81.
- (26) *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.
- (27) *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- (28) See *Ibid.*, p. 86.
- (29) *Ibid.*, p. 89-91.
- (30) See *ibid.*, pp. 89-90 n. This evidence is drawn from Friedrich Zahn's analysis of the 1925 census in Germany. See *loc. cit.* for full references.
- (31) *Ibid.*, p. 91.
- (32) *Ibid.*
- (33) *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.
- (34) *Ibid.*, p. 101.
- (35) *Ibid.*, p. 102.

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社会における知識人に関するカール・マンハイム

リチャード エバノフ

「社会における知識人に関するカール・マンハイム」の論説は、彼の3冊の本『イデオロギーとユートピア』『文化社会学の小論』そして『再建時代の人類と社会』で述べられているように、知識人に関するマンハイムの見解を評論する。論題の中で論議されたことは、マンハイムが区別した“静”と“動”の社会、イデオロギーに相反する競争意識、社会への知識人の関係、そして大衆民主主義社会における知識人の問題である。

