

CHAPTER 28

COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES

When we engage in patent exclusion and predation of others, we may naturally encounter resistance. Humans commonly have a low threshold for resistance against such actions to become violent. Even if no manifest opposition forms for each single act of oppression, the accumulation of such acts is likely to generate growing resentment in disadvantaged individuals over time. Recurring or continuing preclusion and taking of means and deleterious consequences they inflict create friction that may have victims' tempers eventually boil over. Physical confrontation is likely because the preclusion of others from accessing resources we want to reserve for ourselves and the taking of their possessions are in essence physical acts. To prevent victims from accessing resources that we reserve for ourselves, we have to construct physical barriers or physically restrain them. To take resources from them, we have to invade their domain and break their possession.

Victims are likely to react to such violence with acts that enable them to continue their pursuits. The minimal form of physical resistance would be that victims go about their pursuits undaunted. But the incompatibility of competitive pursuits appears to force victims to increase their resistance. They might attempt to arrest and to dismantle competitive instruments marshaled against them. They might address the offensive tools and general resources of competitors to counteract present and future attacks. In addition, they might try to recoup losses to their pursuits inflicted by competitive attacks. These losses do not only include resources as of the time of attack. They also comprise the pain inflicted by the attack and the loss of the resources and pleasure that would have resulted if their pursuits had remained undisturbed. Compensation would mean to place victims into a historical and present state as if their pursuits had remained undisturbed. This may require that the historical and continuing losses and experiences of pain would have to be balanced with resources and occasions of happiness. To the extent the impact and consequences of an attack are not compensated, victims may insist on retribution. They may demand an infliction of damage and pain on attackers that matches the damage and pain the attackers inflicted. Such demands seek to avoid a relative advantage in attackers' satisfaction state. Yet victims may want additional retribution to punish transgressions by the infliction of relative disadvantages or to discourage any future attacks. Although these actions may qualify as defensive remedies against offensive competition, they themselves constitute exclusionary and predatory techniques. We may

therefore designate them defensive competition. The related character of these techniques may make it hard to distinguish offensive and defensive competition, particularly if victims engage in offensive competitive strategies of their own. The reality of human conflict is rarely cleanly divided between offensive and defensive competitive forces.

To succeed with competitive strategies in spite of countermeasures, offensive competitors have to engage in adverse activities against victims that overcome these efforts. This, in turn, requires victims to increase their countermeasures, demanding an increase in aggressive force and so on. After several rounds of escalation in which each side has endeavored to defeat the force presented by the other with an application of more force, it may become difficult to distinguish a competitive aggressor from a competitive defender. That characterization may be the subject of differences from the start because a conflict of interests might be regarded as a competitive infraction from the viewpoint of either side. Competitive conflicts might easily arise and grow not only from actual but also from perceived or from threatened unwarranted preclusions and takings. Since each side enforces the pursuit of its needs, it may be convinced that it acts rightfully. This causes it to interpret the other's position and maneuvers as unwarranted and confront them with defensive indignation, which may further intensify the dynamics of conflict. Hence, competitive endeavors are likely to cause a spiral of escalation that may easily grow uncontrollable.

A spiral of escalation may stall or close under several constellations. One or both sides may exhaust their resources or succeed in using them to vanquish the other side. The opponents may be so equally matched that they cannot achieve a decisive advantage over the other. Finally, both sides might gain the insight that the conflict harms their interests more than it benefits them and cease hostilities. Such an insight might succeed before a conflict escalates. Competitive measures and victims' countermeasures in open competitive conflict may injure the existence or the production of resources that are the focus of the competitive struggle. Beyond that, a competitive struggle can severely affect victims and competitors in concerns that exceed the focal point of competitive action. Mutual interference may disturb other pursuits and create existential threats. Competitive preparations and reactions may further readdress parties' resources toward the production of instruments for competitive conflict and for addressing its effects. Rules by which the sides abide despite their conflict may minimize the damage to either side. However, the costs, risks, and diminishing benefits of a continuing or escalating conflict may still make it an unappealing process for all participants, even those who might ultimately win.

Even where such cognizance does not prevail to forestall, limit, or end a conflict, the willingness of humans to engage in conflict may be constrained by their hierarchic and tribal instincts. While hierarchic instincts may have individuals contend for position within their tribe, they also ordain rules for a settlement of such conflicts and the subsequent interaction. Moreover, their conduct is not merely defined by hierarchy. It is supplemented by tribal instincts that institute mutual protection and support. Both instincts coalesce in inducing tribal members to restrain themselves and to agree to a social order that restrains them. As humanity develops and as it begins to recognize itself as a tribe, some of these restraints may be applied to conflicts among traditionally defined tribes. These may be disposed to organize their relationship based on hierarchic criteria and processes that are similar to inner-tribal organization. They may exhibit additional propensities to behave according to tribal instinct as if other tribes were members of the same tribe. But the escalation of conflicts may easily break these restraints, and we may then continue with our traditional treatment of nontribal humans. Exploiting and precluding our environment outside the boundaries of our tribal allegiances with much curtailed scruples seems to be the traditional manner by which we obtain resources that we do not gain from members of our tribe or from ourselves. By considering humans beyond our tribe to be parts of that environment, our unrestrained competitive strategies become free to apply to them. Although we might experience some instinctive discomfort because we recognize similarities in human victims, our seemingly natural enmity toward nontribal humans imparts a competitive dimension that might counterbalance such compunctions even without an escalation. Overcoming these impulses that favor competition through restraining instincts and cost-benefit assessments might be difficult for us.

Traditionally, we may have preferred to act cooperatively within our tribe and limited our competitive behavior against members to accepted conventions. We may have concentrated excessive competitive strategies against the outside where hierarchic and positive tribal attitudes did not restrain us and negative tribal attitudes incentivized competition. Yet we may undertake more intense competitive activities against members of our tribe when hierarchic and tribal conventions recede without having given way to a considered scheme for cooperation. Their power may decline due to an atrophy of hierarchic or tribal instincts as humans develop. It may be weakened by the proliferation and interaction of humans in nontraditional settings that may recast associations in manners that decrease opportunities for hierarchic and tribal instincts to engage. Their continuing but confused ex-

pressions may give rise to persistent competition because a traditional settlement of hierarchic conflict is thwarted and because of tribal subdivision and lacking coherence. Additionally, the power of hierarchic and tribal instincts may suffer from the strengthening of other needs or the rising ability of these needs to increase their weight through the development of our council of traits. In the course of our mental progress, we may consider the rewards of compliance with hierarchic and tribal conventions to be insufficient in reference to the overall fulfillment of our needs. The scarcity of resources may further raise the relative importance of other needs. Members and groups may therefore regularly involve one another in intense competitive struggles.

Relentless competition within a tribe appears to be a comparatively recent development. It may appear to be different from competition among tribes because it includes competition by individuals upon other individuals. But societal dynamics that arise from the alignment of competitive forces to achieve and maintain competitive positions lead to the establishment of competitive groupings whose stance toward one another and their ultimate victims closely resembles traditional relations among tribes. For that reason, a review of traditional competitive practices is also instructive for competitive relations within a society. Historical competitive practices are largely defined by violence. Unless tribes are put under pressure by exigencies, competitive practices are usually undertaken by tribes that deem themselves capable of overcoming the defenses of tribes they target. Yet, even with a strategic advantage, such practices are fraught with difficulties. Even if they should initially succeed, competitors that wish to hold their gains must find means to consolidate and maintain them. To control the involved risks and costs, competitive interests might move the resources for which they invaded another group's territory permanently to their home territory. Where that is not feasible, they might try to eliminate or expel victims from the conquered territory. Such a radical approach may engender particularly determined defenses by victims. This may drastically increase the risk and cost for invaders. Further, taking advantage of conquered resources upon the elimination or expulsion of victims requires an extension of competitors' capacities that may not be available within a reasonable time. Problems with the expulsion or elimination of the conquered populace or its value as a resource may motivate conquerors to retain the conquered population. But this requires an occupying presence to maintain its compliance. Moreover, conquered territories, particularly if they prosper, may have to be defended against other competitors. Conquerors may lack the resources to hold foreign territory by force. Even if these capacities can be built,

they and their exercise come at a high cost. Territorial expansion for continued exploitation may depress competitors' profits and create an overextension that exposes them to defensive and offensive competition. The only fundamentally effective remedy against these problems may be the inclusion of conquered populaces into a merged tribe.

Competitive interests might prefer to extract resources through nonpermanent invasions into foreign territories. Even if the resources that can be secured in a raid may lag behind the resources that can be secured in an ongoing occupation, it saves competitors occupying resources. It further makes it easier for them to defend against countermeasures after the initial conquest. They merely have to extend themselves for brief periods and can subsequently defend themselves from their familiar territory. Nevertheless, raids may be burdened with elevated risks and costs and with questionable benefits. The anticipation of having resources taken may cause victims to curb their production. The devastation during raids and the depression of means after raids may not allow the rebuilding of resources or at least not quickly or at high levels. The fluctuations in victims' resources may only maintain a relatively small number of individuals and may not allow them to produce high qualities or quantities of resources. To make repeated raids profitable, raids have to leave victims with sufficient resources to re-flourish and to possibly advance to cover competitors' future requirements. But the experience of repeated raids may cause victims to dedicate their productive capacities in large parts to defensive measures, hence reducing the amount and possibly the quality of potential loot besides increasing the risk and cost for raiding invaders. Also, to the extent victims develop their technology, they may pose an increasing defensive threat. Even without technological improvements, they may adjust and mount increasingly better defenses. They may move to locations where it becomes more difficult to raid their property and fortify such locations. They may deploy warning systems. They may enter alliances with other victims or other competitive forces. These adversities are likely to grow and to be recurring because victory may have to be regained in every instance. Overwhelming power that dissuades victims from engaging in defensive competition or counterattack may be unavailable and the military strength of invaders may be repeatedly tested and abraded. If raiders leave the production of means largely to their victims, their technology may not be superior and they may be less skilled in applying and maintaining such means, placing them at a disadvantage as technology advances. An existence based on temporary exploitation therefore seems hard, particularly because the results of raids must deliver means to project power in subsequent raids.

Many of the risks and costs involved in the temporary or permanent invasion of foreign territories might be reduced if the transfer of property can be secured through the threat of invasion alone. However, a credible threat requires mounting a credible capacity and readiness to conduct an invasion. Yet, even then, the effectiveness of such a threat remains doubtful. Victims may resist a transfer of resources unless they are being directly forced, or at least they may not agree to a transfer on the terms demanded. In addition, threats will encourage victims to mount defenses. They might use the lack of direct intervention in their productive capacity to establish such defenses. As a consequence, a period of threats may heighten the cost for competitors to maintain an edge even if violence does not break out. It may confront them with having to invest resources into their threat that exceed the defensive resources against them and still not gaining the surrender of the desired resources or at least not in the desired scope. Moreover, if competitors cannot be dissuaded by counterthreats, a delayed conflict may be more perilous and costly due to the preparation of victims.

A key vulnerability encountered by both competitors and their victims in a competitive struggle appears to be their fixed location, although it might also offer advantages. While this exposure to offensive and defensive activity or threats may have induced groups to prefer a migratory lifestyle, humans may have migrated for additional reasons. Their expansion in number or an alteration in their environment may have made it necessary for at least some of them to move, and it may have been difficult for them to uphold permanent locations due to the presence and hostile pressure of other humans. Further, establishing a permanent domicile may have been difficult because one location may not have provided them with sufficient sustained resources. The scarcity, movement, or dispersion of resources on which humans once depended may have caused them to move between or to new locations. A migratory existence that was entertained for other reasons may also have carried the advantage of posing an alternative to the vulnerability of a fixed homeland. Then again, territorial expansion in the course of migratory movements may have expanded the potential of tribes to lay claim to the same territory and may have increased the potential of conflict. As the population of humans increased, that potential grew. In addition, a migratory lifestyle impeded the development of agricultural and multiple other higher manufacturing processes as well as the ability to accumulate, maintain, and secure possessions. Accordingly, groups that were primarily oriented toward acquiring resources from their nonhuman environment may in time have preferred a stationary lifestyle as more productive in spite of increased exposure to attack.

Groups that were oriented toward precluding or exploiting humans may have resisted that trend and continued to find a migratory lifestyle more advantageous. Migratory raids permitted competitors to surprise victims. Their mobility made it more complicated to exert defensive remedies against them after they left the settings of invasions. Apart from that, competitors could concentrate their entire power on a raid and were not dissipated by simultaneously asserting domination over other lands. But such advantages were countermanded by significant disadvantages. The central problem of migratory competitors became that many of their permanently resident victims grew stronger and more proficient in defending themselves because of their superior production opportunities, their technological advancement, and their increased population that ensued from the other advantages. Stationary groups that defended their territory more effectively decreased the selection of manageable targets. Intensifying takings from a diminishing range of still manageable victims left these with difficulties or unable to recover or caused them to relocate or to defensively align.

Such developments may have caused many competitors to become or remain migratory. To assure their access to unwary, relatively defenseless, and profitable victims, migratory competitors would have had to steadily enlarge or change their area of movement. But an expansive search for targets led to expansive requirements for territory, even if these claims were sporadic, and exposed migratory competitors to increased pressures. The mounting scarcity of fitting victims made them difficult to locate and required long travel. Settled tribes defended their territory against intrusions, rendering even a transit through their territory difficult and costly. The reduction of opportunities and expansion of territory to cover in finding opportunities also made it more likely that competitors encountered one another. They may have been increasingly subjected to attacks from other competitors or may have had to resort to attacks against other competitors. Either of these alternatives could have exposed them to unsustainable attrition. Even the consolidation with other competitors might not have helped them to survive because their amalgamated power might rapidly have been matched by associations of victims or by protective arrangements with other competitors. These pressures constrained migratory competitors in their movement and their acquisition of resources, and ultimately their existence. They began to encounter the problems of an existence in which competitors engage in permanent or temporary invasions or coercions from a fixed home base. However, without the development of productive resources and leveraging the power of resulting means, none of these competitive models offered much prospect of success.

Even the most outwardly competitive tribes will have had some extent of internal cooperative and individual production. But developing these facilities to include resources previously acquired by hostile action may increase the effectiveness and efficiency in the pursuits of a tribe because it reduces risk and cost in the acquisition of means and enables members to direct the production of means. Developing their own productive resources may have led competitive tribes to change and lay down all or some of their competitive designs and adopt cooperative or individually productive habits. If they decided to continue their competitive ambitions, a development of production capacity increased their ability to subject other groups, their territory, and their possessions. Increased productive capacity and the resulting growth of population and means may further have motivated groups to become offensively competitive. Such advanced groups may have been able to afford the permanent occupation of foreign territories and may have succeeded incorporating these into their productive mechanisms. In the competition between forces that were already adapted to the production of resources and competitors that later had to adjust to such a manner of organization, the already adapted forces had a decisive advantage. For competitors with low production capacity, a transition to the amelioration of resources to produce their means may have been hard to accomplish autonomously. They could have merged with productive societies. If they wanted to retain their self-determination and their competitive powers, they may have had no other choice than to acquire productive capacity in a competitive struggle. To avoid overextension, competitors may not only have occupied a productive territory. They may have elected to make it their permanent home. Alternatively, they may have made productive inhabitants and assets of another territory move to and reside in the competitors' territory.

The rise of internal production capacity of tribes autonomously or through interaction with other tribes reconciles innertribal and intertribal competitive strategies in this respect. It suggests the coexistence and interaction of cooperative and competitive interests within a society. But such societies may not practice full mutuality and instinctive cohesion. This deficiency may arise from the growth of tribes. It may be sourced in the inability of hierarchic and tribal instincts to engender cooperation due to their decay or their shortcomings for internal organization. It may further be based on limitations of emotionally including larger numbers of members or individuals and communities whose foreign nature attenuates their tribal inclusion. These tendencies rarely allow societies to be exclusively cooperative. Even the most instinctively organized tribe never was wholly cooperative. Particular-

ly its hierarchic features always integrated exclusion and exploitation among members. But even tribal instinct may ordain sacrifices for the benefit of other members that we might deem unjustifiable upon application of our council of traits. Unrestrained by their traditional instinctive boundaries, the competitive features of hierarchic and tribal instincts tend to combine with the traditional inimical attitude toward tribal outsiders. The variety of causes by which, and of constellations in which, competitive interests can occur may create multiple sources of competition. Beyond overcoming the resistance of victims, competitors are hence likely to be confronted by competitors who seek to victimize them or their targets. Members and their associations may be competitors, victims, or both, depending on their relative strength.

In spite of such dynamics, we often encounter systems in which winners and losers have been settled to relative stability. Such systems exist because, as individuals and groups apply competitive, protective, retributive, and corrective strategies upon one another, a clarification process sets in. That clarification causes positions in a society to solidify into governance structures. The struggle may become settled without a decisive victory by competitive or cooperative powers or a clear distinction between the participants as purely cooperative or competitive. These categories may only be discernible in relative terms. A society may in large ranges settle into compromised structures and processes that allow some competitive practices while certain cooperative practices are entertained. If competitive or cooperative interests win, they have the opportunity of establishing a system that protects and supports their domination. Cooperatively dominated societies will institute structures and processes to prevent competitive practices from usurping, undermining, utilizing, and frustrating cooperative practices, including these protective structures and processes. But the establishment of a governmental structure is also in the interest of competitive forces if they can win. To lower the risk and cost of excluding and exploiting victims, they have to establish an order that enables these practices without or at least with reduced resistance and allows them to remain on the winning side of competition. They must render their competitive advantage acceptable and institutionalize it. The difficulty of reining in the reactions of victims who are being barred from access to resources or whose property is taken incentivizes competitive powers to shape a united front and, upon succeeding over victims, to join in a ruling association. Although the threat that victims pose for them may not prevent continuing struggle among them, it may induce them to settle to conduct their conflicts within parameters and under regulations that avoid hindering the system that enables their rule.

Maintaining the necessary differential in power to exclude victims or to appropriate their resources over their resistance tends to be difficult in a society. Proximity between victims and competitors may cause disruptions in a society and its production of resources because of enforcement, defensive maneuvers, and resulting escalation. Competitive interests are particularly at risk at earlier stages of technological development because they rely on their victims to produce all or a significant portion of their means. The production of such means in sufficient quality and quantity may require a sizeable class of victims with useful skills. Such victims might realize the extent of their power, understand the superfluous and damaging nature of competitive governance, and use their skills to free themselves of it. The growing specialization or fungibility of victims in their functions and the resulting dependence on the system grant some safety for competitors. However, technological development and resulting idleness create challenges that make it difficult for them to maintain control. With rising development and particularly as a result of increasing mechanical automation, the exploitative aspect of competition recedes in its importance and wanes as a cause for resistance. Still, the exclusion of victims from access to resources claimed by competitors and from a command over societal affairs continues. Such an exclusion alone may render a competitive system at any stage unstable and prone to conflict, revolution, and failure. Additionally, the frustrations of specialized, fungible, and unproductive individuals due to the limitations of their activities may cause problems. These problems can be explained to be caused by exclusion as well because the production process prevents these individuals from pursuing their needs with adequate freedom. Although the pervasiveness and depth of such problems may rise to unprecedented levels with progressing human development, they are not new. Some specialization already arose at earlier stages of human development to increase effectiveness and efficiency with the extant knowledge, in an effort to advance technology, or in consequence of societal restrictions and privileges. Moreover, fungible masses and nonproductive population segments whose discontent may endanger governing forces have been historically generated or retained by competitive strategies. They have been produced among individuals who were intended to be competitively abused as well as among intended beneficiaries.

Yet, remarkably, competitive forces have regularly been able to rule despite these imperiling factors without serious resistance against their competitive strategies at a diversity of development stages once their power was established. To understand how they have managed to maintain their rule, we must explore their strategies in some detail.

The source for stable competitive systems seems to be their focus on preventing violence. Competitors governing such systems understand that a physical conflict may negatively affect the production and existence of the resources they are attempting to secure and may quickly threaten them existentially because they are a dependent minority. Comprehending that they could not succeed in suppressing a broad-based uprising, they may try to foreclose such conflict by violent subjugation of any resistance. Then again, they may realize that such actions could sidetrack considerable amounts of their resources and may give rise to escalation that may endanger their position. They may recognize that it may lead to a polarization that may guide victims to recognize their oppression and to take more widespread action. Still, competitive interests must break the will of victims to engage in natural defensive reactions to competitive activity. They might be able to accomplish this by convincing victims that their resistance would cause greater damage to their pursuits than submission. Such a preventive curtailment of violence by nonviolent coercion might add stability to a system and preserve competitive resources as well as the structures and processes that generate them. With sufficient enforcement tools, competitors might be able to control victims with nonviolent coercion. Yet the utility of that strategy is limited. Even if it succeeds, it may require a show of capacities to believably threaten consequences upon noncompliance that may involve resources in approximation or even in excess of what is necessary for violent suppression.

The likelihood that intimidation might have to set forth such a threat is high in stages of development in which victims produce all or momentous aspects of means and competitors struggle to extract the means they desire. Even if they manage to extort resources from their victims, the production under coercion may not match the quality and quantity of production by individuals who are or deem themselves to be free. That may be due to technical detriments that derive from the interference with and direction of production by competitive interests for their purposes. But competitive compulsion may also result in passive resistance. Subjects might only do what is necessary to stay out of trouble. Overcoming passive resistance may be more challenging than preventing active resistance because it necessitates the enforcement of positive acts. Positive enforcement may require intense, detailed, and constant pressure and an associated high level of dedicated resources. The lack of effectiveness and efficiency in production that results from intimidation tactics may not coincide well with the requirements for resources connected to such tactics. Similar pressure and resource requirements apply where intimidation is engaged to control unproduc-

tive individuals. In that case, no resources are required to competitively acquire victims' property or to keep them committed to production standards. Still, maintaining victims and suppressing their frustration over being unproductive decrease competitive profits. In either case, the elevated resources necessary for intimidation render the acquisition and maintenance of resources by competitors less efficient. Past such negative consequences for competitive resources, nonviolent coercion holds further negative potential. Because it lays open and continues to pronounce the opposing interests between privileged circles and their victims, it elevates the threat of active resistance, escalation, and destabilization. The damage resulting from active resistance and from efforts of quashing it may impede or may destroy production and endanger the existence of competitive rulers. For these reasons, intimidation does not qualify as a viable alternative to violent suppression.

Maintaining the profitability, solidity, and potentially the existence of a competitive system requires that its rulers avoid the escalating spiral between enforcement and resistance. In an environment in which competitors rely on production by victims, enforcement efforts, risks, and costs might be decreased and conflict might be prevented if competitive rulers would permit subjects to pursue the production of means according to subjects' preferences with a relatively remote and indirect involvement by competitive forces. Enforcement efforts could further be saved if victims were allowed to retain enough of their production to fulfill their needs to tolerable levels. Similar considerations apply where production occurs without the participation of competitive victims. Here, enforcement efforts could be saved if the exclusion of unproductive victims were reduced by attributing larger portions of the production results to them. By affording subjects certain levels of satisfaction, subjects may become vested in sustaining the system and less prone to dissent and counteraction. Upon such a basis of apparent dissemination of wealth, competitive interests may engage in practices that undermine and largely reverse the distribution of resources. They may profit from the earnings of and attributions to victims by controlling the resources victims acquire through exchanges to sustain their needs. Competitive interests may control the markets in categories of products and exclude or impede alternative types of products. Where that is not feasible, they may encourage victims to spend earnings or attributions on products they control or on types of products in which they have an interest. They may undertake this by influencing victims' opinions on the desirability of products in relation to their cost. Recycling the earnings and attributions of victims through controlled enterprises provides competitive interests with another legitimate source

of benefit that is enhanced by competitive practices. The indirect syphoning of value may be greatly less recognizable than direct takings by shortchanging victims in their compensations or their attributions or even by taxing them. To maximize the exploitation or exclusion of victims, competitive interests may strive to maximize victims' expenditures on exchange products. In an environment in which competitors rely on production by victims, this increases the production of goods and services from which competitive interests can profit because they shortchange the contributions of victims. It further increases the sales of products to victims in which competitive interests take another cut. All these activities increase tax revenue as well. Moreover, a high rate of spending keeps productive victims committed to the productive environment and the system that allow them to afford products they desire, thus raising their effectiveness and efficiency. The dependence of victims on maintaining or raising their income to afford their expenditures also permits the applying of competitive pressure with less concern about repercussions. The voluntary nature of high consumption simultaneously reinforces and helps to mask the compulsory relationship between competitive interests and their victims. Although some of these competitive benefits cannot be generated from unproductive subjects, the recycling of their attributions may be important to ultimately afford competitors with the resources that they desire. Subjects may remain loyal to an order that allows them to achieve sufficient resources to purchase an acceptable level of means even if much of the wealth generated in a society is absorbed by competitive interests.

Competitors may additionally serve their interests by maximizing the expenditure of earnings by victims and the effects of that maximization by offering victims financing for the acquisition of products. Waiving the requirement for an exchange of present value may stimulate the emotional impression in customers that they receive a product without a commensurate loss of value in exchange. That payment must occur in the future may weigh less seriously in customers' minds because they have yet to incur the pain of gaining such exchange value or because, in the event of mere attribution, its receipt is deemed secure. Beyond that, the formulation of payments as installments makes it hard to rationally or emotionally gauge the true cost of a product or its financing. Financing therefore supports predatory product pricing and permits the imposition of predatory credit conditions as another source for competitive wealth. Competitive systems may also encourage credit transactions because they intensify victims' submission. To qualify and maintain a good standing, they must comply with conditions that serve the interests of those who make credit available.

In a final step, competitive interests may take advantage of the retained resources of victims by selling them ownership stakes in ventures controlled or manipulated by competitive interests. This allows competitive interests to obtain value without having to provide value in return, unless dividend payments are made or the company is sold and compensation is paid. They exchange an abstract ownership right whose value is partly represented in the for minor owners illusory notion that its holder controls a part of the enterprise. Mostly, however, it consists in an expectation of liquidity and of monetary participation in the enterprise's success. The existence of a market in which ownership rights are traded may fill victims with confidence that they can participate in the value created by an enterprise. Competitive interests may support such a notion by claiming that the interests of all owners are aligned. That seems to be indisputable because controlling competitive interests may use their stakes in enterprises as vehicles to store wealth and to increase that wealth by growing the enterprise's value. But not all of this concentration of wealth within an enterprise may have the purpose or effect of maximizing the ownership value for all owners. That is so because the governance of enterprises becomes largely separated from its ownership. The sale of stakes to minor owners assists competitors to delegate considerable portions of the financial burden of ownership while empowering them to maintain control with relatively low ownership exposure. They unilaterally or in cooperation with other competitive interests maintain control by appointing and guiding its governance. This control bestows benefits on them that may not or only somewhat be shared with noncontrolling owners. It permits competitors to use enterprises for securing and controlling competitive structures and processes. Further, the direction of enterprises may empower controlling owners to generate profits from their holdings by promoting their other interests. On top of direct benefits, interlocking direction and mutuality by different competitive interests of enterprises can create a layer of unofficial governance that can impose competitive abuse in ways that might be challenging or impossible for official government. To be effective in such endeavors, competitive interests are drawn to constructing large and powerful organizations. If necessary, competitive forces may reserve or return ownership entirely to themselves to keep their activities private. Only, their ability to control companies although they are mostly owned by victims and their ability to hide the pursuit of their interests behind justifiable rationales renders such reservations generally unnecessary. Particularly their collusion to affect larger conditions may be difficult to track or prove as illegitimate due to its abstraction and diversification.

Minor owners may agree to let major owners control companies because of the complexity and required effort in steering the affairs of an enterprise and because they lack or perceive a lack of skill to participate in management. They may not know of or not object to the ulterior utilization of enterprises by major owners as long as it seems to be aligned with their profit interests. Because the interests of controlling owners appear to be fundamentally coextensive, a conflict of interests with them might not be suspected. However, if minor owners remain unorganized, their expectations of participating in an enterprise's success may be disappointed not only because they fail to partake in the ulterior uses of the enterprise. For one, competitive interests often assert their control and seek to increase their power by building assets within an enterprise and avoiding or minimizing distribution of an enterprise's wealth to its owners. That may not raise much opposition by minor owners because an accumulation of wealth within an enterprise appears to increase the value of ownership. They might trust that they will be able to actualize that value when they trade shares. But a company's retained wealth may find only a moderate reflection in the value of shares in the enterprise. Moreover, if owners are unskilled, unconnected, and only dedicate part of their attention to the enterprises in which they do or might hold shares or to the larger economy, they are disposed to value, hold, and trade stakes on the basis of third party opinions and resulting emotions. Competitive interests may influence the decisions of victims to buy and sell shares and therewith the market price of shares by disseminating incomplete information, incorrect interpretations, and rumors. They may instigate overconfidence or exaggerated fear that may drive unsophisticated owners into unwise investment decisions. This irrationality provides opportunities for investors who base valuations on deep-rooted information and comprehensive rational assessments. Competitive interests may not only manage enterprises whose shares are traded but also trade their shares. These interests may be connected to one another through a network of mutual benefit. They are by their functions and their competitive efforts in superior positions to understand, anticipate, and react to, if not affect, the conditions and the developments of traded enterprises, even without collusion. If they were to confine themselves to only act upon generally available information, their superiority would endure. Minor investors rarely avail themselves of this information, let alone consistently or timely, lack resources of interpreting it, fall short in their risk capacity, and do not have the resources and standing to profit from it. Even where shareholders partake in risks and costs equally, competitive interests may benefit by hedging their risk and cost exposure.

Minor investors might try to compensate their deficits and improve their standing by consulting with advisers or managers who do not have a competitive agenda directed against them. Competitive interests may permit such activities to some extent to suggest an equality of opportunity. But independent advisers may frequently be less informed even if most of the relevant information may have to be disclosed. They may be at a disadvantage because they may have to cover many companies and lack the immersion or the direct access, breadth, depth, and detail of supplemental knowledge of insiders. Additionally, competitive interests may pose as advisers and managers or influence them. They may use the ignorance, insecurity, and reliance of victims to direct victims' decisions or by managing entrusted holdings in ways that benefit the interests of parties beyond the victims at least in part. Their running of assets they do not own for competitive purposes may move similar and in assistance to direct governance of enterprises.

It appears then that, with shrewd management, even resources left to victims can be commonly utilized or recycled to serve competitive interests. Arguably, victims should be able with some effort to see through such strategies and to understand or at least suspect the true nature of the system. Notwithstanding, competitive interests habitually manage to influence their subjects' minds sufficiently to subdue inquiry, awareness, and comprehension of the circumstances or willingness to act upon them. Semblances of legitimacy are easier maintained if information about the true state of affairs can be withheld or modified, if pretenses and falsities can be established in their place, and if victims' emotions can be modeled to override alerting information. To make a competitive system work for competitive rulers, those systematically disadvantaged in it must be subdued so they suffer their inequitable treatment. Where that is not pursued or achieved by physical control or threat, it is necessary to control victims' minds. Thus, competitive interests may undertake comprehensive and continuing campaigns of concealment and deception. They may apply methods of advertisement and other systemic forms of indoctrination to fashion the mind and behavior of victims into line with their competitive plans.

Even if other sources of information are permitted and available to victims, competitive interests may successfully apply their commercial and their governmental dominance or control to produce or maintain conducive perceptive, rational, and emotional mental positions in their victims. In addition to misinformation about present, past, or future events, competitive interests may also create events that are calculated to shape victims' minds. Beyond that, they may provide entertainment, games, and other distractions that build a world of superfi-

cial information and activities, of rational and of emotional diversions from the underlying reality. Although the subject matters of these diversions may be of little consequence for victims, they may dominate their minds and detain them from focusing or taking action on their true concerns. Such influences are easier conducted if victims are kept uninformed, underinformed, or misinformed. They are also advanced if victims lack the mental skills or motivation to question information imparted to them and to explore the truth. Competitive forces may allow and promote the mental development and education of individuals to the extent advanced skills are required to serve them. If such individuals gain insight into competitive strategies, which might be necessary to have them serve competently, they may be coddled and rewarded to bind them. But competitive rulers may interfere with or neglect the mental and informational development of large segments of the populace that are most exposed to exploitation or exclusion.

To overcome lucid judgments by victims, competitors may additionally build and use emotional ties that can bind victims into allegiance to them or to the system. Competitive rule may heavily rely on that strategy to motivate and distract victims because it may take incisive and repeated countervailing mental impressions to reverse emotional allegiance once it is established. Competitors may appeal to victims' strong emotional attachment to particular objectives and means. But they may also find it convenient to summon the potent and broad emotional coverage that can be traced to instinctive hierarchic or tribal concepts. By connecting to these visceral mechanisms, competitive rulers may obtain unreflected compliance from victims in a wide variety and possibly all of their pursuits. Tribal ties may be reflected in allegiances to family, community, ethnicity, territory, cultural or experiential identity, pride of accomplishment, a cherished way of life. Hierarchic ties express themselves as allegiance to the leadership of a society or its governing institutions. Competitors may try to find legitimization by identifying themselves as supporters, protectors, guarantors, representations, or subjects of tribal motives and related more defined needs in the category of collective survival and thriving. Using such allegiances may be particularly effective to prompt purportedly selfless efforts and sacrifice by victims that can be placed into the service of a competitive system. Competitors may create or utilize myths and other misinformation to enhance these allegiances to unimpeded and exaggerated heights. They may further connect and extend these to symbols that permit them to activate and to direct such allegiances at will. They may generate or appeal to fears of actual, fabricated, or purported threats regarding persons, places, objects, concepts, and symbols to

which victims feel allegiance. They may instill, shape, or advance such attitudes and related deeper emotional traits by influencing their victims' environment, information sources, production mechanisms, culture, religious organizations, schools, and families. Competitive interests may conduct campaigns to persuade victims on an emotional level that they will protect and support victims and what these hold dear, and that the support and protection by victims extended in return will strengthen victims' objectives. The formidable force of this emotional programming and indoctrination may cause critical attitudes to fail.

To fully comprehend and to eventually surmount this competitive peril, it is useful to examine our hierarchic and tribal instincts and their interrelation further. The invocation of hierarchic instinct introduces behavior into the relationship between competitors and victims in a society that may strike us as illogical. Almost any type of success of competitors, including their subjection of victims, may establish instinctively accepted criteria for them to submit. Once a hierarchic relationship is settled with or without contest, competitive behavior by superior individuals or groups may be emotionally recognized without further challenge as long as the domination that established a hierarchic relationship continues. Instead of resenting and resisting competitive offenders, victims may admire them, emulate them, and attempt to gain their favor through obedience. They may then be torn between submission consistent with their hierarchic instincts and rebellion due to the deprivation of needs they suffer at the hands of competitors.

Competitive interests may overcome remaining risks of rebellion by using their victims' tribal instincts. The emotional connection among the members of a tribal structure creates a unique provocation potential to have them commit to and act upon a competitive stance. This potential accrues because the emotional bonds among members engender an impressionability among them that greatly facilitates the transfer of emotions and of intent from one member to another. The emotional bonds permit members, or conditions that are suspected or known to affect members, to easily stir and escalate emotions in other members. Such dynamics seem to be a fundamental function of a tribal system. To protect the tribe from dangers and motivate it to act effectively regarding opportunities, members must operate in a coordinated manner. This requires that experiences of danger or opportunity by members have to be effectively shared. The communication of perceptions and of rational information may be useful and necessary for that purpose. Yet underlying such system is another, a visceral system that allows the actual or imputed alert and readiness level of members to travel to other members. The triggering occasion for their empathy

might be a show of extraordinary emotion by another member or their information of an event that they believe to have caused such emotion in another member. This contagion of extraordinary emotions within a tribe may be effective in rousing members to prompt and coordinated action. But it creates a great risk that emotions might sweep over a group and bypass perceptions as well as rational and other emotional concerns. Controlling that risk seems problematic because this mechanism appears to be genetically ingrained. Control might be imparted by the instinctive willingness to fit into hierarchic power structures. In fact, the two instincts appear to be intertwined in their occurrence. It appears that the same events of danger and opportunity that produce tribal responses also trigger the instinct in members to rally behind a leader. This grants competitive rulers extraordinary power over tribal motivations. Instinctive urges to synchronize emotions in a group and to look for leaders and follow their orders render hierarchically organized groups easily manipulated by those who purport to lead them.

As tribal leaders, competitors may succeed in equating submission and service to the tribe and them in members' minds. This could permit them not only to have members tolerate their own exclusion and exploitation. It may also permit competitors to turn members into agents for competitive strategies. Members may overcome their internal thresholds against competitive action if they believe that their welfare and the welfare of their tribe require them to take advantage of a competitive opportunity. Even more cogent may be a perceived competitive demeanor or threat by outside forces toward them, the group, its leadership, or other members immediately or by damaging their interests. Although the most effective trigger to rally members might be an actual attack, even perceptions of competitive threats may be taken as justifications to engage in competitive acts as preventive remedies. Readiness may be additionally strengthened if group members believe that taking advantage of opportunities or repulsing attacks or threats requires the entirety of the group to act. Because tribal leaders possess a unique platform, credibility, and authority to dictate and command the pursuit of competitive objectives, they might not have to set forth a strong exhibition of reasons for competitive behavior to have members conform. Their emotional guidance might afford them the power to manipulate members into submission without much of a challenge to their claims. Yet, even under conditions in which instinctive attraction to competition falters, members may stay compliant. This may be induced by their guilt about disobeying hierarchic and tribal instincts, or their fear of disadvantages upon dissent not merely by punishment from competitive rulers but also by rebuke from other members.

Domination and agitation by competitive leaders may not be an indispensable condition for the realization of a hierarchic competitive system. Momentous purported or actual threats or opportunities may cause a cooperative system to voluntarily convert itself into a competitive system by searching for and appointing leaders. Many instances that might be attributed to nefarious strategies by competitors to gain command of a cooperative society may then be encouraged if not generated by members' instincts to unite according to tribal principles, to organize hierarchically, and to rally around leaders they appoint. Cooperative systems may not intend to convert themselves into competitive systems. Rather, they may entrust leaders with the protection and advancement of cooperative causes. They might appoint leaders only temporarily for the duration of the perceived requirement for such a measure. But the historical frequency in the occurrence of momentous threats and opportunities facing societies has made hierarchic conversions common and often indefinite. This mechanism offers those who are selected as leaders a convenient opening to assert perpetual competitive rule by perpetuating actual or purported causes or subsequent justifications for such a rule. Such a selection often gravitates to those whose natural attraction to become leaders suggests them for that position. Qualities that make them competent competitors on behalf of a cooperative system also endow them to employ competitive strategies against the group they lead. This makes competitive conversion likely.

To direct us in the improvement of their resources, distract us, and overcome dissent as well as to assume, centralize, and consolidate control over us, competitive powers may use the lure of actual or purported opportunities of resources beyond the confines of the tribe. To the extent such opportunities pertain to the exclusion or exploitation of other tribes, they may use our instinctive disregard for other tribes. They might further incentivize us by the specter of generating or improving resources within the group. But opportunities alone might not sufficiently trigger tribal and hierarchic attitudes. It might be easier to provoke competitive instincts by presenting an actual or a purported threat. In that undertaking, competitive interests may use the natural tendencies of our negative tribal instincts as well. They may prompt us to align ourselves with them in a defensive posture by provoking other groups or individuals. In addition, or where a threat from the outside does not exist, cannot be evoked or faked, or where arousing it might jeopardize competitive forces or their interests, they might attempt to create the impression of a threat within the tribe. This strategy also allows them to justify domestic exploitation, to exclude certain individuals from the tribe, to eliminate them, or to give them diminished sta-

tus. In a society with high competitive tendencies, it may be sufficient to portray targeted individuals as lesser members or nonmembers. But competitive fervor may be increased by denouncing certain members as a credible competitive threat. For such purposes, competitors may characterize targeted members as agents of outside interests or perpetrators of autonomous activities that are or could be damaging to the group. Where such a case is difficult to make, competitive forces may alienate targeted members or member groups to a point where these act defensively and may mischaracterize such measures as offensive.

Objectives of campaigns set forth by competitors may frequently combine the obliteration or weakening of competitive enemies with the acquisition of additional resources. Such a combination may not only be necessary or helpful to incentivize their members. It may also result from the fact that these aspects are often practically connected. The pursuit of opportunities selected by competitors may cause or invite resistance by others who might claim such opportunities or their subject matters as well. Conversely, the vanquishing of foes may open access to their resources. But engaging in mixed adventures of opportunity and overcoming adversity may also be a welcome occasion for competitive leaders because it permits them to build and consolidate their rule while simultaneously using their force to obtain resources.

Competitors may then have powerful weapons at their disposal to shape and direct victims' minds, needs, and wishes and to turn cooperative communities into compliant instruments of their strategies. However, notwithstanding the efficacy of such measures, competitors' attempts to govern permanently are fraught with danger. It might not be possible to sustain subjects permanently in an emotionally charged state of tribal and hierarchic instincts that is vigorous enough to overpower the pain they experience from competitive abuse. Actual opportunities and threats may fluctuate. Imagined opportunities and threats may lose their credibility if they fail to materialize. Threats or conflicts that are brought about by competitive forces could be discovered. The pain of having been misled and the protracted pain of continued competitive abuse threaten to engage victims' critical mental facilities in a search for remediation. As facts differ significantly from the presented illusion and affect the pursuit of victims' needs, the discrepancies may become too obvious for victims to go unnoticed and too important to remain unaddressed by them. Competitive interests must therefore be careful to maintain a reality that can be explained within the disguise they create and that keeps victims reasonably satisfied. If competitive impositions leave sufficient resources with victims to fulfill their needs to an acceptable extent and apply comprehensive supplemental men-

tal manipulation, competitive interests may be able to create complacent, gullible, and malleable victims. These may not have the motivation to fight competitive abuse and may not even significantly react to revelations of such an abuse or of having been misled. Such transgressions may be forgiven or at least tolerated as long as victims possess sufficient resources and a relatively stable setting to apply them.

This may permit competitors to reliably preclude subjects from power and access to resources and, in the case of productive victims, to take some of their resources. To limit remaining impressions in victims that resources are being taken from them or that they should receive greater attributions of resources, competitive interests might instill the view that their competitive advantages constitute tributes to be paid in compensation for governmental services. They might support that idea by providing enough of such services to make this claim superficially credible. They may pose, possibly through a purportedly separate government they determine, as arbiters, protectors, and supporters of their victims' competitive, cooperative, and individual non-competitive activities. They may provide leadership against actual and purported offensive or defensive schemes by other systems or threats from within and share competitive successes they achieve with members' backing. Even competitors' concessions to let productive members retain an adequate portion of their efforts and the attribution of funds to nonproductive members may be interpreted as a gesture of mutuality. Although victims might understand that rulers perpetrate competition on them, they may condone it if they can be held in the apprehension that these rulers save them from greater abuse or otherwise contribute adequately. If resources are scarce, competitive rulers may succeed in blaming domestic and foreign interferences, fundamental circumstances, environmental conditions, or a lack of capacity or effort by members. They may be able to deflect defensive reactions by victims toward such contributing or pretended causes. But if resources are sufficient, they may be eager to take credit for that state. Competitors may then progressively be able to convince victims that they have achieved the highest standard of living possible under the circumstances or at least that it compares positively to the standards achieved in other domains. In these assessments, they may be fortuitously favored by the availability of natural resources in their domain, a relatively high degree of technological development, or their victims' diligence. While competitors may commend the virtues and achievements of the society they lead to earn favor, they may also try to ascribe its success to their leadership. In support of that claim, competitive interests may be able to point to constructive feats in which they

protect and support the unfolding of cooperative and individual production on which they feed or even their participation in such production. They may also succeed in claiming credit for achieving production processes that attribute resources to members without members' contribution. They may further assert ownership of production mechanisms based on their contribution or in purported representation of the society. With a skillful indoctrination, these showings and claims may suffice to hide or disguise their competitive activities, to distract from them, or to make them appear to be overall constructive. Upon convincing victims, competitors may even be able to conduct some of their exclusions and takings openly under the assertion that such detriments are compensated by benefits. Competitive rulers may then be successful in producing sufficiently strong impressions of mutuality in victims that may motivate these to identify with and offer support and protection for a system that takes competitive advantage of them.

Creating and maintaining an operational impression of mutuality may require that competitors leave a large part of resources to their victims. This may threaten to weaken the rule of competitive interests or to leave them with insufficient resources for their objectives. They may therefore strive to supplement their resources and the resources they leave to their victims by engaging in exploration and competition beyond their domain. Competitive rulers may conduct foreign exploration and competition in a clandestine manner through their own efforts to conceal and compensate domestic deficiencies that are caused or aggravated by their domination. In addition, they might reach for overproportional resources by openly projecting their competitive designs abroad under their own power, possibly only referring to the potential of involving their domestic system in the competitive imposition of their will abroad. Yet that may not be sufficient. Competitive rulers may have to involve their subjects in explorations or in assisting them to portray a credible threat or to conduct competitive operations abroad. This again might make it necessary to share sizeable portions of such resources with domestic victims to achieve their backing and their utilization in such adventures. Competitive rulers might still undertake such strategies because they might proportionally or overproportionally participate in the overall takings. Even if competitive rulers could operate independently, they might prefer to make their subjects accomplices in foreign adventures. Subjects' participation might not merely align them by tribal and hierarchic instincts but also establish competitive rulers' leadership as productive. It further adds convincing aspects of mutuality. Competent coordination and conduct of explorations, attacks on foreign societies, and subsequent exploitation

may assure competitive rulers acknowledgment of their commanding position. They may also ensure approval of the sizeable attribution of foreign and domestic takings to them as compensation commensurate with their contributions. If competitive strategies can be focused toward the outside, a competitive system may be operated with reduced contradictions and the remaining internal competitive aspects might become more rationally and emotionally justifiable. Competitive rulers may consequently prefer to engage in foreign adventures. As long as or to the extent resources can be successfully acquired through foreign adventures, they might not turn their full competitive potential inward. If intensified domestic competitive strategies should become necessary, the mechanisms for foreign competition might be adapted if subtler impositions fail. Only, such subtler options may be missing if competitors previously mainly relied on foreign competition. Because there might not be sufficient time to establish them when a change of strategy becomes necessary, a transition could be marked by the perils of newly introduced coercion. For that reason, competitive rulers may not rely on foreign competition alone and install a strong concurrent basis of domestic competitive power, including capable manipulatory instruments, that can cover intensified internal competition.

A society governed by competitive interests may remain stable as long as victims' basic survival needs remain reasonably satisfied and as long as additional aspirations that would endanger competitive rule or benefits can be contained by manipulation if they cannot be met. Yet, in systems that are afflicted by scarcity, maintaining the needs of ruling competitors and making the necessary concessions to appease the population may be difficult. Unless such rulers decrease their takings until better circumstances emerge, their competitive actions endanger the stability of their system. Even if rulers would confine their appropriations, their position might be threatened because they might be held responsible for deficiencies. Competitive systems may therefore be more firmly entrenched and maintained in environments that enable better supplies of resources. In such environments, rulers may be able to meet their objective to reserve desired privileges for themselves while still conceding satisfactory benefits to their subjects. Depending on the wealth of resources available or produced by the subjects, controlling competitors may be able to increase their safety by leaving most resources to their victims. They may succeed in compensating their lack of direct control of resources by control of the populace. They may be able to limit their preemption and misappropriation to tolerable and perhaps innocuous levels. At least under normal circumstances, they may find ways to claim desired resources while leav-

ing the bulk of resource allocation and system administration to subordinated competitive, cooperative, or individual interests. They may be able to control such interests and to sufficiently serve their own by installing a framework and providing implementing guidance.

To assure noninterference and, where necessary, protection and support of their rule and objectives, competitive rulers may institute systematic structures and processes that benefit their interests even if they step back from a direct governance. They may create an order of laws that keep a society within conducive parameters. Forcible installation may be originally necessary to establish such an order. Yet, because confrontation with their subjects is counterproductive and dangerous, competitive rulers will want to replace coercion as a source of their laws with a legitimization that engenders voluntary compliance. They may try to create legitimacy for their position and laws by invoking their appointment by or on behalf of mythical, religious, spiritual, or other acknowledged authorities. They might attempt to have their rule appear to be in congruence with the traditions of their victims by usurping cultural, economic, religious, and experiential marks of identification that instill trust and commitment. They may be able to refer to a history of joint efforts and purported or actual service in conflict with exterior or interior enemies of the society. They might try to establish legitimacy by creating processes that give subjects the impression they have freely selected them to govern and directly or indirectly authorized their laws. If that cannot be maintained to have occurred originally, governing competitive interests may claim popular confirmation through formalisms controlled by them. For that purpose and for purposes of managing the system on their behalf, they may also install a scheme in which the rise to governing or to other leading positions or the maintenance of such positions depends on their approval. Their ultimate command of resources may permit them to wield such influence by application of these or a mere threat. Influence may not be brought to bear through direct intervention by controlling competitive interests. They may conceal their involvement by acting through controlled concerns that are difficult to attribute to them. Such a concealment may be a part in a general policy by which controlling interests maneuver when they cannot or cannot hope to persuade victims of the legitimacy of their rule or their behavior. They may attempt to hide their competitive functions, influence, rule, and even their existence among and behind a profusion of legitimized competitive enterprises or seemingly proper cooperative structures and procedures that they indirectly control. Such measures may allow them to become isolated from questioning, resentment, and defensive repercussions.

Much of the concealment of competitive rulers and their activities may occur through their apparent and actual participation in cooperative undertakings. Arguably, competitive rulers might eventually amass sufficient wealth to relinquish control and competitive strategies and to subsist on their fortune that they might maintain solely by participating in cooperative ventures without any competitive agenda. Yet such a move is unlikely to occur voluntarily because it holds a variety of risks. Wealth alone may not protect them if they give up competitive power. In a competitive environment, power and competitive acquisition and defense of resources are dependent on each other. The resources governing competitors derive and own and the power these resources enable feed into each other. Upon ceasing governing power, other competitors might move into the competitive vacuum and victimize formerly ruling competitors and their beneficiaries. Hostile action may also occur even if a system is converted into a predominantly cooperative system. Cooperative regimes or subjects of previous competition might trace and reveal competitive practices and demand the return or distribution of competitive enrichment, or they might seek retribution. To control such risks at the lowest levels and generally to continue their competitive policies at the lowest levels of risk, ruling competitive interests are liable to retain ultimate power and to maintain their system in a shape that prevents challenges to their rule.

In and through that prevention, they might try to avoid drastic steps that might reveal their identity, position, and activity because of the adversity such awareness might cause. But they can only relent on cruder and more noticeable measures of dominance if they have managed to assume positions that allow them to control and exploit a society with more refined and surreptitious means. Such means may be difficult to develop in departure from a competitive rule that originated in a momentous overthrow or assertion of power. Even if competitive abuse is subsequently eased, competitive rulers may have previously distinguished themselves too starkly as antagonists of their victims. Their prominence renders subsequent efforts to justify and conceal their existence and activities difficult and maybe impossible. Such competitive rulers may remain separate from the society regardless of how unstrained and attenuated their rule becomes. They may remain exposed to opposition and may not have much of a chance to last unless they continue to impose their dominance through strict enforcement and control. This oppression brings its own threats of instability and defeat. Competitive interests may consider preempting their deposition or a continuing struggle for domination by permitting or engineering their formal overthrow by forces that they control with the in-

tent of remaining in power in a remote, clandestine position. However, the events of such a revolution may easily escape their control. The only remaining option to lower the risk of their elimination might be enabling the transition to a cooperative system and to become recognized as constructive functionaries of a resulting system, if only in a symbolic capacity that represents the cultural identity of a society. Yet such a transition might also be fraught with risks because its conciliatory intent uncovers weaknesses of competitive rulers on which other competitors and victims with plans of their own might seize. Survival may hence be a challenge for competitors who obviously rose to power. It may be safer if they mask their competitive approach during and after their ascent by nominating others as apparent competitive rulers that can be sacrificed without displacing their underlying rule.

It may be even safer and more profitable if competitors embed themselves in purported cooperative modes. They may therefore participate in the installation of purportedly cooperative systems and use movements that allow elected majorities and elites within such majorities to govern. Cooperatively minded individuals may already believe that such systems constitute fully developed cooperative systems and that no further development is possible or reasonable. But competitive interests may also steer burgeoning cooperative movements into that direction because these forms of organization make it easier for them to take and maintain control of participating movements and the system. They may protect the competitive structures and processes that such a system entails by the myths that the governed are the supreme authority in its hierarchic and hegemonial organization and that a cooperative spirit envelops and unites all participants. They may provide superficial substance to these myths through elections of leaders, discussions and hearings, and rules that purportedly bind the exercise of power. Their competitive determination, skills, and resources may allow them to dominate and manipulate these processes and to assume and to maintain power. Once victims accept that they have already attained the ultimate exercise of cooperation, they might condone a system as cooperative even if it evidences a competitive governance and the elected government conducts or allows their exploitation or exclusion. As a consequence, competitive forces may succeed in portraying a competitive system as cooperative. Even if victims become aware of these circumstances, competitive interests may remain safe. The official and unofficial structures and processes of the undermined and inverted cooperative system make it extremely hard to overturn a competitive rule while abiding with the official rules by which power is accorded in the system. Even organizations that deem themselves coop-

erative may oppose fundamental changes because these might endanger their chances to wield power upon achieving a majority. This may weaken victims' ability and resolve to improve the cooperative pursuit of their needs. Competitive interests or their agents may be able to reduce or calm remaining restlessness by promising change and endlessly failing to keep that promise or only superficially delivering on it.

The insertion of competitive interests into cooperative organization occurs for more reasons than the opportunity to conceal their competitive activities and to undertake them more regularly and with greater security. They also appreciate cooperative practices because of the substance these provide at stages where production is not yet mechanically automated. Competitive interests may rely on and therefore encourage cooperative structures and processes because they are more effective and efficient in producing their means. They may permit and even promote and invest in cooperative production because this generates superior opportunities for their domestic and foreign competition. They may even participate as regular members in such ventures where competitive exploitation is not possible or not more profitable. Competitive interests may combine cooperative and competitive conduct to reap overproportional rewards from cooperative ventures. This may be achieved by controlling management or ownership, the purchase and sale of ownership interests, the economic setting, or financial and other resources for the operation of cooperative enterprises. They may use this control to govern the economy of a system at large in areas where governmental control might raise objections. They may further employ government to influence general or specific conditions of transactions to their advantage. Their influence over governmental activities may allow them to exclude other enterprises and channel resources to themselves or to allies through laws, regulations, subsidies, contracts, and policy decisions. In a society that is developing toward human automation, the rigidity of specialization, weakness of fungible labor and unproductive masses, and dependence of all its members on enterprises dominated by competitive interests render it progressively difficult to distinguish economic from governmental aspects. The consolidation becomes formally finalized in a state of mechanical automation where production and attribution become matters of administration. However, economic and governmental affairs are set to be united under competitive domination long before that stage is reached.

To fully secure themselves, competitive interests may not only control governmental and economic affairs but also informational, educational, religious, and cultural aspects of a society. The concomitant power over the emotions, thoughts, and behavior of subjects may en-

able them to summon the appearance of cooperative practices and allow these within safe parameters while firmly securing their competitive objectives. Still, permissiveness toward cooperative aspects to appease victims and their use to advance competitive objectives may only be carried to a certain degree before victims expect results that are associated with cooperative activities. Although the inclusion of cooperative aspects, pretenses, and terminology may greatly benefit competitive interests, it also subjects them to the hazard that competitive practices will have to disappoint cooperative expectations in substantial aspects if they wish to maintain their rule. To reach and secure a dominant position without conflict, competitive interests will have to control the risks resulting from their tolerance and use of cooperative practices. They may strive to portray their elevated position and overproportional compensation and possession of resources as justified by their contributions. They may attempt to utilize the fact that there are effectiveness and efficiency differences among contributors to cooperative production and that these deserve positions and compensation commensurate with their contributions. They may disparage victims' contributions relative to the merits of their contributions. In making such arguments, they may emphasize their vision, management skills, their connections, negotiation talent, experience, and leadership qualities as indispensable for the success of ventures in which they are actively involved. To the extent they are passively involved in purportedly cooperative ventures, they may highlight the value of capitalization they provide as conditional for success. Although there might be some merit to some of their arguments, they might abuse the power flowing from their contributions. Further, the accumulation of disproportionate takings increasingly destroys the justification for the compensability of using their capital. Systematic indoctrination in support of this lopsided compensation scheme may keep resistance by victims within bounds. To the extent their defense of preferential treatment encounters problems, competitive interests may look for cover in government that they control as a purportedly separate entity whose preemptions and takings may be easier to justify. But even in this context, members of a system that claims to behave cooperatively may develop expectations that competitive interests will have to partly disappoint.

To curtail cooperative aspirations, competitive interests may attempt to limit cooperative organization to semblances of tribal structures that they can control through the integration of hierarchic complements. They may also try to dampen or reverse the positive connotation of the term cooperation and associated terms in nonsanctioned contexts. They may undertake to disparage the reconciliation require-

ments of cooperation as ineffective and inefficient. In support of that strategy, competitive interests may commonly be able to appeal to an underdeveloped understanding that collective reconciliation can assist our pursuits overall. They may recruit emotional traits whose domination or uninhibited existence might be endangered if we were to harmonize our pursuits with those of other individuals. They may nurture doubts in us if we have progressed in our insights to acknowledge the principal worth of cooperative organization whether or how much it can succeed. They may evoke or increase fears that collective reconciliation or the related optimizations might improperly contort our self-determination if we should develop an aspiration to pursue needs autonomously or in further settings. They may dwell on the potential of cooperative endeavors to become counterproductive and oppressive if they are applied over such pursuits. They may imply that the weight of cooperative organizations leaves members dependent and defenseless and may prevent them from entering into alternative associations.

By ascribing competitive motives and effects to cooperative organizations to which they object, they may depict them as dangerous. That may be particularly successful regardless of the substance organizations if they can be shown or can be credibly accused to have foreign ties because this raises negative tribal attitudes. Competitive interests may receive support for their scheme from incidents where cooperative undertakings are ill-conceived or are poorly executed. If sufficiently deterrent incidents are lacking, competitive interests may attempt to shape cooperative movements. They may infiltrate important movements or externally influence members or leaders. They may establish controlled movements and support them to where they obtain significance. They may configure the philosophies and the approaches of these movements so that they become unattractive or competitively threatening. Competitive interests may also cause circumstances that frustrate cooperative organizations to create similarly unbecoming effects. After one cooperative organization has been brought into disrepute, other organizations may be discredited by a claim of ties or similarity to that organization. Because all cooperative organizations share some characteristics, no cooperative organization is safe from this denouncement. Competitive interests may prevent a thorough consideration of such organizations' nature by attaching a prejudicial label of notorious dangerous organizations to them. They may apply negative and threatening impressions regarding cooperative forces to fan tribal and hierarchic instincts that rally subjects under their leadership and focus attention away from their competitive abuses. This allows competitive interests to fight cooperative efforts with public justification.

Such manipulations may wholly dissuade subjects from the notion that a cooperative organization is a desirable or viable alternative to the competitively dominated system in which they reside and may transform them into supporters of a competitively dominated system. Competitive interests may be able to install an ideology in victims that zealously guards their domain against unwanted cooperative developments. Even to the extent subjects still embrace cooperative organizations, competitive interests may be able to defuse perilous aspects in the agenda of these organizations by inserting themselves directly or indirectly into their governance. Controlling at least some cooperative forces may allow competitors not only to position deterrent examples of cooperative organizations. It might also permit them to control opposition as well as alternative models while apparently condoning avenues for victims to organize in opposition to them or to give shape to alternative intent. This might have competitive interests set the stage and plot for a play in which the interaction of cooperative and competitive forces is choreographed to give members of a society an impression of choice. They might try to guide victims to support competitive interests, or they might be satisfied with neutralizing them.

Competitive interests may substantially succeed in making impressions of competitive abuse more palatable by bringing cooperative alternatives into disrepute. But they may not be able to remain effective and efficient in their competitive applications if they reduce these to a level that would be necessary to keep them or their effects hidden or at least pushed to the background of victims' awareness. They will have to find ways to maintain at least some of their activities with the acceptance or at least tolerance of their victims. Competitive interests may endeavor to mask their competitive activities by admitting to a part of them and claiming that they add value to the pursuits of their victims. By promoting competition as a constructive undertaking, they may try to immunize their practices and themselves. They may undertake this by attempting to raise the positive profile and lower the negative profile of competitive structures and processes. Competitive forces might claim that their competitive activities fulfill helpful or even indispensable functions in a cooperative economy. Where relative affluence is achieved in a society, they may represent such affluence as the result of competition. They may strive to conceal that the required effectiveness and efficiency are largely attributable to cooperative ventures or to individuals who engage in noncompetitive efforts to better their resources by offering products of higher effectiveness or efficiency. If cooperative or individual exertions cannot be dismissed, a claim may be made that they found success because they were motivated by

collaterally constructive competition. Competitive interests may emphasize positive outcomes of collaterally constructive competition and play down exclusionary and exploitative practices and consequences. They may try to condense competition generally, or at least the variety of competition practiced by them, to the positive aspects of increasing the efforts by contestants and the consequence of improved results for others. They may dismiss contrary examples as relatively limited, non-typical deviations. Competitive interests may expand these economic arguments to societal organization generally. To the extent they must acknowledge the benefits of cooperation, they may cite hierarchy as a traditionally respected ordering concept. They may invoke the classical function of hierarchy in a tribal context. They may claim that following a leader streamlines and thus optimizes cooperative behavior. They may claim hierarchy to possess clarifying and decisive properties that can achieve results on behalf of a cooperative system that purely cooperative processes cannot achieve or achieve to the same extent or with the same efficiency. They may again try to discount the inherent competitive aspects of hierarchy as manageable abnormalities.

Competitors may attempt to add legitimacy to competitive undertakings by contrasting them as forms of organization that preserve self-determination and independence. They may attach their competitive, anti-cooperative stance to positions that endeavor to protect individuals against undue cooperative impositions. They may be able to impress subjects that the freedom to compete is the ultimate expression of self-determination and an opportunity to fashion our pursuits according to our needs. In asserting this argument, competitive interests may not necessarily focus on economic or other societal domination concerns. Rather, they may set forth analogies in which individuals strive for excellence and independence without or with merely limited negative consequences for others and may imply that competition for resources or for power is not different. Such claims may succeed in convincing victims that the success competitive interests possess is attributable to individual qualities that their victims recognize as commendable and constructive. These justifications may permit competitive interests to openly exert at least some of their competitive activities. They may also allow them to conduct less publicized competitive strategies in relative safety because the pursuit of these strategies may use the cover of structures and processes that have been legitimized.

The acceptance level of false contentions and manipulations regarding the cooperative or competitive character of demeanor and the absolute and relative merit of competitive and cooperative manners of pursuit can serve as an indicator of the degree to which competitive

interests have succeeded in controlling and adjusting the minds of individuals in a society. These interests may not only originate from other individuals. Competitive impulses by genetic or independently acquired aspects of traits may contribute to a competitive governance of our council of traits. The combined characterizations of traits as well as experiences whose effects do not rise to the level of acquired traits may dispose us to advocate and defend competitive behavior. Competition may become an automatic premise for our pursuits with the exception of pursuits that clearly state a requirement of cooperation. But even with respect to these, we may believe that competitive strategies are compatible with cooperation or can even improve it. We may accept competition not only as a natural condition for human existence but also as a desirable mode of operation that makes humans set forth best efforts and strengthens our species. Even if we recognize that losing in competition generates negative consequences, we may consider it as a just system based on idyllic notions of hierarchic and tribal instincts. By engaging in practices that exemplify these notions, competitive interests may shield many of their endeavors against criticism or inquiry. To the extent criticism of their competitive practices remains and these cannot be successfully characterized as constructive, competitive interests may still be able to prevail on victims that their domination has an overall positive effect. They may draw attention to their tolerance, sympathy, protection, and support for cooperative concerns in and seemingly beyond their self-interest. They may cite these samples where criticism appears to be misplaced as symptomatic for their entire or at least their principal orientation. They may endeavor to use these merits to portray an ultimately positive balance of their conduct. They might try to additionally improve the appearance of that balance by releasing some and even generous portions of their wealth to charities or other constructive purposes and by managing information so it praises their constructive attributes and conceals damaging effects.

Competitive interests may also try to legitimize competitive activities that they cannot successfully recharacterize as constructive by defending competition as a fundamental right. They may refer to competitive behavior as a ubiquitous essential law by which nature develops. They may assert that this purportedly supreme natural law translates into a supreme right to exercise competition and even an obligation that serves to develop and secure our species. They may cite the existence of competitive instincts and their apparent utility in the past of human development without a distinction in their application between humans and a nonhuman environment and without a consideration of whether such instincts may have lost their utility for us. Such

roots of competitive behavior may only be rarely cited to justify competitive practices in a society because they seem to validate the relentless exclusion and exploitation of weaker by stronger forces regardless of any ethics. Such a ruthless attitude may be persisting in all humans grounded on instincts that may predate even hierarchic and tribal instincts. Nevertheless, most may deem acting upon it to be unjustifiable or they may consider incurring the involved costs and risks to be practically unwise compared to more surreptitious strategies. Competitors may therefore reserve extreme competition to exigencies. Yet the instinctive derivation of a fundamental right to competition may continue to represent the core principle of their conduct. By a softening of their philosophies or practices with cooperation, competitors may divert their conscience from the fundamentally depraved nature of their behavior and obtain support or at least tolerance from victims.

An additional, more palatable justification for competition may be the general promise that competition avails everybody of a chance of success. That promise of opportunity may advance to eclipse critical questions of how that success might be achieved. If competitive interests can inculcate this simple refrain in victims' minds, they might deflect criticism and attract respect by portraying themselves as more or most successful participants in such a system. This strategy may be appealing to competitive interests because they may be able to drop a large part of their cooperative pretensions. Their task is also alleviated because they do not have to show that all participants in their system succeed but only that any participant can win by following competitive principles and investing sufficient efforts. To believably maintain that a competitive setting can promote victims' interests, dominating competitors must grant some space for victims to pursue their needs competitively and to succeed to a certain extent. They may therefore maintain legal protections for competitive behavior by victims. If victims observe that other victims succeed under competitive strategies, they might believe that they too can beat the odds and win. The potential of an overproportional acquisition of means can provide a lure that might prove to be irresistible to those who currently suffer from this disproportionality. A vision of competitive practices and success may also appeal to victims because it allows them to vent their frustrations about being victimized by inflicting damage and pain on others in turn. As a result, a competitive system may be able to draw staunch support from those it torments and injures. Such a determination may further harden if the system does not leave victims viable alternatives to competition. It may induce victims to engage in competitive strategies by making the acquisition of certain resources dependent on their

successful competitive activities. It may succeed in motivating most or all members of a society to engage in at least some competitive activities. Because victims then are also commonly perpetrators of competitive behavior, they become guilty of the same general type of infraction as ruling competitors. This makes it more challenging for them to legitimately criticize competitive rulers. Involving victims in competitive practices makes them accomplices of the system and helps competitive rulers to legitimize their own demeanor. In addition, a general environment of competition may create a maze in which the ruling interests and the nature and consequences of their endeavors are commingled and harder to identify or gauge. The ensuing confusion helps to paralyze or to redirect victims' protective, retributive, or corrective impulses from their competitive oppressors toward one another.

But the competitive motivation of victims comes at a price. In a society in which production has not been mechanically automated, it may depress production. That may not only be due to competitive interferences among members. Competitive motivations of victims may also predispose them against cooperative manners of pursuit because competitive practices are the antithesis of cooperation. In particular, they may draw cooperation with a competitive system that is imposed on victims into question. This may disturb the resource base and security of competitive rulers. For that reason, competitive activity among the subjects of a competitively ruled society must be limited. Yet, even without proliferation of competitive practices among victims, a competitively dominated system has to ultimately set forth convincing justification why large segments of the population should cooperate but remain subjected to competitive rule. To maintain such a system, its principles must reconcile the coexistence of competitive and cooperative strategies. Ruling competitive forces may undertake to do this by describing their system as being grounded on merit, entitling some to lead and others to follow in accordance with their relative attributes. Such a portrayal joins the concepts while emphasizing the supremacy of competitive characteristics. It reserves control and overproportional rewards to privileged individuals who are purportedly qualified by superior characteristics. It demands overproportional cooperation by individuals who possess productive talents, advise leaders, execute their orders, or more passively abide by them, but it also requires competitive leaders to contribute. A rational justification for competitive impositions may then closely trace the central instinctive hierarchic and tribal paradigm of leadership in exchange for obedience. Both rational and emotional arrangements call for cooperative strategies by competitive rulers. The following chapter explores this contradiction.