

obnox

ILLUSTRATED

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NO ONE HAS ever suggested that Anglo-American democracy is the perfect system of social management. But most Americans believe it is still the best system because it seems less obnoxious than any other structure of social order and justice.

It is true that other kinds of societies in the world today which diverge greatly from the American model do seem to be much more obnoxious, at least to Americans. And, going backward through human history, earlier and earlier societies also seem to have been more and more obnoxious.

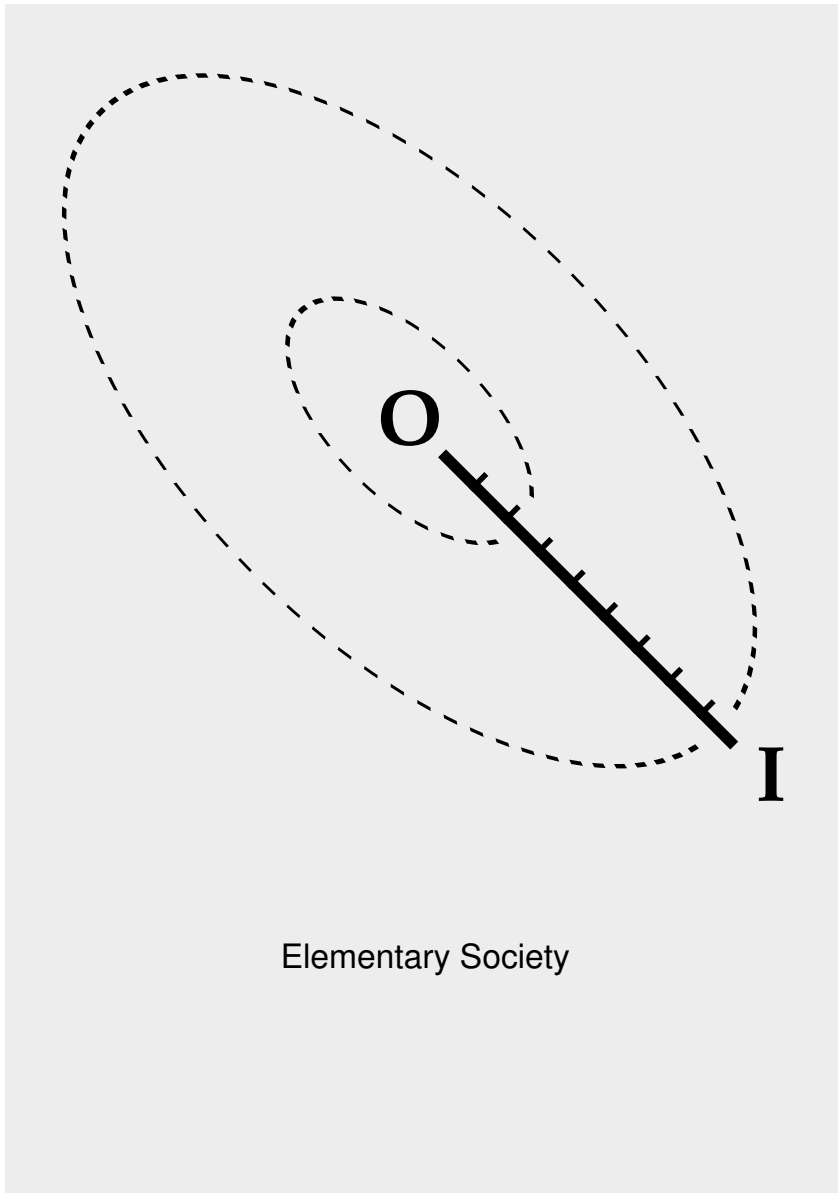
Even today's best societies, however, still need improvement. And any serious social reform, by Americans or anyone else, must eventually become a search for the "obnox" that makes some societies more obnoxious and enfeebled than others.

Many optimistic Americans, for example, simply assume that obnox was nothing more than human ignorance. They say earlier social planners made fundamental mistakes because they just did not know any better. And, they say, American society today is less

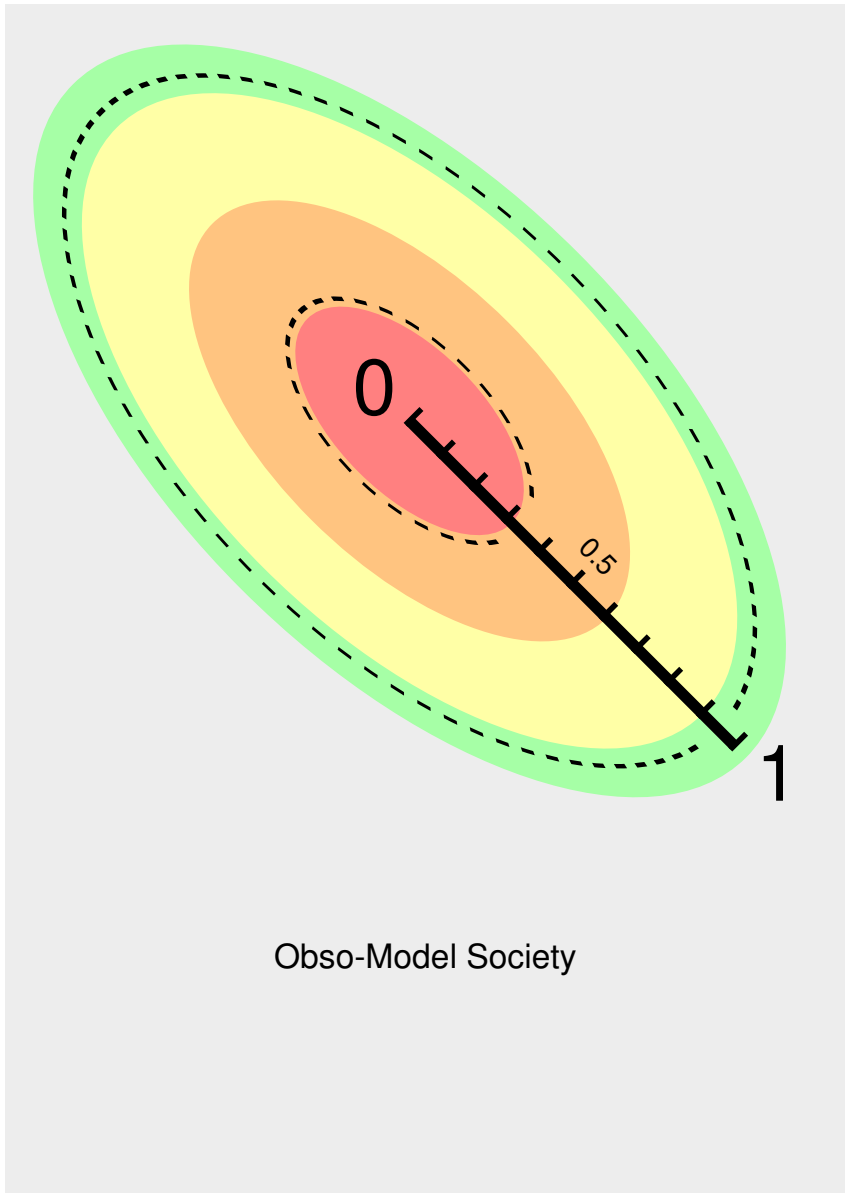
obnoxious than others simply because it has overcome most of that ignorance and has fixed most of those old mistakes – and will continue to do so until American society reaches a state of final perfection. But many of those "improvements" in recent years have clearly been making American society more, rather than less, obnoxious.

So it may be more accurate to say obnox is some kind of chronic social disease. It was an unexpected affliction that first appeared after mankind's earliest productive innovations. And, since then, many people have been trying to find ways to ameliorate the symptoms of that sickness, through such things as democratic ideas and institutions.

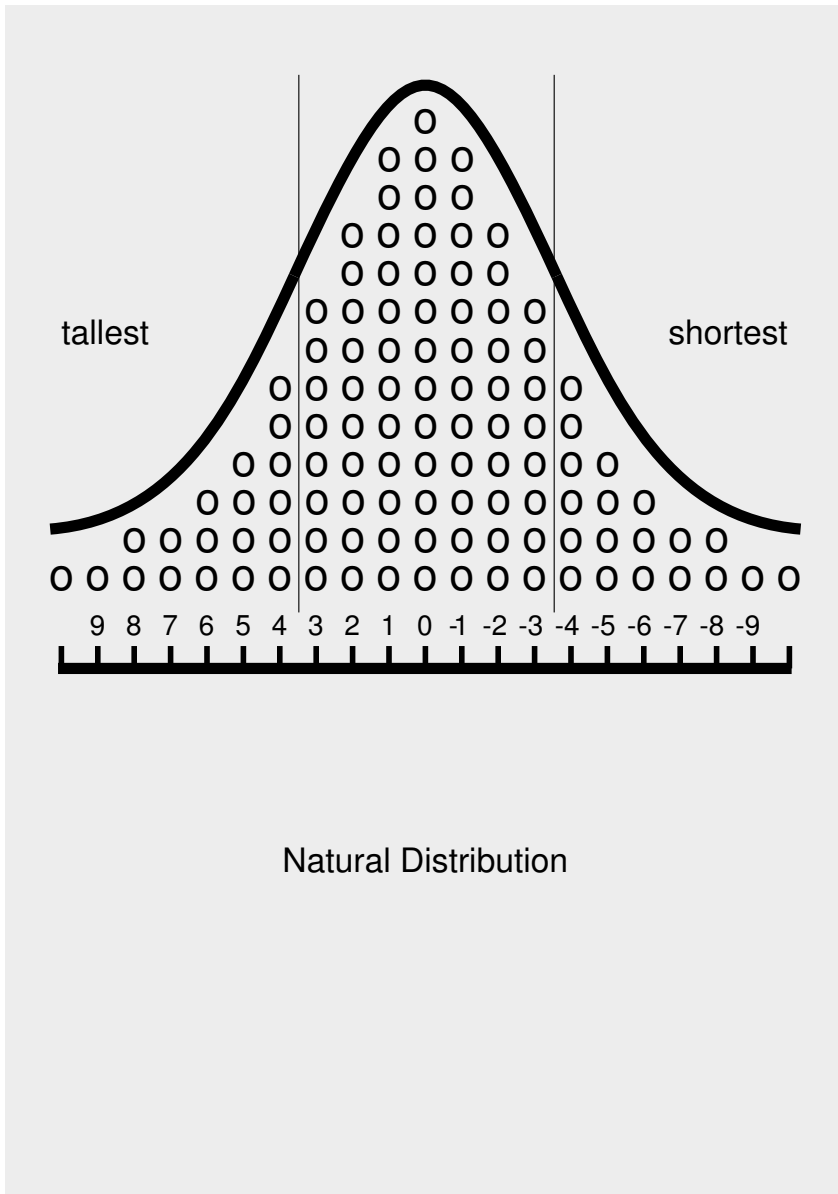
Curing a disease is better than just treating its symptoms. But that requires a very good understanding of the origin and nature of the disease. So the etiology of obnox is a central theme of *Odiology* and *Novoasis*, the second and third installments of the *Beyond Democracy* series, using the following diagrams to illustrate the genesis and evolution of both good and obnoxious human societies.



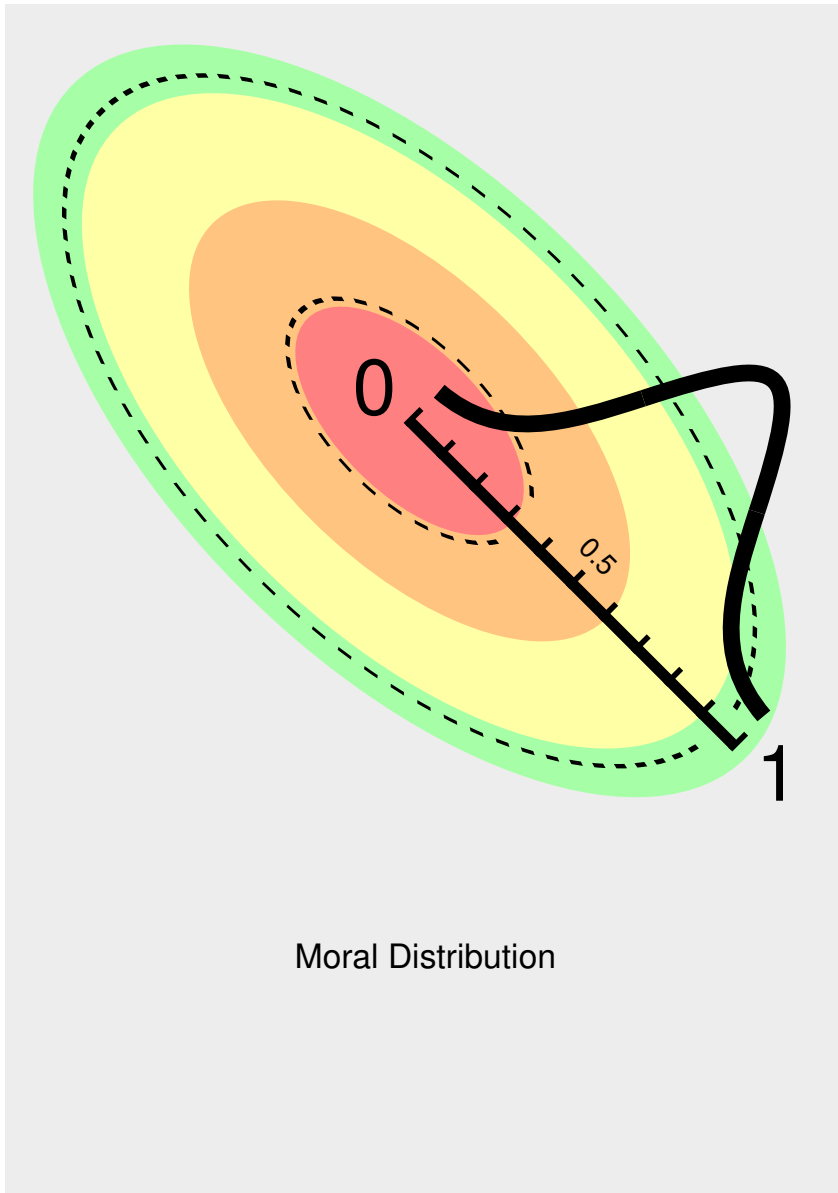
AN ILLUSTRATION of the basic structure of a good society begins with the letter “O,” which represents a round table. On a pedestal at the center of that table is the social purpose of the community and its moral point of origin. Surrounding the table is an “inner circle” where the owners of various families and other groups in the community come together for the kind of association and arbitration that serve their social purpose and justify the existence of the community. Most members of those groups remain outside the inner circle but within a protected outer circle. The diagram also includes a cross-section scale descending from the point of origin to the letter “I” at the bottom, representing anti-social individuals. That scale may be used to measure the degree of alienation of people who have placed themselves voluntarily at various distances from the center of their society, according to where they feel most comfortable – and where other people at the same distance from the center of the society feel comfortable with them. (*Odiology*, p. 13)



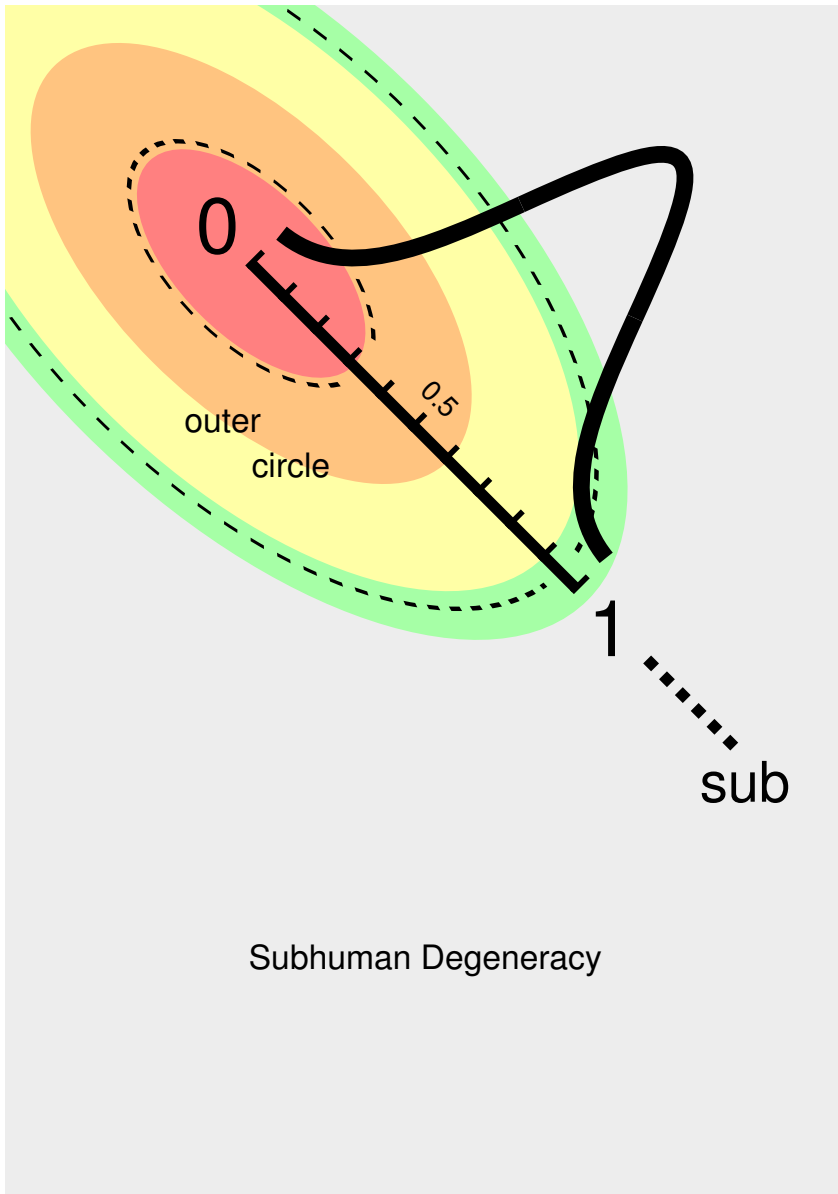
COLOR CODING is used in this diagram to indicate classes of membership in a tribal, prehistoric, Obso-model society, where the central moral purpose was the Conservation of Creation. Upper-moral-class (red) members were those who were most dedicated to that purpose. Middle-moral-class (orange) members, whose social horizons in both time and space were more limited, recognized the importance of Conserving Creation but were usually preoccupied with just Conserving their Community. Lower-moral-class members (yellow) whose horizons did not extend very far beyond their immediate personal, family or factional interests, were only interested in Conserving Us. And finally, the most alienated little green men at the bottom of the obsoscale were interested only in Conserving Me – they needed social protection to survive, but contributed nothing in return for it. The real nature of this kind of society depended, therefore, upon the number of its voluntary members who distributed themselves among each of those four moral classes.



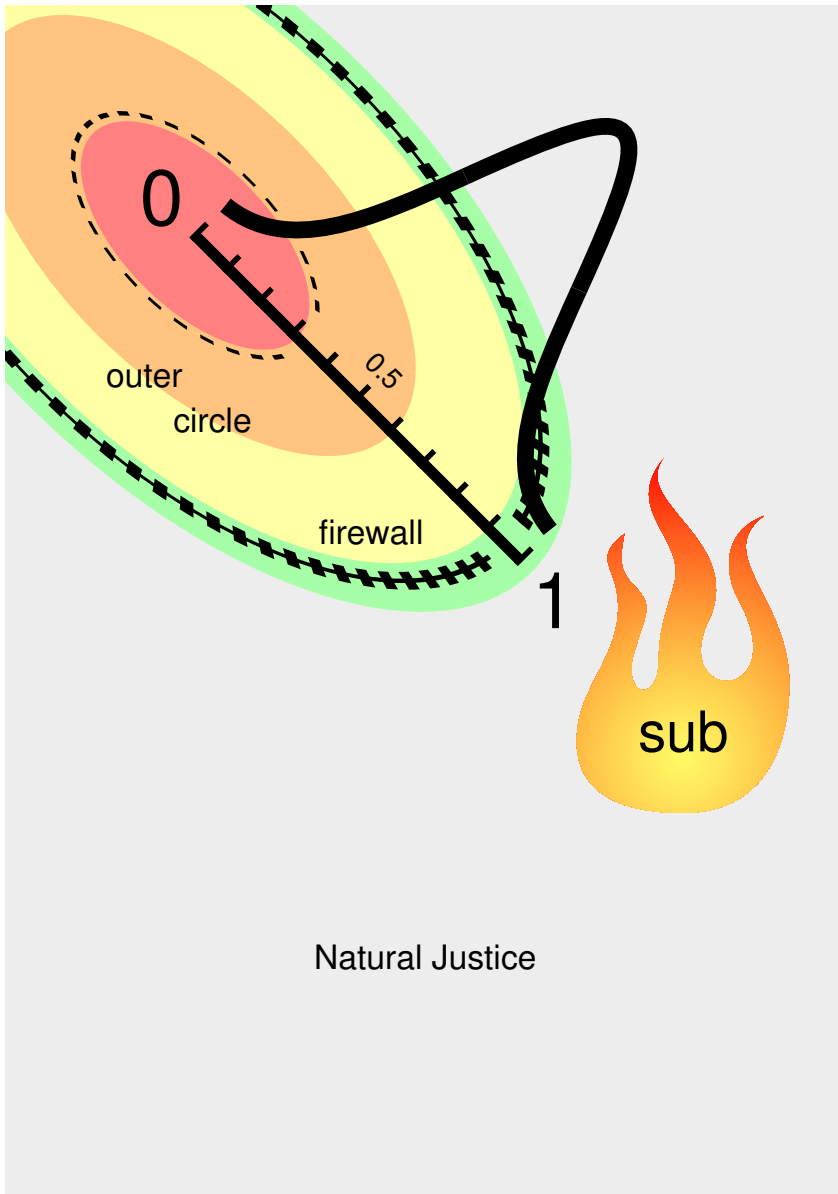
A NATURAL OR “normal” distribution of people according to a measure of physical heights is shown in this diagram. It is not as easy to measure the moral stature of individuals, but it seems likely that a diagram of the distribution of people along a scale of social alienation, from the center of a society to its outer limit, would look much the same. And that means the terms “moral” and “immoral” are not a simple dichotomy but are, like “tall” and “short,” just the names of two ends of a natural human distribution of moral stature. As the shape of the bell curve indicates, only a few exceptional people can be found at the two extreme ends of that, or any other natural distribution. The vertical lines in this diagram, for example, divide the scale of heights into three equal parts. And it is known that, in any natural distribution, the central one of those three parts will contain about two-thirds of all of the people in the entire sample. That is, only a relatively small number of people in any community are noticeably tall or short, or moral or immoral. (*Odiology*, p. 22)



ADDING THE bell curve over the obsoscale in this diagram indicates the moral distribution of members of a typical Obso-model society. About two-thirds of all members placed themselves within the orange, middle moral class. The red, upper moral class and the yellow, lower moral class each had about one-sixth of all members. But in spite of this imbalance, no one was confused about which way was “up.” Whenever the voluntary members of a moral community got together to discuss their feelings about social issues, it would have become quite clear to all of them that, in the formation of a moral consensus, some people would contribute much more than others. But those who contributed less still supported that consensus because they recognized the value and necessity of a moral consensus as the foundation for a good society. And they were willing to follow the leadership of people with higher moral stature, as long as those people served the social purpose of the community, rather than just their own personal purposes. (*Odiology*, p. 24)

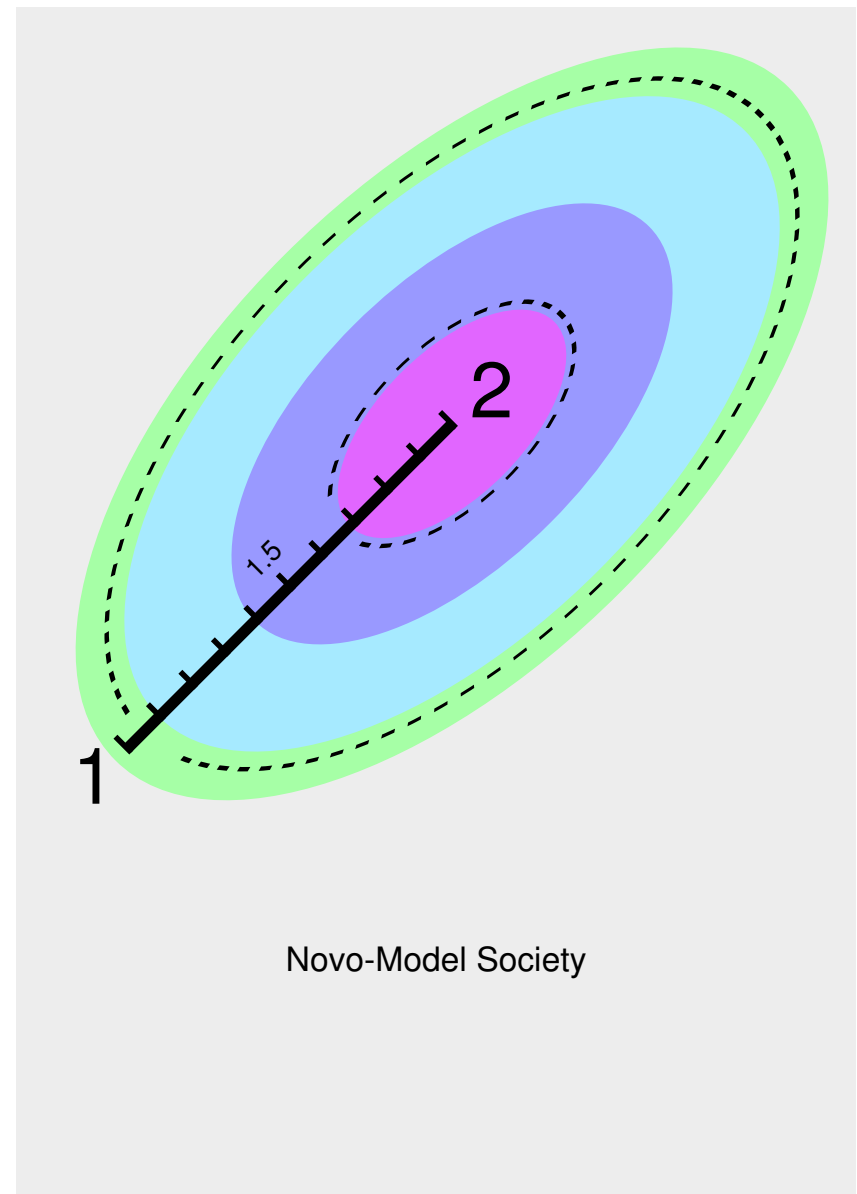


BUT THE OUTER limit of a typical Obso-model community did not extend beyond about .95 on the scale of alienation because no moral community could afford to include many self-serving individualists or, beyond them, those subhuman degenerates who also tried to satisfy their own appetites at the expense of everyone else. Those subhumans would just wreck a moral consensus by trying to replace rules that served social purposes with rules that served only their own personal purposes. So, for a moral community to ensure its own long-term stability and survival, it was always necessary for it to withdraw its outer circle far enough up the obsoscale to exclude such degenerates. And that is why a moral consensus was much more significant than the American notion of political consensus, which requires little more than a decisive majority. A moral consensus was, in effect, the definition of a community and its membership because no one who refused to embrace a moral community's consensus could be a member of that community. (*Odiology*, p. 31)

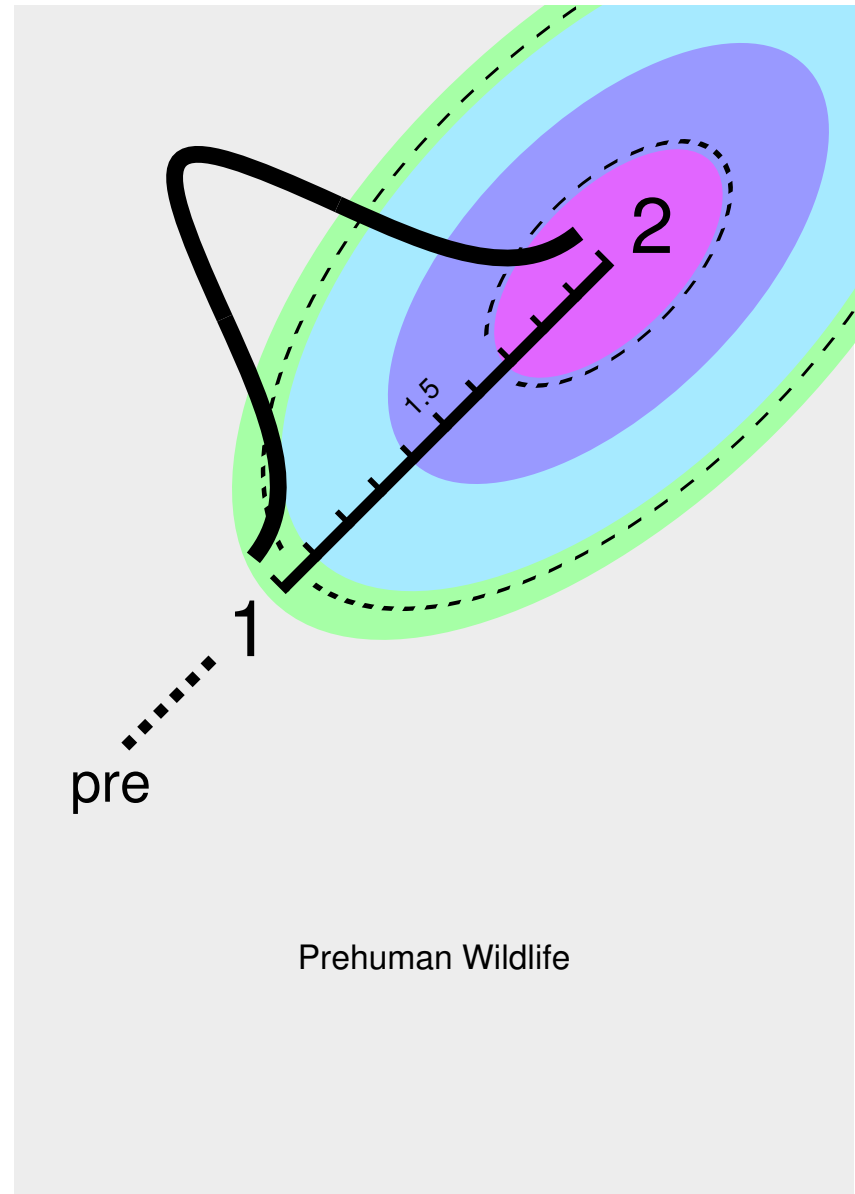


NATURAL SOCIAL hellfire, as the most elementary kind of social justice, played an essential part in the purification and protection of the moral consensus on which Obsolete societies were built. In this diagram, the outer limit of the community has become a firewall that protects the most politically flammable members inside the wall from the inferno of hellfire which is consuming politicians and other subhuman degenerates outside. And that is about the way most Americans, from within the safety of their own national firewall, perceive the situation of most other people in today's anarchistic world. They see various kinds of social hellfire consuming people in other countries day after day. And, while it is not a pleasant thing to watch, they see no reason to accept any blame for it or repudiate its obvious advantages. Most Americans simply assume, quite correctly, that such destructive hellfire is usually the consequence of, and the only good remedy for, the moral degeneracy of either the governors or the citizens of those other nations. (*Odiology*, p. 106)

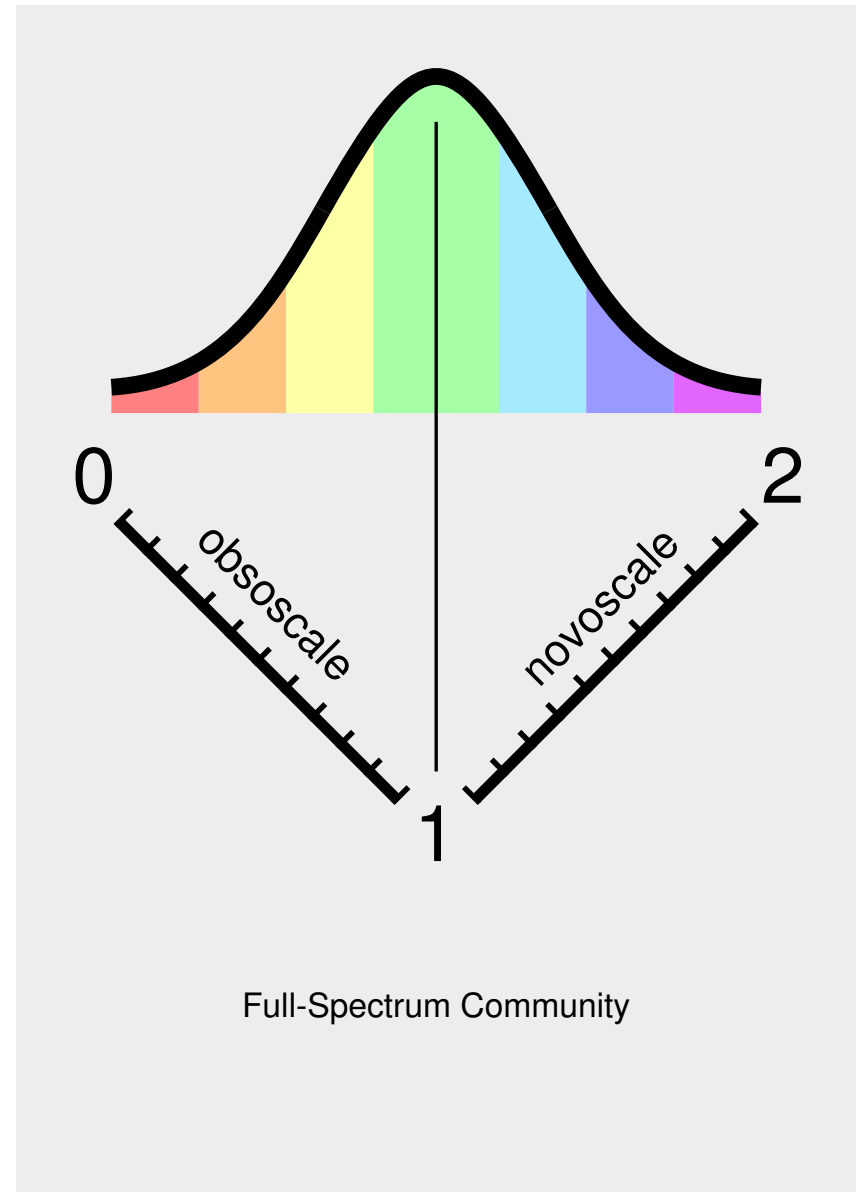
A PREHISTORIC Novo-model society, on the other hand, was a place where people had discovered the vastness of their human potentiality and had made themselves into producers as well as consumers of unnatural wealth. With the widest and longest social horizons, their purpose became the Enrichment of all of Humanity. Members of the (violet) upper class of human potentiality were fully dedicated to that purpose while members of the (indigo) middle potentiality class were mainly dedicated to the narrower purpose of Enriching their Community. Members of the (blue) lower potentiality class were usually limited to the family or factional purposes of Enriching Us. And, of course, (green) anti-social individualists were only interested in Enriching Me. The inner circles of Obso- and Novo-model societies served much the same purpose. But while the size of every Obso-model community's moral firewall was strictly limited, Novo-model communities could expand the size and reach of their constructive enclosures indefinitely. (*Novoasis*, p. 44)



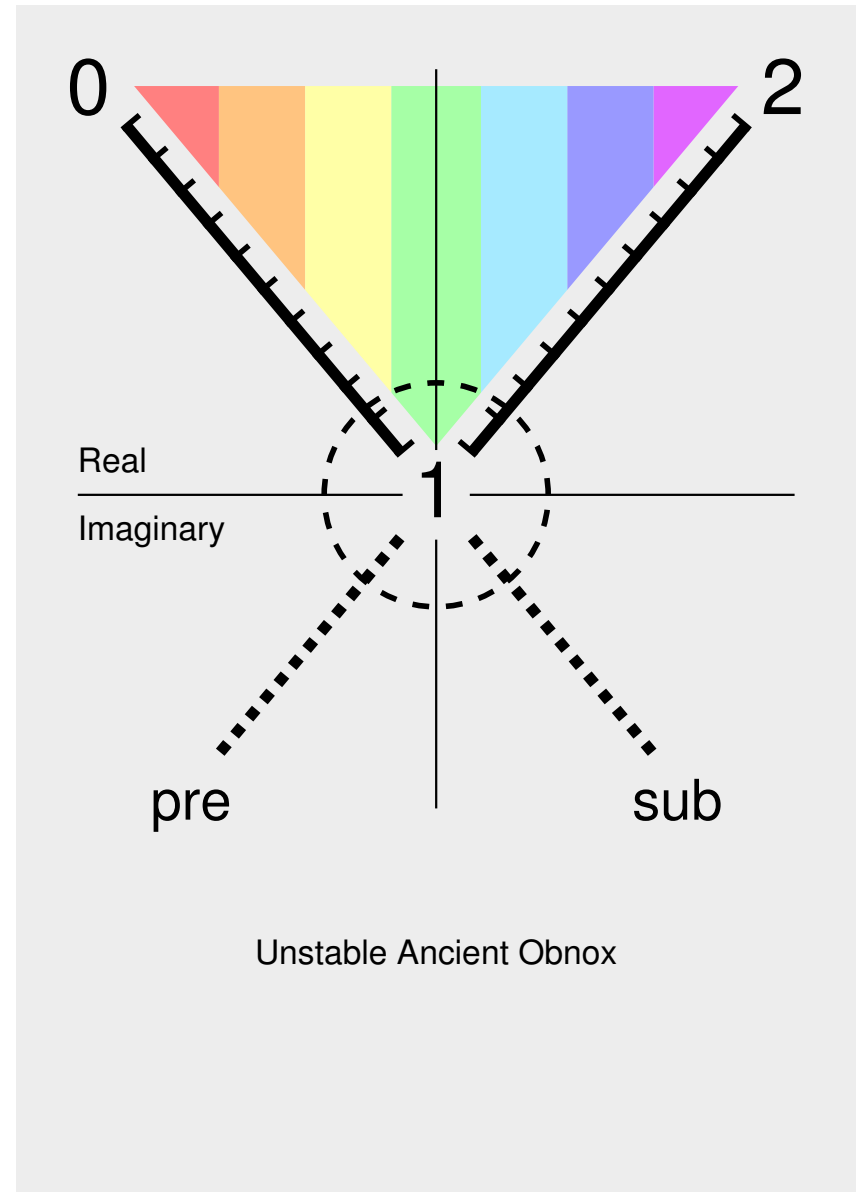
MOST MEMBERS of a Novo-model society (Novists) were members of its middle class. But they, like middle-class Obsists, were willing to accept the leadership of a much smaller upper class, so there was no confusion about which way was “up.” Obsists and Novists also agreed that anyone below the number “1” at the bottom of their scales of alienation was something less than human. Obsists thought all subhuman degenerates below “1” should be incarcerated or exterminated. But Novists regarded those below “1” as just being various kinds of prehuman wildlife – many of which were capable, with the proper instruction, of growing up to be real people. So, for example, Obsists believed their children were born into a state of perfect innocence and just needed to be kept from sliding down the obsoscale toward subhuman degeneracy. But Novists believed childhood was a prehuman state from which many, though not all children could escape by working their way up the novoscale onto higher levels of maturity, enlightenment and integrity. (*Novoasis*, p. 77)



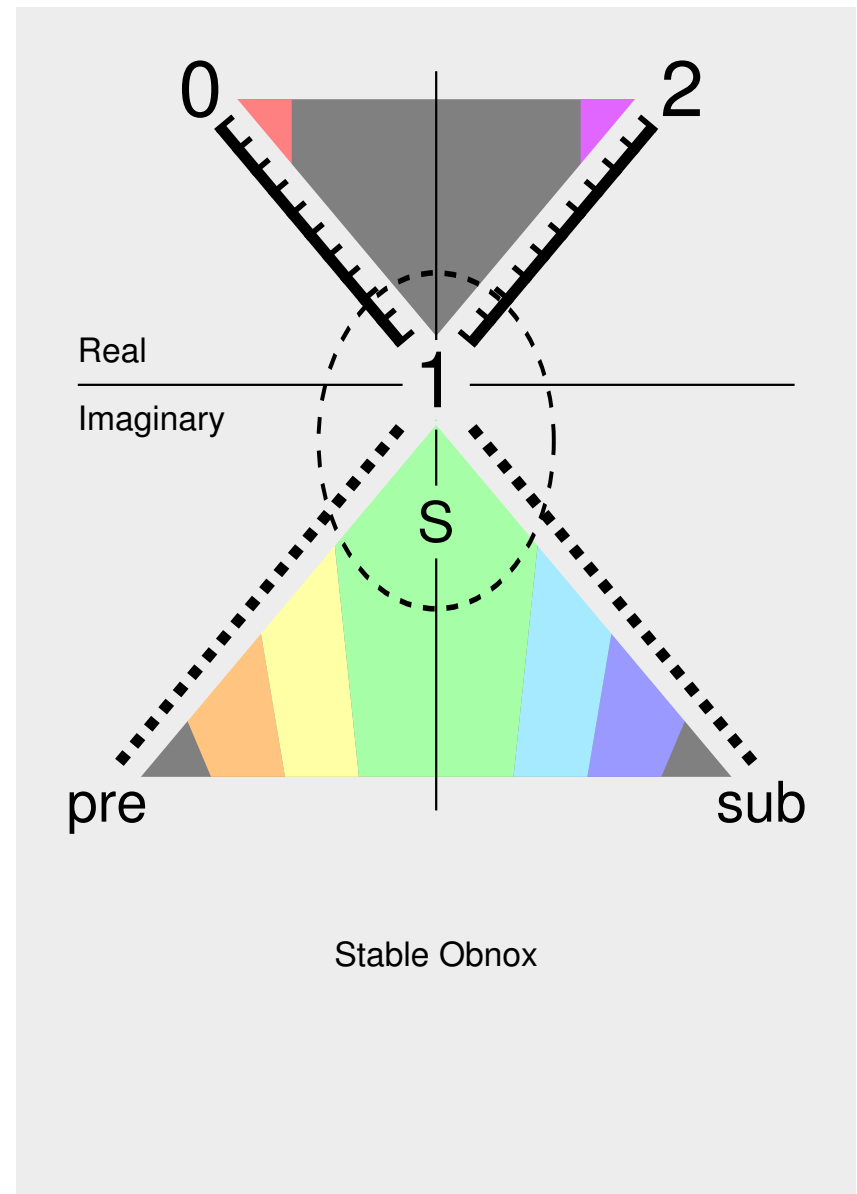
AMERICANS TEND to think a real society should include people from all colors of the social spectrum. But the first unnatural, full-spectrum communities were probably the result of armed conquest by gangs of thugs and tyrants. Those communities and their enslaved subjects served no constructive social purpose but only the consumptive purposes of their rulers. Obsist morality on the left, and Novist integrity on the right became so peripheral it was no longer clear to anyone which way was “up.” Instead, the community was dominated, as the diagram shows, by a middle class of green individualists who were just as self-serving as their rulers. The only social order was whatever order a tyrant and his gang of thugs could impose by force. And imposing such order on unruly or rebellious subjects was seldom easy because, at the same time, tyrants also had to contend with an endless train of rival gangs who, like the territorial animal predators they clearly resembled, always coveted rich habitats with an abundant supply of easy human prey. (*Novoasis*, p. 101)



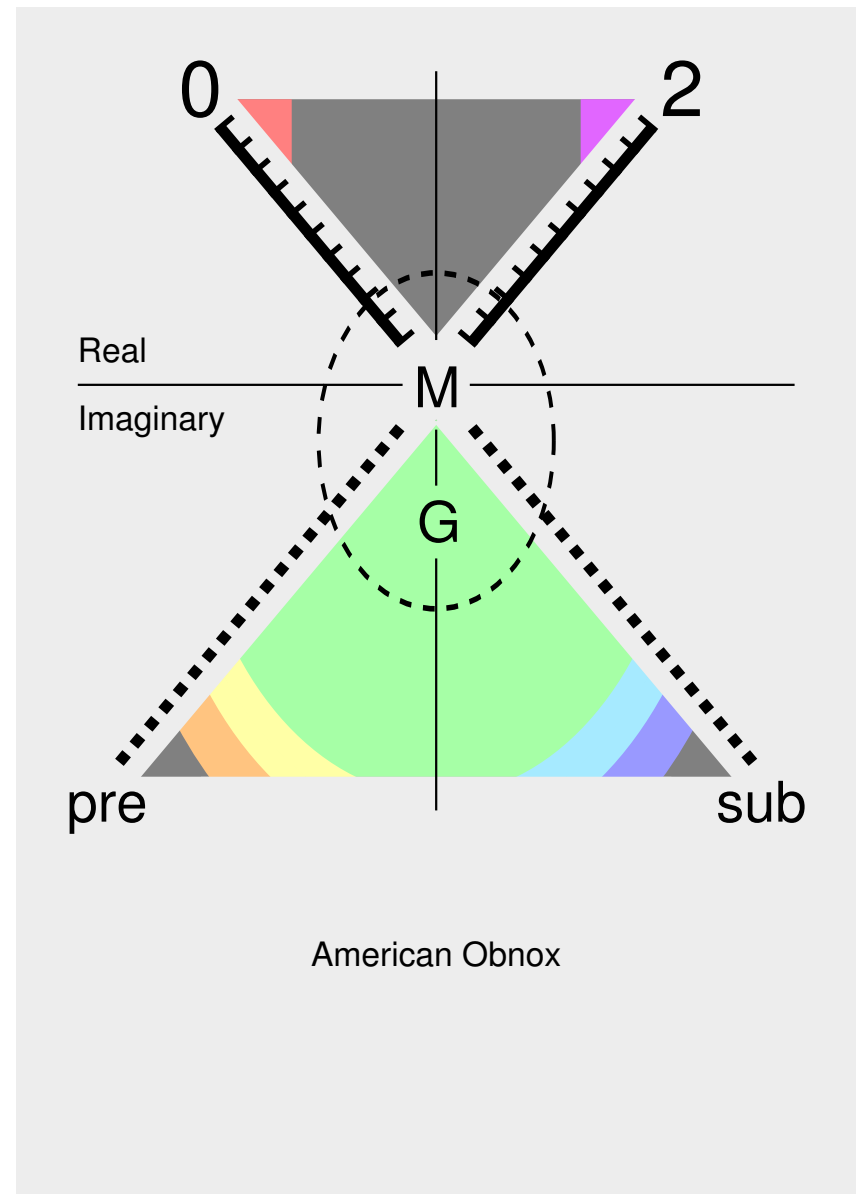
THAT KIND of community could never have become a real society. Its only social ideals were Obsist and Novist ideals, and trying to combine them did not lead to any better conception. It just produced a malformed, bastard offspring known as the “Obso-Novo Cross” or the ob-no-x shown in this diagram. The full-spectrum distribution of people is seen at the top, flipped and clipped. And only the tip of that triangle, representing collaborators from the greenest part of the social spectrum, reached into the tyrant’s inner circle. The instability of that arrangement was quite obvious. A ruling tyrant and his collaborators, at the very bottom of every social scale, had no legitimacy. They could never receive much social support because everyone else in the community was “looking down” on them. In fact, it would require a much more sophisticated kind of obnox to finally reduce the chaos of the ancient world and, after many centuries of further evolution, to become the philosophical basis for the obnoxious societies that dominate most of the world today. (*Novoasis*, p. 127)



STABILIZATION OF the ancient obnox required the psychological emigration of nearly all of the people in obnoxious communities from the real world to an imaginary world, where they could “look up to” tyrants, politicians and lawmongers instead of looking down on them. In return, those people would enjoy the comfort of perpetual, infantile dependency, having been relieved of all onerous, real-world burdens of morality, integrity or responsibility. That transformation was effected by a new institution located at the secondary point of focus (S) in an inner ellipse which replaced the old inner circle. In the beginning, the institution that created that illusion of legitimacy, both for itself and ruling thugs, was most likely to be some form of religion. Hard-core, self-sufficient Obsist and Novist groups survived in the real world but were treated as peripheral social idealists or “extremists.” In the imaginary world below, the domination of green individualism expanded even further, with real social alternatives limited to minor, local associations. (*Novoasis*, p. 105)



AMERICA'S FOUNDING fathers thought they could create a new society that would be much less obnoxious than its European ancestors. But the necessities of nationhood eventually extinguished that hope. Today, the primary point of focus of the American republic, as in most modern republics, is its military and paramilitary forces (M). Those forces defend societies from foreign enemies and also restore order at home whenever imaginary republican "social order" breaks down. Such breakdowns occur less often in America than in many other countries, which is why Americans can pretend that the primary focus of their society is actually the one occupied by their imaginary democratic government (G). That government and its various agencies must maintain and enforce an illusion of legitimacy that encompasses all parts of America's inner ellipse, apparently without help from any official religion. But when a republican state has no established religion, it is the apparatus of its governors and governesses that inevitably becomes its official religion.



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