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Editor's Note

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Editor's Note

The life span of man carries with it joys and sorrows that we cannot escape. In this issue it is unfortunately necessary to begin with the sorrows. Two individuals closely associated with the journal and with our parent organization, the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, have died, and I want to acknowledge them here. They are Lee Snyder and John Reilly.

Dr. Lee Snyder was president of the organization immediately before the term of Dr. Andrew Targowski. Dr. Targowski has written a beautiful appreciation of the life and service to this organization of Dr. Snyder which follows my remarks about John Reilly. For myself, I note that Dr. Snyder was a very pleasant man who always came to the annual meetings and contributed in a meaningful, significant, and penetrating way. He was missed by all of us when he had to stop attending meetings, and his absence will be permanently, and sadly, felt.

John Reilly was an Associate Editor of the *Comparative Civilizations Review* journal for several years. On New Year's Day I received a note from Dr. Nora P. Reilly, Ph.D., Associate Dean of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies and Professor of Psychology at Radford University in Radford, Virginia. It carried wishes for a happy new year and informed the organization that her brother, John Reilly, had died "from a sudden and incurable neurological disorder" which "lasted eight weeks from start to finish." She concluded as follows:

I know that John very much enjoyed the topics in this journal. Simply mentioning "Spengler" always made his ears perk up, though it did not much engage the attention of my elderly mother.

In a response to her on behalf of the journal and the association, I noted his important work as an Associate Editor of the *Comparative Civilizations Review*. Among his recent writings for the journal had been a major piece entitled "The World After Modernity" (2003); and reviews of Tony Blankley's *The West's Last Chance: Will We Win the Clash of Civilizations?* (2006); Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Years of Rice and Salt* (2006); and Carl Schmitt's *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum* (2009).

Mr. Reilly also spoke on *The World After Modernity* under the title "Spengler's Future" at the Sixth Annual Conference of the Center for Millennial Studies, held at Boston University from November 3 to 6, 2001. A long-time futurist, he commented that:

A persistent and highly influential image of the future appeared in the late 19th century. It occurred to a long list of people: I might mention Ernst von Lasaulx,

Henry and Brooks Adams, Nikolai Danilevsky, Nikolai Berdyaev and Walter Schubart, and for that matter Albert Schweitzer and Jacob Burckhardt.

They all shared the intuition that the Western world had entered a new "Hellenistic" age, and the twentieth century was going to see a recurrence of the less pleasant aspects of Hellenism. These would include such things as demagogic tyrannies, annihilation warfare, and a relaxation of traditional restraints in art and personal life.

Nietzsche had said as much, too, and in fact anyone who entered the 20th century with this modest insight would have met with few surprises.

While I shared in my note some of what I knew about her brother, I hadn't realized how extensive his career had been outside of the ISCSC. A graduate of St. Peter's College and the Georgetown University Law School, he wrote extensively on theology -- and in particular eschatology, politics, alternative history, and the philosophy of science and literature.

An orthodox Roman Catholic and a lawyer who lived in New Jersey, he published five major books including *Apocalypse and Future: Notes on the Cultural History of the 21st Century*, *The Perfection of the West*, *The Perennial Apocalypse*, and his well-received *Spengler's Future*. One review noted that this latter book was "a Basic computer program to predict the future of Western Civilization," indicating that "the last Emperor of the West will die in his sleep in A.D. 2601 and no successor will be elected."

It was also reported that he had authored the following works of what one commentator called "amusing short fiction and alternate history":

President H. P. Lovecraft
Cthulluism and the Cold War
The Irish Empire
C. S. Lewis: An Alternative Obituary
The Stopping Problem (Alan Turing and the End of the World)
If Jesus Had Never Been Born
The Hour of the Laity (Lycanthropy in Upstate New York)

One blogger wrote that he had "played some role in prodding Mr. Reilly to write his review of Kim Stanley Robinson's alternate history 'The Years of Rice and Salt', where the Black Death reduces Western Christianity to an obscure sect."

John regularly appeared in *First Things*, *Kirkus Review*, and he had been an editor at *Culture Wars* before he withdrew to protest a drift toward anti-Semitism which he publically denounced. Our Associate Editor also maintained a blog entitled *The Long View*, where he covered very large subjects. In addition to The International Society for

the Comparative Study of Civilizations, he was active with the Center for Millennial Studies, the Simplified Spelling Society, and American Literacy Council.

What a polymath.

According to a thoughtful obituary in *The Jersey Journal*:

John explained himself thusly: After long thought, I realized that the most important thing in life is to be helpful. So, I have taken to explaining things, carefully and empathetically, and often at very great length. 'Spengler with a Smile' is how I usually characterize the organizing principle.

The ISCSC and this journal were honored to have such a talented individual, such a Renaissance Man, as an Associate Editor.

Joseph Drew, *CCR* Editor-in-Chief



Lee Daniel Snyder, Civilizationist and the President of the ISCSC (2004-2007)

In his mind, Lee Daniel Snyder was as straightforward a civilizationist as you could wish to see.

He grew up in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York and graduated as valedictorian at Williams College in 1955. He was elected a Danforth Graduate Fellow and spent a year at Mainz, Germany, with a Fulbright grant. He earned a M. Div. in religious history at Union Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in History at Harvard University. Since then he has participated in six NEH summer study programs in cultural history.

After five years at Ohio Wesleyan, he moved to New College in Sarasota, where he was Professor of History and Director of Medieval-Renaissance Studies. An intellectual-cultural historian known for his impressive range of interests and expertise, Professor Snyder was a specialist in Medieval and Renaissance Europe with an alternating focus on France, Spain, Italy and Germany, as well as the Protestant Reformation and the history of religion.

He served as a full-time faculty member at New College from 1969 until his retirement in 2003. Among his many accomplishments at New College is the founding of the College's Biennial Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Studies, one of the leading conferences of its kind in the United States. He was President of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations (2004-2007). He has presented papers on the history of religion and historical theory.

In 1999 he published the book of his life, a monumental treaty titled *Macro History: A Theoretical Approach to Comparative World History*. This volume explores and documents Macro-History, the attempt to create a model of the cultural-historical process that will explain historical change for all societies/cultures/civilizations. The book, which appeared by the end of the 20th century, had a chance to synthesize contributions of many 20th-century historians and scientists who made sense of world history.

As the civilizationist Matthew Melko described this book, Snyder synthesizes world histories beginning with H.G. Wells and continuing through William McNeill and Philip D. Curtin; of course it touches civilizational studies beginning with Spengler and continuing through Toynbee to contemporaries like David Wilkinson and Samuel P. Huntington. It includes the more recent development of world systems analysis by Immanuel Wallerstein, Andre Gunder Frank, Barry Gills, Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas D. Hall. Snyder is familiar with general systems theorists like Ervin Laszlo and T. Downing Bowler, and macro-sociologists such as Gerhard Lenski and Stephen K. Sanderson. He applied these approaches by mostly modifying, correcting and synthesizing for the purpose of comparative world history.

Snyder's study of religion led him to Toynbee, who defines a civilization by its kind of religion. Hence, reading Snyder reminds you of reading Toynbee, who is widely considered as the father of civilizational studies.

Snyder argues that the largest historic framework is a “culture-system,” called a Culture or Civilization by many. However, his basic unit of study is the Historic Cycle of 300 to 400 years. Macro- and micro-history can be analyzed within a framework of five dimensions: economic, socio-political, intellectual (insight, spiritual aspect, subjective side, ideas, “culture”), geographic, and expressive (art, literature, and music).

Since his book is rather on World Macro-History than on Civilization, the author is mostly preoccupied with the timing of the Historic Cycle and how it is influenced by these five dimensions of culture-system. He is innovative in defining the role of an individual in a culture-system.

I remember Lee Snyder from our conference in Alaska (2004) and later from Paris (2006). Here at UNESCO’s large auditorium he really showed his class. We had witnessed several long, similar and articulated presentations by the French members of the conference Presidium. Even at one point I left the auditorium and said *France est mort* (France is dead). Then I returned and heard Lee Snyder’s presentation as the president of our Society. It was a very well done, impressive in terms of scholarship and clarity, as well as management of the conference and so forth.

Lee Snyder surprised me by telling me that he was in my town Kalamazoo (Michigan) many times, since my Western Michigan University has organized for the last 40+ years the International Conference on Medieval Studies, which is attended by more than 3,000 historians each year, including him.

In 2007, I revisited him in his home town Sarasota. After a dinner, we walked around his inspiring home and around the large garden full of trees and talked about world civilization. He was aware that he was weakening but still full of world curiosity, just recently having paid his the last visit to Europe, including northern Poland. I suspected that his roots were there, but the city he visited he called Danzig rather than Gdańsk.

He was humble but at the same time proud of his contribution to the theory of civilization, since he believed in the macro approach to the history, which allows us to see our small picture within the larger picture of human development. We are grateful to him for his effort to understand better our place in civilization.

We, at the ISCSC, are deeply saddened by Lee Snyder’s departure to another... civilization.

Andrew Targowski
President of the ISCSC (2007-2013)

Now, the good news. First, this issue of the journal precedes our annual meeting, to be held at Asilomar in California. Please make every effort to attend, if you can; it promises to be an exciting conference, with many interesting debates.

Second, we are publishing in this number a set of fascinating papers. The opening paper is one that brought many remarks of approbation when it was read at our last meeting. Dr. Abbey Perumpanani of Australia made a big hit when he argued, as he does in the paper, that we can logically arrive at a meaningful, clear definition of “civilization.” It is his task in this paper to show us how to do so, and it is an especially significant venture for the ISCS since the topic has been debated vigorously and repeatedly ever since the onset of the association. The definition that Dr. Perumpanani proposes is the following: *a civilization is a dynamical system that supports endogenous cultural developments through economic interactions aggregated across elements of its data.*

Next is another significant work in the editorial board’s judgment, this one by Prof. Dario Fernandez-Morera. In this paper he challenges the widely accepted notion that under Islam the Jewish community of Spain enjoyed a “Golden Age.” New facts are adduced to show that this was not really the case. As he states in opening the paper: Jews remained subject to the vicissitudes of their condition as *dhimmis* (“protected” non-Muslims). If there was brief good treatment, it was because of tactical needs of particular Muslim rulers, not out of legal considerations.

As editor, I would add that with the recent passing of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu’s father, another well-known scholar on the subject of the Spanish treatment of the Jews during the Middle Ages, and the Inquisition, in particular, this topic is most *à propos*.

Dr. John Grayzel has led a dazzling career, first as a leader in the U. S. Agency for International Development and then in academe as a professor and as the holder of the Baha’i Chair for World Peace at the University of Maryland. With a J.D. from Stanford Law School and his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Oregon, he has participated in, and led, major funding missions throughout Africa and Asia over four decades, plus heading the Education Office of his agency.

In this article he argues persuasively that most Western scholars have misunderstood African civilization and most diplomats have, as well. Now he adds the Chinese to this list, maintaining that that in spite of what many observers might think, African Civilization has found another dupe in Chinese efforts to buy long-term control of that continent through short-term deals. In the process of this insightful presentation, he presents and analyzes three separate African civilizations and how they have interacted with the outside world.

What is going on in contemporary China? Perhaps experts in international relations have not fully understood that country recently. So argues Prof. Barbara Onnis, an international relations expert and scholar in Italy. In her paper, she maintains that the evolving Chinese vision of China's role in international affairs has been indicated through a series of significant policy statements. Many prominent Chinese scholars, she reports, shade their intentions carefully. There has been articulated "China's peaceful rise," but Dr. Onnis shows that this might merely be the vehicle through which Beijing is trying to allay foreign apprehension of this resurgent old/new world power. We can follow in the paper the series of arguments China has brought forward to convince the world that her ascendancy is well-intentioned.

Dr. Pedro Geiger from Brazil begins his paper on war and peace conjunctures by addressing the possibility that the German social democrat Karl Kautsky, whom we all learned of in school as "the renegade Kautsky" – a term of opprobrium thrown upon him when he refused to back the ultimately ill-fated Spartacist Revolt – may have been right all along.

In spite of Lenin's hectoring, Marxist intellectuals and others supported capitalist expansion in the last century, surprisingly, and have helped capitalists to expand worldwide lately via globalism. These Marxists postulated, and Dr. Geiger finds, that the threat of another world war has been receding since 1945, perhaps as a result of capitalist expansion. Is this a turn that could have been predicted by Marxists a century ago?

Mariana Tepfenhart of Monmouth University in New Jersey provides an analysis of the causes of ethnic conflicts worldwide over recent decades. In the wake of the collapse of the Cold War, some third world countries lost their sponsors and, as a result, they also lost much of their ability to stabilize their domestic strength and restrain ethnic tensions.

Unhappily, ethnic conflicts have broken out repeatedly in the former Communist sphere of influence: we see evidence of this in the new republics emerging out of Yugoslavia, in Chechnya, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. We also have witnessed violent internal conflict burst forth in the developing world, with Rwanda being the most dramatic and horrible example.

Globalism, anti-Americanism, large-scale migration, and the nature of the multi-national state are all examined by Prof. Tepfenhart as she considers why ethnic conflict is so present in our world today. Poverty and fear, she says, not cultural diversity, fuel ethnic conflict. If violence, cruelty, and inhumane acts are accepted, the beginnings of genocide cannot be far behind.

We conclude on a special note, with a brief essay sent in by Dr. Wallace Gray. Dr. Gray is a longtime member of the ISCS and an American expert on Japanese culture. In this

paper, which he translated and annotated, we read of the journey of a Japanese intellectual to the city of Nagasaki. There are many facts about the city to learn, including that the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki was meant to strike a munitions area, an important ship-building and servicing complex. Instead, winds carried the atomic bomb to a Catholic area, to the north. As a result, the bomb apparently fell on a Christian hospital and medical university.

In addition to the narrative, which includes an analysis of the introduction to Buddhism in Japan and the attempt of Catholic leaders, such as the Pope, to encourage mutual efforts regardless of religious differences in Nagasaki, the article we print contains fascinating observations by the ever-trenchant Dr. Gray. This is both an aesthetic and a cultural commentary. We publish this for its inherent value as an essay and observe that it has not gone through peer review.

As always, these incisive essays are followed by book reviews that deal with significant works of comparative civilization. There's much to read in this issue, and the editors hope that you will agree with us that this issue brings you a pleasant and rewarding experience.

See you soon!

Joseph Drew, Editor-in-Chief