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HISTORY OF CONSCIOUSNESS
AND CIVILIZATION ANALYSIS

VYTAUTAS KAVOLIS

Both terms of my topic may not generally be held in clear focus. I will therefore begin with the names of some of those I take to be, by their main accents, representative of each of the two perspectives.

Civilization analysis stands for Max Weber, Norbert Elias, Louis Dumont, Benjamin Nelson, S. N. Eisenstadt. History of consciousness is represented by Michel Foucault, Philippe Ariès, Hayden White, Fredric Jameson, H. D. Harootunian. The second list could be greatly expanded: it points to a currently fashionable approach.

Most of those listed (to their own credit) are not "pure" representatives of one of these perspectives. Foucault in his substantive works on madness, the clinicalization of medicine, and imprisonment is almost as much a civilization analyst as historian of consciousness. Among those who can be identified with the civilizational approach, Elias (in his studies of "the civilizing process") is closest to history of consciousness, Eisenstadt wholly alien to it.

Shifts occur over time. Dumont in his later work on European political philosophy has moved toward history of consciousness, as have several others. Any movement in the opposite direction is barely perceptible.

I have chosen to compare these two scientific programs because, first, both are important to civilizational studies, capable of grasping what is essential to civilizations as distinguished from other entities, and second, both are more than merely "technical" disciplines, rather constituting broad intellectual and human orientations. It is not possible to be a "cultured person," in the sense in which nineteenth-century east Europeans used the term, without having become deeply engaged with both history of consciousness and civilization analysis.

I will focus on two tendencies both of which may exist in the same author, but which carry him or her in different directions. I will touch upon their logics, phenomenologies, points of contact, and critical evaluations.
The Logic of the Disciplines: Intentions and Guidelines

History of consciousness has emerged as an effort of literary scholars and philosophers to conceive of their subject as the history of more than their subject. But it also arises from the postmodern sense of the disappearance of boundaries, centers, and hierarchies; and it itself expresses this sense.

Civilization analysis is the outcome of efforts by sociologists and historians to understand the distinctiveness of the historical trajectories of their own civilizations. Their starting point is a more grounded sense of the intellectual task than that suggested in the history of consciousness. The problem is not to get hold of what one experiences but to account for what is being done.

Civilization analysis is concerned with locating the structural connections (a) between symbolic designs and social settings, (b) among different kinds of symbolic designs, all within the largest comprehensible and historically continuous organization of action. The crucial issue is: the largest interconnectedness over time of sociosymbolic organization.

History of consciousness seeks to describe the shifts in coordinates of orientation toward the self, nature, society, and the transcendent—and the forms of organization of knowledge itself—evident in particular assemblages of text. The crucial issue is vital shifts in what secularists are capable of recognizing as spirituality. This becomes the crucial issue when a taken-for-granted sense of self, nature, society, and the transcendent is lacking and seriously missed.

In history of consciousness, symbolic forms—or modes of discourse—tend to be regarded as either alone worth noting (the bias of philosophers and traditional literary scholars), or as identical with human behavior (a premise basic to semiotics). History of consciousness differs from a traditional history of ideas in (a) being primarily concerned not with individual thought, but with collective forms of thinking underlying and partially expressed in the thinking of individuals, (b) placing most emphasis on the structural patterns implicit, or taken for granted, in particular texts.

Civilization analysis must pay attention to both symbolic forms and organizations and flows of actual behavior: what distinguishes civilizations is the problematic connectedness of meanings and practices on the largest operational scale. In the absence of central focus on this issue, even when civilizations are being studied, they are studied as something else, as political or economic systems, or as religious, literary, or intellec-
tual traditions, *not as civilizations*, that is functioning sociocultural systems on the largest scale.

To constitute a civilization, such a system must have generated a literate culture that meets two conditions. First, it must be capable of giving symbolic coherence either to a wide-ranging empire or to a system of states for at least several centuries. Second, it must be universally recognizable as one of the major centers of creative achievement, in most spheres of human activity, for humanity as a whole. Civilizations are systems that have been creative in ways that can be "generalized" and employed widely beyond their own confines. They are also systems integrated not by functional interdependence but by symbolic distinctiveness.

Historians of consciousness direct their attention mainly to the points at which the vital shifts in spirituality are taking place. The "inert mass," the stabilizing "ballast" of which cultural systems mostly consist, is generally beyond the scope of their concern, except as the spheres which the vital shifts, originating elsewhere, influence—or as the source of mechanisms of suppression or containment of these vital shifts.

Civilization analysis cannot disregard the persistence of stabilizing principles and arrangements. For them, what changes must be seen in relation to what does not change (or what changes in the opposite direction.)

*The Phenomenology of the Disciplines: Existential Qualities*

Beyond the more formal definition of a research program one can sense a set of human dispositions and tendencies of perception. The relationship between the definition of the program and the phenomenology of its practitioners is, of course, imperfect. Much of the excitement of scientific work arises from such imperfections.

A phenomenological comparison of our two intellectual orientations—each only partly revealed by a particular author—begins when we note the differences in their distinctive thematic concerns.

Historians of consciousness are attracted to such themes as *sex* or *desire*, *theatricality* or *ritual*, *wildness* or *madness*, and *death*, the common denominator of which is intensification of experience. Civilization analysts tend to be concerned with such topics as *rationalization*, *discipline*, *social transformation*, *hierarchy*, *individuality* (as theoretical ideas and as political practices). These might all be described as responsibility concerns.
A somewhat metaphoric way of describing this difference is to say that in history of consciousness energies project and dissolve structures, in civilization analysis structures contain and emanate energies.6

History of consciousness either does not explain the shifts in symbolic designs it describes, or it explains them by economically generated “vital impulses” or psychological “anxieties.”7 That which most clearly distinguishes civilization analysis is the taking seriously of the possibility that the symbolic frameworks are primary realities which retain their continuities over time (even while changes occur within them), constrain and direct individual and collective energies, and shape the meanings of experiences.

The works conceived in the two intellectual perspectives speak of different “positions in life” of their authors. The texts of the historians of consciousness frequently suggest a sense of homelessness, disembeddedness, lack of standards, enjoyment of playfulness. Those of civilization analysts project a need for mastery of everything, a drying-out schematization of experience. The first is a contemporary representation, in this-worldly sociocultural sciences, of the mystical, the latter of the ascetic attitude; or of “underground” and “modernistic” responses to modernization.8 The most interesting cases are always those of mystics who force themselves to be rationalists.

The knowledge of historians of consciousness is usually organized as a consecutive story describing changes. Civilization analysts organize their knowledge typically in the form of assemblies of analytical elements suggesting various kinds of interactions or encounters among them, from close examination of which generalizations about causation are derivable.

The consecutive story one constructs is the only defense against the homelessness one experiences. The less coherent assembly of analytical elements is only bearable if one still remembers a world that makes sense.

To sum up: history of consciousness is a “Romantic” discipline, always to some degree intellectual autobiography, an effort to create a history for one’s own consciousness, research arising from intense personal preoccupations of the author.9

Civilization analysis is a more “classical” discipline, a statement about how the world hangs together, more removed from personal preoccupations, more reserved in its manner of self-revelation.
Points of Contact: Sociological Theory and General Methodology

Various points of contact between history of consciousness and civilization analysis can be identified. I select two, one primarily theoretical, the other mainly methodological.

I find it helpful to view theory as either (a) substantive propositions about causes and effects, or (b) interpretations of the meaning of aspects or the whole of experience from the point of view of a particular system of thought; and to consider methodology as all efforts to identify analytical elements and relations among them.

Theoretically, both history of consciousness and civilization analysis pose, but in conflicting ways, the question of how meanings relate to power. This is more consistently an issue in civilization analysis. History of consciousness is at least as much attracted to the ways in which cultural meanings intersect with experiences of intimacy or selfhood. The problematics of self-understanding will not be reviewed here. Our concern is, for the time being, with how power is dealt with in the two intellectual perspectives.

In civilization analysis, power is understood in relation to both interests and meanings. Power is always an organization of the interests of particular individuals and groups, in which both durable and changing elements can be recognized. (In modern times, the national interest is particularly durable.) Legitimate power is viewed as arising within especially long-lived and continuously active structures of meaning, whether all-embracing ideologies or narrower, formal conceptions of legality and beliefs in the justification of power by utility, that persist independently of efforts of the powerful—and those desirous of power—to exploit them. (An inevitable aspect of power is the ability to exploit symbolic resources to advance one’s own interests: who can exploit symbolic resources has power.) Legitimate power is, with varying degrees of conviction, resonant with structures of meaning the credibility of which does not in the main depend on their alliance with particular agencies of power.

Illegitimate power emerges outside of reciprocally accepted structures of meaning and is not spontaneously, by the people on whom it is exerted, recognized as permeated by or aligned with the meanings they respect. But all, even illegitimate, power can, to some extent, modify the structures of meaning which it always, in some way, affects by its operations.10
This generally (though not compulsively) Weberian perspective permits empirically based but in their implications critical inquiries into the legitimacy—that is cultural control—of power and requires us to pay attention to the actual modes of cultural participation of all, including underprivileged, groups in a social order.

History of consciousness in its single-minded preoccupation with the text as the embodiment of whatever can be analyzed,—an attitude one might describe as culturally Islamic,—tends to reject the ultimate separateness of culture and power. In Foucault’s thought, all power arises from a particular organization of meanings—a symbolic technology—and, rather than being exercised by identifiable individuals or organizations, is embedded in the impersonal “micro-practices” of which this organization of meanings in everyday life consists.

In history of consciousness, meanings are not theoretically separable from practices, which makes it impossible to judge either meanings or practices: there is no standard independent from a fusion of both. If we want to judge, we either return to a premodern attitude, taking up some primordial solidarity as an ethical stance (Edward Said and some feminists), or the standards of judgment are imported from contemporary sources external to the logic of history of consciousness itself—from a spontaneous “particularizing” anarchism rejecting all “totalizing” confinement as the worst evil (Michel Foucault), or from a faith specifying “true” or “false” aspects of consciousness by postulation (Fredric Jameson).

History of consciousness in its major representatives does not appear to possess the capacity of careful movement toward greater universality or rationality of ethical standards: one either commits oneself to one’s own “totalization” or rejects any “universality” or “systematicity” as oppressive. History of consciousness may thus constitute a less responsible ethical stance than that allowed for by civilization analysis.

While their theoretical positions diverge, the methodologies of civilization analysis and history of consciousness are, in my view, complementary (and indeed found in the works of many of the same authors). History of consciousness proceeds by close readings of particular texts or small collections thereof, insofar as these texts reveal some larger structure common to several of them, or changes in this structure. But it lacks a general conception of such larger structures.

What theory history of consciousness has is mainly reconstituted from Nietzsche, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and structuralism. While these approaches may be helpful in describing the historical trajectories of
particular symbolic forms, none of them provides an adequate framework for identifying the relations between different kinds of symbolic forms within a civilization.

History of consciousness, to be sure, has introduced refinements into these theories—e.g., into the Marxist tradition by the fruitful elaboration, on the basis of Karl Mannheim, Antonio Gramsci, and Lucien Goldmann, of the idea that all symbolic designs contain both ideological and utopian elements, or that postmodernist artistic and literary culture is both an expression of and a form of struggle against advanced capitalism. But this still, while depoliticizing Marxism in the most interesting way, approaches only particular components of civilizations, not patterns of their interrelation.

How, for example, is postmodernist art related to the "revival of religion?" If they are both expressions of and forms of struggle against advanced capitalism, what is the significance of their confronting each other as symbolic alternatives? Is this not the kind of problem about the structure of contemporary civilization that history of consciousness has so far not been able, or willing, to address?

Civilization analysis centers its attention on "texts beyond the text"—the larger, more generalized designs of culture which, in contrast to the particular texts, are difficult to describe exactly and to delimit in time and space. One is in danger of abstract schematization. But working with the "larger texts" allows one to ask how they relate to one another, what controlling principles hold together the elements of a civilization in a continuous and distinctive sociosymbolic system.

How these controlling principles can be conceived is a major concern in civilization analysis. I will choose a contemporary thinker who has addressed this issue, in my view, most incisively. For Louis Dumont, the central issue is always the relation of individualism to holism. The solution takes the form, for each civilization, of a value hierarchy in which two intellectual operations are simultaneously performed. First, on what is for him the inferior level of social action, the dominant principle is differentiated from the subordinate principle as its opposite. Second, on the superior level of ideological thought, the dominant principle encompasses the subordinate principle as its own subsidiary component. Social holism is the dominant principle in all traditional civilizations (Dumont has worked it out in detail only for India), individualism is encompassed by it. In the modern West, the value hierarchy is reversed, deviating from what he regards as the "normal" civilization case.
Dumont conceives of "the individualistic configuration" of modernity as having these features:

- individualism (as opposed to holism),
- primacy of the relations of men to things (as against the relations between men),
- absolute distinction between subject and object (opposed to merely relatively, fluctuating distinction),
- segregation of values from facts and ideas (opposed to their indistinction or close association),
- distribution of knowledge into independent, homologous and homogeneous planes or disciplines.

Having emerged in England and France, the individualistic configuration now constitutes "the dominant civilization" with which other cultures currently interact, "undergoing in each case a degree of transformation."

But the individualistic configuration is not able to subsist by itself. It necessarily produces holistic reassertions at the core of Western civilization; and, as it extends from that core into peripheral areas—Germany, Russia, India and so on, it enters into volatile mixes with locally established holisms which feed back, in potentially dangerous ways, into Western civilization. The danger arises from a conflation of irreconcilables; "the only mode under which [values] can be associated without peril," says Dumont, is that of "a clear hierarchy." Where encounters between civilizations undermine such clarity, he sees a potential for totalitarian artificialism.

Controlling Principles and the Integration of Civilizations

One has to follow Dumont in detail to see how fruitful his approach is in its particulars. But can the whole symbolic structure of a civilization be explained by a single principle? The answer must be no, since the "controlling principle" is an analytical abstraction in the construction of which different scholars choose to emphasize different aspects as crucial; and several controlling principles may be present in a civilization.

The choice of the controlling principle depends on the problem the analyst regards as central to which the controlling principle stands as the solution. Consider, for the moment, Western civilization; but keep in mind that civilizations can best be compared, at least from a sociological point of view, in terms of their controlling principles.

If the central problem is the relation of individualism to the social whole, then the Western principle (since Abelard) is indeed the superordination of individualism over holism. But if we choose the relation of good and evil as the central problem, the controlling principle in the West, recurrently since the witchhunts of the fourteenth century, has been
ideological dualism threatening, from one or the other side, any established social hierarchy (the God-Satan paradigm, but with a wide range of substitutable secular contests: rationality vs. feeling, nature vs. artificiality, left vs. right, feminism vs. patriarchy).\textsuperscript{17}

If the problem is the relation of faith and power (or its derivatives, values and facts), the Western principle has been mutual acknowledgment of legitimate separation (giving to God and to Caesar what belongs to each, a principle theoretically inherent in Christianity, but put seriously into effect only since the sixteenth century and most respected in the liberal age). But if the problem proves to be relations among substantively differing systems of meaning, the controlling principle is now becoming semiotic universalism—recognition of the right to independent existence of all sorts and varieties of cultures, without necessarily presuming that they must be regarded as equal in depth and comprehensiveness as well (although "postmodernists" tend to take the latter for granted).\textsuperscript{18}

The increasing difficulty posed for the integration of a civilization by the presence of different controlling principles in it can be resolved by one of two assumptions. Either there is, at a deeper level of symbolic organization, an enduring form of thought to which most of its conflicting principles approximate (as Takie Sugiyama Lebra argues in distinguishing between Western unilateral determinism and Japanese interactional relativism—ultimately two conceptions of causation).\textsuperscript{19} Or, \textit{at any given time}, one of the controlling principles serves as the configurational form within which other controlling principles, to be recognized as fully legitimate, are supposed to operate and to which they are expected to adjust themselves. The second assumption would give justice to both changes over time within a civilization (as the first assumption does not), and the continuity of its controlling principles. Changes in the integration of a civilization occur through the expansion or contraction of the authority of particular controlling principles which persist in a civilization so long as it remains itself.

When the configurational form of Western civilization changed from militant dualism to separation of spheres it moved from its medieval to its currently prevailing liberal stage. But militant dualism persists as a subsidiary principle and keeps reemerging, in revised forms, mainly in the geographic, class, ethnic, or religious peripheries of Western civilization. (Sometimes the young also come to perceive themselves as a civilizational periphery.) To the extent semiotic universalism becomes the configurational form, one could speak of the West’s movement into
either a "postmodern" or a "global" stage. Christianity, which had provided the configurational form in the first, and less directly in the second stage, would become a subsidiary principle in the third.

"Postmodern" and "global" are two alternative models by which this emerging stage may be understood. In its prevalent, originally American usage, "postmodern" carries overtones of a fashionable confluence of everything with everything else that totally abolishes any sense of a hierarchy of values. The "global" perspective, as in Roland Robertson’s globalization theory, allows for a range of differentiated responses to the sense of world-wide humanity having become the common framework for both social action and interpretation of experience. But it also postulates a Durkheimian inevitability of moving, sooner or later, toward a universal value hierarchy in which the idea of humanity as a whole subsumes these locally differentiated responses.

Globalization theory falls short in tending to conceive of individuals and societies as standing in an immediate relationship to global humanity. It has not given sustained theoretical attention, in formulating its central concerns, to the continuing vitality of the five living civilizations—the East Asian, the southeast Asian Buddhist, the Indian, the Islamic, and the Western (entities with blurred boundaries, beyond which there are several less firmly, or extensively, organized regions). Civilizations can be looked at as enduring perceptual forms or as institutionalized but evolving substantive theories. In either case, they are (and must be) viewed as centering in the symbolic structures from which their distinctiveness arises. If we do not pay primary attention to their distinctiveness, we slip from "civilizational studies" into some version of a "universal social science."

But having done all that, we must also ask, in line with the main thrust of sociocultural science: Is it appropriate to conceive of the integration of any civilization as a product of its imaginative or cognitive structure alone? Are civilizations not better understood as the complexes of relationships between theory and practice they establish?

Can the Islamic civilization be comprehended as a functioning sociocultural system by the theory of total subjugation of the world to the religious law? Must we not take into account the different practical arrangements which have been made everywhere, after the first two or three centuries of its existence, for connecting the sacred and the secular, or "religion" and the "state," which have found themselves differentiated from each other and needed to be reconnected in ways for which,
from a religious point of view, there should have been no theoretical necessity?

In Saudi Arabia, this took the form of coordination of the state with religion, in Egypt and the Ottoman empire, of manipulation of religion by the state, in Iran religion acquired an independence from the state which made it possible finally for religion to take over the state. The modern Indonesian state has even approached the "syncretistic" model of religion-state relations of the East Asian civilization. Indonesia has thus acquired a potentiality, as the population center of the Islamic world, of offering an alternative to the Near-Eastern conception of Islamic civilization and assuming within Islam a role analogous to that in which Latin America seemed, at the height of Liberation theology, to be functioning within Catholicism: as a source of challenges to established models of theory-practice articulation.24

We are led to conclude that civilizations cannot be comprehended either by their "theory" or by their "practices," but only by the relationships between theory (which may change over time) and practice (in diverse social settings and spheres of life) they establish. An analytical account of a civilization must include its specific range of theory-practice relationships (what accommodations it has produced and proved able, or unable, to tolerate). It is from these relationships that the internal dynamics of each civilization arise, inter-civilizational encounters constituting the second major source of civilizational change.

Will the controlling principles and modes of theory-practice articulation of particular civilizations persist in the future? A homogeneous world civilization appears unlikely, as the different ways of handling relations between religion and secular culture currently most clearly illustrate. But changes are occurring both within particular civilizations and in the symbolic forms of their global interaction (not to be reduced merely to shifting balances between states and economic systems).

In the shaping of global configurations of the future, particular living civilizations may well be influential not only in proportion to the quantitative indicators of their power, as has been the case in the ages of imperialism, but also in proportion to their cross-cultural openness, their pluriformity, the depth of their cosmopolitanism. Instead of a "dominant civilization," we could then talk of a "meeting-ground civilization," a different (though not necessarily feasible) logic of moving toward a global configuration.

It may well be that, in the sociocultural sciences, the most fruitful
comparative research occurs when the emphasis is on a "detail," a text, an event, a theme, rather than on the largest possible structures. But such research is "civilizational" only when the detail is seen in relation to what is conceived of as the controlling principle of the civilization to which it belongs, when we ask what controlling principle it expresses, modifies or offends against, or (in opposition to controlling principles in existence) what new controlling principles it proposes, and to what effect for its civilization.

**Structures of Consciousness and Stages of Experience**

In contrast to civilization analysis, which has sought to identify the principles and modes of operation linking up civilizational wholes, history of consciousness in most cases starts out by being sectorial. It works with the structures of consciousness operating in particular "stages of experience"—types of situations (such as periods in the life cycle, relations between groups of human beings, the conduct of politics, of science, or of "private life," and responses to nature and to history) that are held in the cultural traditions in which they occur to be significantly different, that is are talked about in a distinguishable descriptive language or accompanied by distinguishable rituals, from other types of situations.25

It may be assumed in such studies that the symbolic organization of a particular stage of experience is influenced, in specifiable ways, by the general structure of the civilization in which it occurs or, more radically, that it constitutes a reliable representation in a particular setting (constrained by its circumstances and demands) of a civilization as a whole.26 To the extent it pursues these assumptions in actual research to their most distant implications, history of consciousness can provide the most effective point of entry to the revitalization of studies of particular civilizations. The employment of this approach in comparative studies still encounters difficulties.

**Critical Evaluation**

What problems become evident for each of the two theoretical perspectives when looked at from the point of view of the other? What types of issues is each best and least capable of handling?

1. The *processes* described in history of consciousness should lend themselves to comparative studies.27 If little has been done along these
lines, one reason may be that the language employed in history of consciousness arises too intimately from the Western sensibilities, preoccupations, and obsessions to which it responds. As a result comparative study becomes self-criticism, (or, at best, critical self-examination). The other is employed, as in some efforts to search for life on other planets, as a solution to the mess we have produced in our world. (This is the spirit in which postmodernist historians of consciousness are now discovering "Third World literatures").

It is the responsiveness of language to deep personal concerns that makes history of consciousness so intimately incisive—and theoretically risky. Language limits theoretical attentiveness to that which speaks to the sensibility embedded in it. And it becomes unbearable to those whose sensibilities differ. One can be indifferent to civilization analysis, one can be offended (or seduced) only by history of consciousness.

(2) History of consciousness reconstitutes, from particular sets of documents, the symbolic designs of particular spheres of life and shifts over time in such designs. But it is hard put to conceive how these designs fit together, with designs of different kind, within civilizations as wholes. Thus, when Foucault links together various branches of thought by a shared mode of discourse, he has found a controlling principle only for the intellectual activities of a society (one which, moreover, as soon as he has defined it, he needs to destroy). It remains unclear how, for example, popular piety or practical politics stand in relation to it; or what keeps a civilization together over time when modes of discourse—or, in a later work, disciplinary practices—change. Dumont, Hodgson, Lotman, Lebra come closer to identifying the durable principles that integrate a whole civilization and contribute essentially to explaining the place occupied by all its components within the overall structure.

From the opposite side, a historian of consciousness might criticize a "pure" civilization analyst:—You generalize about the presumed behavior of artificial entities, instead of seeking to reconstruct the inner experiences of actual people by uncovering in their own interpretations of it what they themselves took for granted as the implicit framework for constructing it.

History of consciousness provides detailed processual precision lacking in the larger reconstructions of civilization analysis, and a more concrete sense of experience, a more sharply cutting edge of perception (as well as much fresh, or freshly perceived, evidence).

While it has not done much of this in fact, history of consciousness can offer a way of grasping the creative employments of and the resistances to
the symbolic designs of a civilization by individuals and by groups around, and at some distance from, the key symbol-makers. This is difficult to see in the macroscopic perspective of civilization analysis.

Civilization analysis cannot be "resistance knowledge," a knowledge that increases the capacity of individuals to resist the dominant tendencies in their own civilization. History of consciousness can generate such knowledge. And indeed this perspective has been adapted, though not by its major discipline-defining representatives, to feminist concerns (e.g., studies of "feminine spirituality").

But there is a problem with this kind of resistance knowledge. Since, in history of consciousness, the "substantial" individual tends to evaporate (and a collectivity of such individuals only disguises the lack of substance by giving it a shared name), what resists the impositions of civilizational disciplines is an "empty" horizon or perspective, that is, not human agents, but the movement of the history of consciousness itself. This way mystifications arise.

In civilization analysis, the individual is a substantial representative—a priest or a prophet (or a hermit critic)—of the controlling principles of his or her civilization. As mystifications go, this is a far more tangible one, testable and criticizable. The knight of faith vs. Rameau's nephew.

**Conclusion**

A civilization analyst, looking at particular studies in history of consciousness, asks: What is the theory of culture, its significant components, relations between them, the causes of their historical trajectories, suggested in these studies?

The historian of consciousness beseeches the civilization analyst: Show us in concrete processual detail how all of this transpires in the efforts of individuals and groups to comprehend the meanings of their existences.

Of the future of these two disciplines the following may be said: history of consciousness without civilization analysis lacks reality (grounding, perspective, balance). Civilization analysis without history of consciousness lacks life (concreteness, sensibility, preoccupation).

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NOTES

1. I will be talking mainly about the sociologists, but their work must be seen as related to that of historians of religion and science like Marshall Hodgson and Joseph Needham, and cultural anthropologists like Clifford Geertz. The latter has also moved over time closer to history of consciousness.

2. Aries lacks the theoretical concerns of Foucault or Jameson; but it seems advantageous to delimit history of consciousness as a descriptive category broadly, by similarity of method and topical focus, rather than narrowly, by theoretical scheme.

3. Whereas civilization analysis puts religion in its place, as an important element in a way of life, history of consciousness shows signs of replacing religion as a total, not only intellectual, frame of orientation. It is for this reason that for some of its adherents (if not for the best of its practitioners) history of consciousness becomes a cultic phenomenon, as civilization analysis cannot possibly be.


History of consciousness emerges only when through a study of these (or other) themes larger cultural structures are revealed. If this is not done, the study of "themes" has a merely antiquarian interest.


7. "One must imagine such cultural structures and attitudes as having been themselves, in the beginning, vital responses to infrastructural realities
(economic and geographic, for example), as attempts to resolve more fundamental contradictions. . . ." Fredric Jameson, "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism," Social Text, No. 15 (Fall, 1986), pp. 77-78. "... cosmologies invariably satisfy some fear or seek to arrest an anxiety brought on by the perception of social failure: ... a structure of consciousness (or a structure of perceptions) by which people seek to form a conception of the world which they inhabit; . . . people have used this world vision to construct theories of praxis in order to manage the world they inhabit." H. D. Harootunian, "The Consciousness of Archaic Form in the New Realism of Kokugaku," in Tetsuo Najita and Irwin Scheiner, eds., Japanese Thought in the Tokugawa Period 1600-1868: Methods and Metaphors (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 63-104, quotes from pp. 103, 68-69.


9. Cf. the mottoes cited by two historians of consciousness: "Everybody finds in the ancients what he needs or wants, and above all else, himself" (Friedrich Schlegel); "One can study only what one has first dreamed about" (Bachelard). Harootunian, op. cit., p. 63; Hayden White, Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), p. V.


14. Vytautas Kavolis, "Civilizational Paradigms in Current Sociology: Dumont vs. Eisenstadt," Current Perspectives in Social Theory, 7 (1986), pp. 125-140. Dumont calls "holist (holistic) an *ideology that valorizes the social whole and neglects or subordinates the human individual . . . a sociology is holistic if it starts from the global society and not from the individual supposed to be given independently . . . we call individualist an ideology which valorizes the individual [understood as 'the independent, autonomous moral and, thus, essentially nonsocial being'], and neglects or subordinates the social whole. . . ." Dumont, Essays on Individualism, op. cit., p. 279.


17. The dynamic potency of "dualism"—more precisely, the stress on the independent power of Satan in relation to God—has been weaker in Islam than in Christianity. For this reason, Muslims did not need a specialized Inquisition to ferret out secret adherents of Satan. But the relatively more "monistic" character of Islam has also reduced its dynamic potentialities. To this is added the much weaker development in Islam of the secular versions of the God-Satan paradigm. The intensity of the struggle against the "Great Satan" in Iran, while it has deep historical roots in that region, is on the whole more reminiscent of medieval and early modern Western than of predominant (Sunnite) Islamic models.

18. For further discussion of semiotic universalism, see Vytautas Kavolis, "Contemporary Moral Cultures and 'The Return of the Sacred,'" *Sociological Analysis*, forthcoming.


20. For one of the most judicious reviews of the tangled perspectives on postmodern culture, see Andreas Huyssen, "Mapping the Postmodern," in Günter H. Lenz, Kurt L. Shell, eds., *The Crisis of Modernity: Recent Critical Theories of Culture and Society in the United States and West Germany* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1986), pp. 253-299. Huyssen argues against "that easy postmodernism of the ‘anything goes’ variety" (p. 292) and concludes: "my main point about contemporary postmodernism is that it operates in a field of tension between tradition and innovation, conservation and renewal, mass culture and high art, in which the second terms are no longer automatically privileged over the first; a field of tension which can no longer be grasped in categories such as progress vs. reaction, Left vs. Right, present vs. past, modernism vs. realism, abstraction vs. representation, avant garde vs. ‘Kitsch,’ all dichotomies essential to modernism" (p. 288). For a similar point made much earlier, cf. Kavolis, "Post-Modern Man," *op. cit.*


22. Thus Robertson's alternative responses to globalization are completely neutral to the particularity of the cultural tradition within which they occur. Each of them, in accordance with the presuppositions of a universalistic social science, could occur anywhere: (1) "the universalistic [progressive-rationalist] emancipation orientation," (2) "the more extra-societal [mystical] orientation to identity and common humanity," (3) "the particularistic [traditionalizing] Gemeinschaft-orientation," (4) "a more universalistic and hierarchical [Durkheimian religion-of-humanity] attempt to resolve global cultural conflict and remake the world." Robertson and Lechner, *op. cit.*, p. 113. The logic of globalization theory permits all four responses, but it requires the fourth. What is troublesome about this in general quite justifiable conception is that little effort has been made to relate the type of response to globalization most likely to be generated by a particular people to either the enduring qualities of their civilization or to the trajectories of their histories. Yet this is the most pressing issue in any theory of contemporary culture. For a start in this direction, see Roland...

23. Regions which have not been integrated by a single tradition (or, in east Asia, by a syncretizing set of such traditions) capable of keeping several complex states together as organizations functioning within a shared symbolic framework that retains its continuity, in spite of changes in its particular components, effectively over several centuries for hundreds of millions of people—continue to be, even in the twentieth century, in a culturally disadvantaged, less resourceful, condition compared to societies sustained by secure roots in one of the universally recognized civilizations.


27. But what can be done is not demanded by the logic of the discipline. The central problem of civilization analysis—what difference does a particular structure make?—requires cross-cultural comparisons. The central problem of history of consciousness—how best to describe transformations of structures and their modes of operation?—requires not cross-cultural but overtime comparisons.

28. "... we Americans. ... The view from the top is epistemologically crippling, and reduces its subjects to the illusion of a host of fragmented subjectivities, ... to dying individual bodies without collective past or futures bereft of any possibility of grasping the social totality. ... All of this is denied to third-world culture, which must be situational and materialist despite itself. ... I have suggested the epistemological priority of this unfamiliar kind of allegorical vision; ..." Jameson, “Third-World Literature,” op. cit., pp. 86-86.


30. See, in addition to the sources mentioned before, Lotman’s distinction between Russian and Western culture: in Russia, “the division of cultural life into two contradictory spheres, one of which functions as ‘elevated’ (sacred) and the other as ‘low’ (profane)”; Western Europe, “where the dominant role belongs to a ‘middle,’ semiotically neutral sphere of behavior, viewed by society as neither sacred nor profane.” Boris Gasparov, “Introduction,” in Jurii M. Lotman, Lidiia Ia. Ginsburg, Boris A. Uspenskii, *The Semiotics of Russian Cultural History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 26-27.