reflektif
SOSYAL BİLİMLER DERGİSİ
JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

2020, Vol. 1(1), 109-123

DOI: 10.47613/reflektif.2020.7

Received: 05.08.2020
Accepted: 01.09.2020
Online Published: 18.09.2020

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In Search of Human Nature
İnsan Doğasının Peşinde

Keywords
Psychology, psychology paradigms, psychology methods Diane Sunar

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Psikoloji, psikoloji paradigmaları, psikoloji yöntemleri Diane Sunar

In recent years I have been teaching a general elective course called "Human Nature". On the first day of class, when I ask the students to tell me what they think about human nature, most of their responses revolve around the question of whether human beings are naturally cooperative and good, or naturally selfish and bad (the majority tends to favor the second alternative). Later in the course, I ask them to tell me what they think morality is; most say it is a set of rules for behavior imposed on the individual by society. A few of them dissent, maintaining that conscience is inborn. Like generations of moral philosophers before them, no matter what their position, most are pretty sure they are right in their judgments; but they are flummoxed by the question of how society, composed of naturally selfish individuals, is able to generate and enforce moral rules, or how naturally good individuals come to form societies full of greed, injustice and violence.

It is not only philosophers who are vexed by these questions, but social scientists also, and the answers proposed are as contentious today as they were in ancient times. This essay is an account of my particular wanderings as a social psychologist through these and related

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questions, from where I started as a student more than half a century ago to the present day, in various academic settings and through sometimes radical transformations both in my own views and in prevailing orthodoxies in the field.

Getting started: Berkeley and the 1960's

It is impossible for me to relate this or any other part of my intellectual and academic story without some detail about my graduate education and experience. However far in the past, and however much transformed by later learning and thinking, much of what I have done and thought throughout my career has its roots there.

When I entered the doctoral program in social psychology at the University of California, Berkeley in the fall of 1967, I faced a bewildering mix of rigorous scientific study together with critiques of the epistemological underpinnings of science, on the one hand, and examples of career-oriented professionalism on the other; the hippie movement and the "greening" of American culture; anti-war (Vietnam) activism and militaristic suppression of protest; the ubiquitous slogan "Make love, not war", that succinct fusion of anti-war, anti-authoritarian sentiment and sexual liberation; and endless discussion and debate, both intellectual and ideological, in every classroom, café, bookstore, and public space. Coming as I did from a small college, and having majored not in psychology but in English literature, every item in this mix was a challenge to me.

What had brought me there, among other things, was the naïve desire to understand "the nature of human nature". Inspired by an undergraduate reading of Erikson's (1950) *Childhood and Society*, I saw this not as a philosophical question but rather as an empirical one, specifically a psychosocial and developmental question – thus my choice of social psychology as my area of study.

What I found there at the beginning was a kind of intellectual boot camp, a rapid but deep dive into the different schools and tools of psychology. Whether it was the intricacies of various versions of behaviorism, or those of the psychoanalytic approach, psychology seemed to me to be disappointingly deterministic, dismissive of conscious experience, and divorced from the social context. The first stirrings of "third force" (self-actualization) psychology – which remained marginal – and the "cognitive revolution" – which in later decades gained virtual hegemony over the field – had newly begun to make themselves felt, while the words "neuroscience" and "postmodernism" had been heard by only a few psychologists. The year 1968 was marked by social and political tumult in many parts of the world (and Berkeley saw its share); it also seems as good a year as any to mark upheaval in psychological science – and a lot of it was happening at, or least was visible from, Berkeley. It was excellent preparation for the many years I later spent teaching the history of psychology.

In contrast to the major schools, social psychology had no overriding theory; what it did have was a wide array of fascinating problems, and the determination to solve them using

experimental and other empirical methods. However, it is probably fair to say that social psychological theory and research of the 1950's and 60's was dominated by the attempt to come to terms with the moral questions posed by World War II and particularly the Holocaust. Early on, Adorno et al. (1950)[1] tried to understand the people who "just followed orders" in carrying out genocide by analyzing their "authoritarian personality" and its source in their upbringing. On the general assumption that the child is molded by its parents' attitudes and behavior, a "socialization" literature grew up, identifying different parenting styles and investigating the child outcomes associated with them. An important subset of these efforts directly connected parenting practices with the child's "internalization" of morality, helping to define one of my theoretical interests. The fascination I felt with questions of moral development intensified when I listened to a lecture by Lawrence Kohlberg, whose proposed theory of stagewise moral development (e.g., Kohlberg, 1969) was gaining a great deal of attention in developmental and social psychology and went on to establish itself firmly in standard textbooks for the rest of the century. The idea that children's acquisition of morality followed an epigenetic pattern rather than being simply an outcome of indoctrination or reinforcement contingencies, and that it could potentially eventuate in "postconventional" principles,[2] resonated with my earlier notion of "human nature."

Other social psychologists queried whether obedient Nazis were actually no different from anyone else; what if the evil they did was simply "banal" (Arendt, 1963), the product of normal personality and social processes? If so, what were those processes? Studies of obedience, conformity, social identity and the power of the situation attempted to provide answers. While few of these studies directly focused on morality, in fact a very large portion of them were implicitly engaged in the effort to discover the sources of an evil that was manifested, not as antisocial behavior, but rather as socially normative behavior, and to specify the conditions that could provoke, prevent or ameliorate the harm.

Many of these studies showed that being subjected to the power of an authority or group could lead to harmful or immoral behavior; but I was curious about how having power would affect the actual power holder. In my dissertation research I looked for the origin of derogatory stereotypes of dominated groups in the injustice inherent in a power relationship. This required an examination of justice norms and their effects on interpersonal perception as a mechanism of self justification (Sunar, 1978), and it united moral concerns with both personality and relationship dynamics.[3]

Apart from specific theories or research areas, certain books, authors and concepts that I first encountered at Berkeley were especially influential on my future thinking. For example, T. S. Kuhn's (1962) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* was a revelation to me, though perhaps the lesson I took from it was different from that taken by most social scientists. Many psychologists bemoaned the fact that psychology had not "yet" attained the "status" of paradigmatic science; others, more often sociologists and anthropologists, seemed to take it as an affirmation of relativism, or even as a decoupling of science and the notions of truth or reality.

For me, the important takeaway was that science is a social project, and that although scientific knowledge at any given point in time is a matter of consensus, empirical epistemology nevertheless sets science off from other human explanatory systems by sometimes generating "anomalies", which render at least some versions of ontology and methodology untenable. That is, science may not be able to tell us what is true, but it can, in the long run, identify some of the things that cannot be true. This consciousness of the provisional status of scientific "fact" is still with me, and leads me to forewarn each new class of students that most if not all of what we think we know is likely to turn out to be wrong.

In a related vein, but more directly relevant to social psychology, *The Social Construction of Reality* (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), spelled out how social norms, institutions and everyday understandings of reality in all its manifestations arise from shared practices, and how shared practices in turn arise from the most basic, even preverbal, elements of interaction. Psychological approaches that focused on the individual, whether behaviorist, psychodynamic, cognitive or even "third force" self-actualization theories, all lacked this grounding in social interaction.

Some themes from my time in Berkeley have stayed with me, repeatedly showing up in one form or another in later years. Specific interests in justice, morality, parenting styles and practices, and the psychology of power have been recurring themes in my research and teaching, and likewise some affinities for more general approaches have endured. One of these is an affinity for interactionist and functionalist approaches rather than one-way, cause-effect thinking. Another is for what I could very loosely term "structural" approaches (not to be identified with any particular version of "structuralist" psychology, anthropology, sociology, or linguistics): that is, attempts to understand behavior or psychological phenomena in terms of their relationships to a larger system or whole.

Middle East Technical University and the 1970's

With my dissertation still in draft form, I began teaching at Middle East Technical University in the fall of 1972, facing an even more encompassing culture shock than the one I had lived through in Berkeley. In addition to a new language and culture, it was a time of intense turmoil within the university that was reflected all the way down to the departmental level. On one particularly tense occasion, I became very concerned that a clash between a crowd of students and the gendarmerie troops was about to erupt. A young colleague watching with me responded to my concern by smugly reciting the adage that "to make an omelette you have to break a few eggs," and in that moment I realized that the assumptions I had brought with me from Berkeley about the aims and nature of student protest did not apply here. There was no trace of the playfulness of "make love, not war"; it was just war.

Despite all the distractions, there were opportunities for intellectual stimulation and comradeship at METU. Discussions of John Rawls' new book, *A Theory of Justice* (1971),

served to better ground my understanding of justice and to reinforce my interest in Kohlberg's justice-based theory of moral development. Most importantly, one of my departmental colleagues shared my interest in justice phenomena. We devoted our Saturday mornings (as public employees we were required to be in the office then) to developing a theory that turned out to be ahead of its time.[4]

We observed that much research in the equity model of distributive justice had focused on comparisons within a larger organization, where fairness as proportionality required unequal outcomes if inputs were unequal, but that another body of research in sociology and anthropology focused on reciprocity, where fairness required exchange that is judged as equal, at least over the long run. In other words, there appeared to be two separate norms of justice, one requiring equality and the other proportional distribution. We suggested that the nature of the interaction, whether direct or "mediated" (dependent on connection through a mediating link, such as an organization or defined group) would determine which norm would be activated. In a cross-cultural experimental study (Aral & Sunar, 1977), we found evidence supporting this hypothesis, but also hints that there might be a third norm favoring equality regardless of the structure of the interaction, together with some cultural differences. Unfortunately the trend of the time favored seeking causality either in the individual or in the "environment," rather than in the relationship. It was not until the 1990's that anthropologists began to develop approaches that would be hospitable to these kinds of ideas.

Boğaziçi University: the 1980's and 1990's

In 1979, I transferred to Boğaziçi University, where I stayed for the next 23 years – a long enough time to include many phases, projects, diversions and digressions, indeed long enough to move from more or less "early career" almost all the way to "late career."

For about the first half of my time at Boğaziçi, much of my research attention was directed to two large projects. Both involved aspects of parenting practices and their outcomes, but did not deal directly with morality or moral development.

The first was the "Turkish Early Enrichment Project" (TEEP), an intervention designed to improve school readiness of young children living in economically deprived conditions by training mothers to support their children's cognitive development. TEEP successfully demonstrated that mother training could be as effective as center-based preschool education in improving school readiness and primary school performance, and long-term effects were seen in lower dropout rates after primary school (Kağıtçıbaşı, Sunar, & Bekman, 2001) and even much later in higher educational attainment and better employment in young adulthood (Kağıtçıbaşı, Sunar, Bekman, Baydar, & Cemalcılar, 2009). The mother-training program was adapted for wider-scale application with the 1993 founding of AÇEV, which continues to serve families and young children today. The study is now well known in Turkey and abroad,

and still stands as one of the very few early childhood intervention studies carried out in a non-Western country with a randomized experimental design (see Efevbera, et al., 2018).

While TEEP was motivated largely by social justice concerns – contributing to better life chances for children of rural-to-urban migrants – I was also curious about how family life, especially parenting practices in the urban middle class, might be changing with the rapid social and demographic shifts taking place in Turkey. To investigate this question, I launched a study of teenage children (14-15 years old), their parents, and their living grandparents, surveying each generation's memories of their own parents' behavior, as well as measuring sex role stereotypes, self esteem, and related characteristics. Results revealed that some practices showed great stability across generations, such as warm relations between parents and children, and close surveillance of children coupled with an absence of rules, while other practices showed steady change across the generations, notably progressively milder forms of punishment, greater recognition of autonomy to children and reduced sex role stereotyping with each succeeding generation. Each generation of parents appeared to follow a different set of norms, partly continuous with the past and partly geared to changing demographic, social and economic circumstances. On the other hand, in all three generations, children's self esteem and their attitudes toward their parents varied in response to their own parents' practices, showing higher self esteem and feeling greater closeness to parents when they were less punitive and more encouraging of autonomy (Sunar, 2002, 2009a).

For most of the decade of the 1990's, my attention turned to other research issues, such as self-construal and sources of self esteem, but my interest in morality was kept alive by supervising a number of master's theses on related issues, sometimes extending to include the connection between moral judgment and religiosity. For example, one student adapted a widely-used measure of Kohlberg's developmental stages into Turkish, which opened the way for further studies using that measure; another documented the effect of exposure to war on level of moral judgment; still others investigated whether there was any relation between religious belief and moral judgment or moral behavior. An experimental study also showed that different types of altruistic behavior show different age patterns of emergence in early childhood.

Towards the end of this period, I began to encounter a newly-emerging and exciting literature, revolving around applications of evolutionary thinking to psychology, challenges to Kohlberg's stagewise model of moral development, and challenges to the importance of parental styles of behavior. This encounter was facilitated both by events in my own life – after many years of relative immobility, I had several opportunities to travel abroad for conferences and to spend time at some U.S. universities – as well as by developments in the wider world, especially the explosive growth of the internet, which revolutionized the processes of literature search, scholarly publication and informal communication among scholars. Although I began to explore some of the new ideas with students in advanced courses, it took some time for me to discern the larger paradigmatic shift that was in the making.

Kohlberg had seen his cognitive-developmental approach as a revolution against the idea of "socialization": rather than being the passive recipient of parental shaping, the growing child used the experience of perspective-taking in social interaction to construct progressively more inclusive understandings of equality and reciprocity, potentially moving beyond conventional morality to a "self-chosen" set of universal principles in adulthood. In this epigenetic vision of development, morality is not taught and learned but rather created and recreated in a series of irreversible stages. Interestingly, socialization theorists and researchers responded, not by refuting or rejecting the attempted revolution but by domesticating it, focusing on which parenting styles would promote moving through the stages more rapidly and successfully.

This domestication could be seen as an instance of a victory for environmentalism in the ongoing struggle between "nature" and "nurture" as explanatory principles in the social sciences. Not only the reinforcement-based behavioristic learning theories of earlier decades of the 20th century, but also the situationism prevalent in mid-century social psychological explanations of obedience and conformity, predisposed most mainstream psychologists to seek the source of individual behavior in external influences. Anthropologists and sociologists also, fighting against prejudicial views of different racial, ethnic and cultural groups as inferior, argued forcefully for a view of the human mind as a "blank slate", differentiated only by processes of culture and socialization. [5] Thus models of development that posited an active subject, like Piaget's "naïve scientist" or Kohlberg's moral reasoner, or that proposed innately programmed stages of development (this includes not only cognitive-developmental theories but also psychoanalysis and its derivatives), tended to become incorporated into the environmentalist framework by means of a focus on parental and other environmental influences in negotiating the stages.

However, the ability of the environmentalist paradigm (if we can call it that) to absorb dissent was fraying badly by the late 1990's; anomalies (if we can call them that) had been appearing on many fronts, at least since the 1960's. One of the most obvious problems was the convoluted stance of environmentalists toward evolution. "Belief" in evolution by means of natural selection, or Darwinian evolution, including the idea that the species *homo sapiens* had emerged through that process, was almost universal among educated people in the West. But the idea that consciousness and other aspects of the human mind might have evolved and could be inherited was anathema, as noted above. Any suggestion to the contrary was rejected as "genetic determinism" that could easily serve rascist and fascist ideologies. Was the brain evolved? – of course: along with bipedalism, opposable thumbs, and a larynx suited to making the sounds of language, the human brain had certainly evolved. Studies of sensation, perception, memory, and other psychological processes clearly demonstrated that specific parts of the brain were specialized for specific functions. But the line was drawn at "higher mental processes," especially consciousness and thought.

Language can serve as an example. Specific brain areas seemed to be involved in language reception and production. But when Chomsky (1965) proposed an innate "language

acquisition device" and "universal grammar" – even though he avoided any attempt to locate them in the physical brain – protests against his "nativist" model rose immediately. Or take a very different example, the matter of self awareness. Gallup (1970) demonstrated that at least some animals are able to recognize themselves in a mirror, indicating that the ability may be an evolved trait, but other researchers hurried to show that human self awareness was unique and presumably therefore not "reducible" to biological processes. After three decades of accumulation of multiple types of evidence regarding the evolution of the mind, Dennett (1996) argued convincingly in *Darwin's Dangerous Idea* that the logic of natural selection is a "universal acid" that cannot be contained, but applies at every level to every mental phenomenon, including consciousness, freedom of will, and other concepts that have traditionally been insulated from naturalistic explanations.

Results from my three-generation study of child-rearing practices had been quite rich, with a great many statistically "significant" outcomes, but I had felt a lingering disappointment with the rather modest explanatory power of my variables – and I began to notice the same pattern in much of the research on the effects of child rearing practices. Somehow I was missing something fundamental, and I suspected that other researchers were missing it as well. In the mid-1990's, a paper entitled "Where is the Child's Environment?" (Harris, 1995) appeared at almost the same time as books summarizing work in the new field of behavioral genetics (e.g., Plomin, 1994; Rowe, 1994). The behavior geneticists argued that many psychological characteristics, including intelligence and personality traits, have a large heritability component, so that similarity between parents and offspring is mostly due to heredity, and Harris went further to claim that heredity is almost the only type of influence from parents – that the peer group has much stronger effects than parenting practices, except in cases of outright neglect or abuse. These ideas fell like a bomb on the community of scholars studying child rearing practices;[6] as for me, contrary to the outrage or outright dismissal expressed by many researchers, I felt enlightened. To my mind, the mystery of weak parenting effects had moved much closer to a solution. Needless to say, this was another anomaly for the environmentalist paradigm.

Perhaps the most telling blow came from studies of altruism (acting to benefit others at a cost to the self). Endless debates about whether any action could be truly free of self interest have failed to solve the issue conclusively (although see Batson, 2019), but while psychologists debated the motives of helpers, biologists were tackling the "problem of altruism", as it was called. Most interpreters of Darwinian evolution had assumed that universal competition was an iron law that doomed cooperators to extinction; but empirical evidence of altruism – observations that individual members of many animal species perform risky behaviors that benefit others of their group – had accumulated to the point that it could not be denied. William Hamilton (1965) provided the first mathematical demonstration that altruism could be selected for among kin, because kin share many of their genes. If altruistic behavior promotes successful reproduction of close kin, genetically speaking it may be worth the cost. This idea

was popularized by Richard Dawkins (1976) as the "selfish gene" and by the expert on cooperative insects, Edward O. Wilson[7] (1975), who suggested in *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* that many features of human psychology, including morality, might have an evolved genetic basis. Soon Robert Trivers applied evolutionary reasoning to "reciprocal altruism" (essentially reciprocity) and to the consequences for mate choice of parental investment (Trivers, 1971, 1972). By 1990, John Tooby and Leda Cosmides proclaimed that "the present explains the past" and that "modern skulls house a stone age mind." Sociobiology had morphed into "evolutionary psychology."[8]

A few years later, Steven Pinker (2002) attacked the environmental-determinist model of the mind as a "blank slate," supporting an alternative approach that recognized the genetic endowment of the evolved organism and its environment as mutually defining, so that neither can have any effects except through the other. Matt Ridley (2003) developed the argument further, arguing that the debate between nature and nurture cannot be resolved because it is a meaningless question. It is no accident that the titles of several of the books mentioned here include the words "human nature"; each of them – and many others as well – sought to reclaim the concept of human nature from the environmentalists, whether of the behaviorist or the constructionist variety. However, far from defending "nature" as determinative, these authors have invited scientists to transcend the old divide altogether.

Istanbul Bilgi University: The new century

In 2002, I retired from Boğaziçi University and joined Istanbul Bilgi University to participate in building up a new university, explicitly focused on the social sciences. The move to Bilgi was not only a change from one institution to another, but it introduced me to a new perspective on academic life: I would spend the next sixteen years in various administrative or governance roles, while still carrying on my research and teaching.

My first large project at Bilgi turned my focus to the social norms governing the expression of emotion ("display rules"). With my coauthors, we carried out the Turkish portion of the research in a worldwide study of cultural rules for emotional display. In addition to interesting patterns of similarity and difference across cultures, the most important finding for my later thinking was that display rules are strongly dependent on relational factors, such as the degree of closeness and the relative status position of the person experiencing the emotion and the target (Bolak-Boratav, Sunar & Ataca, 2011; Matsumoto, Yoo, Fontaine, et al., 2008). This was yet another example of how individual behavior depends not only on personal characteristics but also on relational context.

Meanwhile the psychological study of morality, stimulated on the one hand by the evolutionary approach to altruism and reciprocity (e.g., Trivers, 1971, 1972), was jolted by ideas from anthropology on the other. Kohlberg's theory had been under attack since the late 1980's for its inadequacies in explaining morality in non-Western cultures, but beginning in

the late 1990's an alternative vision, centered not on reasoning about justice but on intuitive, emotion-based judgments, had begun to coalesce (e.g., Haidt, 2001). The anthropologist Richard Shweder and his colleagues proposed that morality is not unitary but plural, having three different domains or codes: autonomy (individual rights and preferences), community (duties, norms, social obligations), and divinity (purity, the sacred) (Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park, 1997), and that violations of each code give rise to specific emotions of disapproval (anger, contempt, and disgust, respectively) (Rozin, Lowery, Imada, & Haidt, 1999). These developments were soon followed by the theory of moral foundations (Haidt & Joseph, 2008), which differentiated Shweder's moral codes into more specific concerns: autonomy yielded care and fairness; community yielded hierarchy and ingroup loyalty; and divinity was expanded to include all varieties of purity. Haidt was influenced not only by Shweder but also by Alan Fiske, another anthropologist whose theory of relational models (Fiske, 1992) had earlier identified similar concerns.[9]

Having proposed in the 1970's that justice norms might be multiple, and might depend on the nature of the relation between social actors (direct versus mediated, in the terms we had used then), I was immediately drawn to the pluralist view of morality, and reasoned that Fiske's relational models could be matched to particular moral concerns. My paper, "Suggestions for a New Integration in the Psychology of Morality" (Sunar, 2009b) was exactly what the title suggests – an attempt to construct a framework for integrating evolutionary roots, relational models, moral codes or foundations, and the self-blaming and other-blaming moral emotions, which I suggested may be reciprocal or complementary.

The latter suggestion received cross-cultural support in a recent study (Sunar, Cesur, Piyale, Tepe, Biten, Hill, & Koç, 2020), but this study has led me nearly full circle, back to my dissertation: we found that actors in a dominant role who behave immorally were attributed very different patterns of self- and other-blaming emotions than those who behave immorally in a subordinate role.[10] Clearly, there is much more work to be done.

Between past and future

A reader who has followed this narrative this far may justifiably ask, after all these wanderings, have you actually reached any conclusions? How would *you* answer the question that you ask your students that first day in class?

The easy reply would be to say that I am still searching; to an important degree that is an honest answer (especially in view of my caveat to both my students and myself that much of what we think we know now will later turn out not to be true). And I believe that, even if we are on the right track, much remains to be discovered or clarified. However, although a great deal of my thinking has been done in dialogue with students, I would probably not have set up a whole course based entirely on questions with no answers; even if my answers are tentative, I do offer them for my students' consideration. What follows is a highly condensed version of the conclusions I have gleaned so far.

We are the biggest-brained, most inventive, most reflective, and most destructive mammals on earth – and also the most social. A self-sufficient human is no more possible than a self-sufficient bee or ant. Evolution has shaped not only our bodies but our minds, equipping them for survival in many physical environments but most especially for survival within and by means of our relationships and groups. This shaping can be seen in the many dozens of individual and group characteristics and behaviors that appear to be universal (found in all known societies and cultures: see Brown, 1991). Rational creatures though we may believe ourselves to be, we experience a constant flow of feelings and emotions that accompany, motivate, guide, and reward or punish all of our thoughts and actions; to an extent not accessible to consciousness, all our cognitive processes including "executive function" (planning, decision making) commingle with this flow. As sexually reproducing creatures whose females necessarily make larger parental investments, males' and females' mate preferences are somewhat differently adapted for maximization of reproductive success; one important outcome is competition with members of one's own sex, which is reproductively more consequential in males (males are more likely to be excluded completely from reproduction, with implications not only for the individual but for the larger group). Like all group-living mammals, we strive for dominance and form hierarchies within our groups, motivated by both survival and reproductive concerns, but accommodate ourselves behaviorally, psychologically and physiologically to subordinate positions when necessary.

The extreme helplessness of human infants, and their long period of dependency, requires cooperative effort on the part of adults to meet their developmental needs. The dependence of individuals, whether juveniles or adults, on the support of the group makes identification with the group and group loyalty highly functional. Motivations for behaviors that support survival and flourishing of the group, that is to say, cooperative behaviors such as altruism, reciprocity and group defense, have likely been selected for through evolution, and these motivations can be observed in rudimentary form beginning in infancy. We approve of heroes, helpers, and reciprocators long before we can talk, and likewise we disapprove of and desire to punish cheaters, feeling anger, disgust and contempt towards them. Our behavior is not only approved and disapproved by others; when we cheat or fail to cooperate we disapprove of our own actions, feeling guilt and shame. "Self-interested" behavior may be *antisocial*, but it is not *asocial* in nature; rather, it aims at gaining greater power or status vis-à-vis others.

Morality (defined as modes of behavior that promote cooperation within the group) can take several basic forms, according to how a relation is structured at any given time. When group identity is paramount, whether for a family or other unit, the moral imperatives are first, to maintain the group's boundaries by observing its rules and taboos, and second, to meet the needs of the members, without regard to their position within the group. In a hierarchy, respect for authority, obedience and pastoral responsibility are morally required. When there is a question of exchange or access to resources, the relevant moral rules require equal sharing, reciprocity, or turn-taking. When resources are to be distributed, they should be distributed

proportionally and equitably. The plurality of sources of morality gives rise to frequent moral dilemmas at both individual and group levels, and differential prioritization of the different moral codes leads to much social conflict.

Even though group harmony benefits the group as a whole, especially in its competition with other groups, competitive behavior can benefit the individual in terms of reproductive success, access to resources, and status within the group. These two sets of motivations – for actions that benefit the group, and those that benefit the self – are always in tension, and neither is more basic than the other. Similar considerations apply to relations between groups: a common goal or common enemy can foster cooperation, while competition can benefit one group at the expense of the other. (Thus politics and history!)

This vision of human nature as evolved to be essentially social, dominated by feeling, and subject to mutually contradictory motivations, cannot ignore culture and its thoroughgoing penetration of cognitive and emotional systems, or the very strong likelihood that culture itself changes through nongenetic but nevertheless evolutionary processes. Nor can it deny the infinite variability of individual experience, abilities, motivations and identities. But it may serve to ground our perspectives as we try to understand both larger-scale human actions and particular individuals.

1 The research for The Authoritarian Personality was mostly carried out at UC Berkeley, as were many subsequent studies of child rearing practices and their effects.

2 This notion appealed both to those who wished for some sort of antidote to the image of the "banal" evildoer, and those who hoped for transcendence over conventional morality. For example, some Berkeley researchers found evidence that participants in sit-in protests were more likely than a random sample of students to be rated as postconventional moral reasoners (Haan, Smith, & Block, 1968).

3 Although I had hoped to test my ideas cross-culturally (which would have been unusual at that time) by carrying out the study in both the US and Turkey, Turkish officials denied my application for permission. Later, while teaching at Middle East Technical University, I was able to repeat part of the study with Turkish students, focusing on sex role stereotypes, and did find some cross-cultural validation for the main hypotheses (Sunar, 1982).

4 Being ahead of one's time does not necessarily bring advantages; it is more likely to bring editorial rejections!

5 Degler (1991) gives a detailed account of the rise, fall, and return of evolutionary ideas in 20th century social science.

6 Actually most were unfazed; 25 years later many such scholars continue to tease out the small differences in child characteristics and behavior associated with different parental behaviors without taking account of either heritability or peer influence. In contrast, students have generally been receptive to the new ideas, although they have shown serious resistance to the claim from behavior genetics that parenting practices play only a minor role in a child's personality development. They simply do not want to believe it, regardless of the evidence; some of have admitted to me that they prefer to believe that they will have an important favorable influence on their own (future) children's personality.

7 Wilson suffered the 1970's version of "cancel culture" by widespread denunciation and even a pitcher of ice water dumped on his head when he took the podium to speak on the topic of sociobiology at a 1978 meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. It should be noted that Wilson later abandoned the idea of kin selection in favor of multilevel selection (within-group altruism is advantageous in between-group competition).

8 I believe that I can claim to be the first to teach evolutionary psychology as an undergraduate psychology course in a Turkish university: first as a special topics course in 2002 at Boğaziçi, and later as a departmental elective at Bilgi.

9 Fiske later suggested that "morality is relationship regulation" (Rai & Fiske, 2011).

10 With most of the same research team we have also identified specific features of laypersons' conceptualizations of morality in Turkish culture (Cesur, et al. 2020).

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