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needed..." and the like. Such high-order abstractions are not operational units and therefore cannot DO anything. However, few individuals, acting on their own, decide much of anything of significance. Anyone who has served on a committee, whether the Board of Directors of a corporation, or a jury, or the leadership circle of a voluntary association (the list of examples could be extended ad nauseam) has participated in collective decision-making. It does not follow that the group decision was identical in all particulars to the decision of individual group members had they decided entirely on their own and not in concert. And such collective decisions are real and have real consequences. Fortunately, "Have we evolved or not, and how?" does not hang on Sanderson's autonomous, monadic change-agents.

The question of societal evolution — what meaning shall we assign to this term? — how inclusive is it? how helpful? — is basic, for civilizationists cannot avoid the puzzle that societal dynamics presents. Hence the "rise and fall" theories, the "stimuli and responses," Sorokin's ideational stages, and the Marxist "motor of history." Sanderson, in this volume, does not provide the magic solution, but he certainly puts our feet firmly on the ground as far as societal evolutionary concepts are concerned.

Laurence G. Wolf

NOTE

1. Albert Bergesen, "Let's Be Frank About World History," in "Civilizations and World Systems," Stephen K. Sanderson, ed., Altamira Press, 1995, p.197.]

Carroll Quigley. *The Evolution of Civilizations*

"In the beginning was The Word," we are told, but fond as I am of words, I doubt that very much. However, to begin a comment on Carroll Quigley's *The Evolution of Civilizations* (1961), I need first to present "the Word" on geography as I have perceived it.

Geography is the art and science concerned with the study of the Earth's "surface." In the same year that Quigley's book was published, Swiss geographer Hans Heinrich Carol recalled for his fellow geographers a traditional definition of our discipline. Our concern is the outer three-dimensional portion of our planet, the *Erdhülle* of Hettner, or Earth-shell of Hartshorne¹ some 75 miles in depth, from the Mohorovicic Discontinuity to the outer limits of the atmosphere.² When we say we study the earth's "surface," it is easy to forget that this "surface" has depth, and the unfamiliar "shell" or "hull" might be a more accurate term.

Carol perceived this earth-shell as composed of six portions, four distinct and two overlapping "spheres," each with its own science(s) and corresponding geographic specialisms. These components were as follows: a lithosphere (the rocks), a pedosphere (the soils), a hydrosphere (the oceans), and an atmosphere, overlapped in part by a biosphere (living organisms) and an anthroposphere (considered separately from the biosphere because of the complexity and uniqueness of human activity in comparison to other life-forms). We have generally left the lithosphere to the geologists, except for its upper portions accessible to us for mining and quarrying, and the importance of the rock crust for our constructions, and the attention that must be paid to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The depths of the hydrosphere have been left to the oceanographers, but the relations of oceans to shores, to transportation and usable resources, are no strangers to us. The study of the atmosphere has led to the emergence of climatology and meteorology from our ranks. The processes which occur in the atmosphere are the realm of specialized physicists: the concern with the distribution of climatic and weather phenomena on the earth's "surface" is a geographical concern. If the full 75 mile depth of the *Erdhülle* thus defined has not been the intellectual habitat of the geographers, we have nevertheless been concerned with a three-dimensional space of considerable depth.

Were the planet's surface, and indeed its entire shell or hull, everywhere the same, there would be no need for any geography. Instead, we are confronted by a complex diversity, the orderliness of which we must discover. One can either select a given phenomenon and map its occurrence and then seek explanations for its occurrence, or select a portion of the earthshell and study the

interrelatedness of the phenomena which occur there. This can be done at any scale, from the entire planet to a very small area.. If there is a "law" in geography, it is that nothing is ubiquitous; everything is unevenly distributed. Each kind of phenomenon has its own spatial differentiation (or unevenness of distribution), and there should be a rational explanation therefore. There is, then, potentially, a geography to everything; to corals or cockroaches, plants or plains, fantasies or philosophies.

All phenomena exist in space and in time, and, therefore, just as there is potentially a geography to whatever one wishes to study, so there is a history to it. History and geography ought therefore to be closely related disciplines, but they are generally not.

Just as a historian would reject with loud protestations mere chronologies, so geographers will scorn mere mapping. Yet historians' narrations do deal with the temporal sequence of events however elaborated or modified, whatever the type of events and the particular time period of their study, and their purpose is to provide an explanatory narrative. The geographer is likewise seeking patterns and explanations, and not the mere location of facts or their mere description. Geography asks 'where' questions: where? why there?, and the answers can become quite complicated. For both the historians and the geographers, the processes and phenomena that occur are identified and explained, as well as possible, with concepts, theories, and information from the processual sciences³ (either natural or social, or both) as appropriate, as well as such as previous historians and geographers have provided. The record indicates that theory comes mostly from the processual sciences, although both historians and geographers have, on occasion, ventured to offer theories.

The scale of one's efforts is an explicit concern for geographers. The fact that each locus is unique is analogous to each individual person's being unique, yet one can generalize about the attributes of places. The question of scale is then important. Scale equals degree of generalization.⁴ It is a measure of the degree to which details are suppressed. Scale must be chosen appropriately for the research project at hand and used consistently. Civilizations are large-scale units. One must therefore always be aware of their internal complexity, lest the sins of reification

impair one's analyses.

All civilizations have an internal and an external geography, and a truly adequate geographic treatment would require that both be attended to. Both the physical and the human geography of what lies beyond the (changing) spatial limits of a civilization are causally connected to what occurs within it. Accessibility is crucial, not only for trade and because of defense (and offense) problems, but also in relation to the diffusion of culture traits into or out of a given civilization. Thus routes of ingress/egress are critical, especially since, in the age of air transportation, historic land and sea routes are apt to be devalued. What is the ease of transition on these routes? What natural or human hazards may endanger their use? Specifically, what in the ecumene of a given civilization is most affected by these routes, their points of entry/exit, and what they bring in or send out? What, for instance, would the prospects for civilization have been on the Levantine coast had it not been on route from Egypt to Mesopotamia and back again, with sea access to Cyprus, Crete, Greece and points further west? How could the civilization of China differed over the centuries had there been no passageway possible through the mountains and over the deserts to its west?

The internal geography of a civilization includes such matters as its physical "floorplan": the arrangements of the landforms (mountains, hills, plateaus and plains); of its drainage basins and the availability of its rivers for navigation, and, if needed, for irrigation, to say nought of seasonal ebb and flow due to the weather and climate; the quality and location of its soils and mineral resources; and, consequently, the distribution of its population and the spatial structure of its political economy.

As the human population is the most dynamic component of any inhabited place or region, it is easy to become so entranced with the purely human drama as to forget its physical basis and take its physical geography for granted. One needs to keep in mind that the natural environment is not teleological! It was not predetermined that Britain would be separated from Europe, or that it would be endowed with accessible, abundant, and conveniently scattered deposits of coal when the inhabitants of that island finally got around to needing a fossil fuel. Nor was it predetermined that the Hwang river would produce a large plain sus-

ceptible to agricultural use.

Although Quigley's awareness of geography was greater than that of many historians or social scientists, it was still quite limited. The idea that there was a geography to everything had not penetrated to his part of the world of the intellect, even though it had occurred to geographers of generations previous to this. He wrote, "The geographic environment includes such things as terrain and climate" (p. 20). On the following page he included forests, yet herring were part of the biological environment and whether that was geographic or not is unclear. The cultural environment was explicitly not geographic (p. 21, p. 175). He wrote "The three dimensions of space in which a civilization is found to include its geographic environment." This leaves him consistently innocent of any explicit human geography and also leaves one wondering what was in that three-dimensional space that was not geographic.

Carroll Quigley seems to conceive of civilization as having some ideal form which would be manifest were a civilization to develop on an undifferentiated plane, one with a uniform geography. Instead, each develops in the real world in a "matrix" which, as he conceived it, consists of the three dimensions of space plus time and "abstraction." Aside from his fuzziness about space, which may or may not be in toto geography as he perceived geography, his treatment of "abstraction" is nowhere explicit. One is left wondering if this included all human endeavors or not. Perhaps some other term would have been more clarifying..

For Western civilization and its predecessors, he indicates the spatial dimensions of the matrix. It is a "Northwest Quadrant," bounded on the south by Lat. 20_N and on the east by 80_E. Long. (p. 171). However, he also indicated that the eastern limit was a northeasterly line along the Pamir, Tien Shan, and Altai mountains, which leaves one at a loss at both ends, since such a boundary reaches neither the Indian nor the Arctic oceans, but has its termini "in the middle of nowhere," so to speak. This quadrant, (borrowed from J.H. Breasted), is really quite arbitrarily delimited. After all, human phenomena are generally not delimited or constrained by meridians and parallels. Furthermore, he has excluded Axum, Ethiopia, and Arabia Felix, which, while peripheral to his main concern, are no more tangential than the Indus

valley which he included. The quadrant also includes Novaya Zemlya, Lapland, and other far northern areas which are quite irrelevant to his story.

Europe, as he points out correctly, has, thanks to its location and lack of insurmountable barriers, been the recipient of influences from Africa to its south and Asia to its east. It has three geomorphic zones extending east-west; a Highland Zone, flanked north and south by Flatland Zones. He placed the western terminus of the Northern Flatlands in the Low Countries, but my geographic eye sees a terminus farther south. One can start from the sandy forested lands south of Bordeaux, travel north to the Netherlands, and then east all the way to the Altai, skirting south of the subdued southern Urals, and never see a mountain on the entire journey! A minor point, admittedly. Nothing is said of the Northwest Highlands from Eire to western and northern Scandinavia, but this, too, is not a serious matter. On the other hand, he has characterized the Highland Zone well.

Although he does not perceive it as geography, he is well aware of the Mediterranean as both a cultural link and a cultural barrier. For example, during the era of Classical Civilization the significant cultural barrier in this part of the world was north of the Mediterranean, in the Highland Zone. The subsequent rise of Islam has led us to consider the Mediterranean itself as a great cultural boundary.

Two "interregional connections" were singled out by Quigley as especially important, the Vardar-Morava and the Syrian Saddle. The headwaters of the Morava and Vardar rivers are not far from each other. The river valleys — the Morava north to the Danube, and the Vardar south to the Aegean — provide a north-south passageway through the middle of the mountainous Balkan peninsula. The Syrian Saddle extends from the northerly part of the Levantine coast to the westernmost portion of the course of the Euphrates and is therefore one of the most strategically important portions of the Fertile Crescent, though its significance is rarely noted. Quigley can be an astute geographer on occasion.

He then proceeds to explain the distribution of "language, physical type, and social customs" (including such topics as horticulture, agriculture, and pastoralism) in their relation to the three geomorphic zones. I view linking culture and anatomy with great

suspicion, but let us set that question aside. Full treatment of it belongs elsewhere. For Quigley, the earliest agriculturalists were in the Highland Zone of the Middle East and as they succeeded in improving their food supply, and consequently their population, they expanded downstream along the river banks. Away from the rivers, the lower precipitation and grassy sod of the Flatlands meant that the Flatlands were primarily the ecumene of nomadic herders.

Quigley then goes into an extended explanation of a geographical-historical nature. He sketches the major climatic conditions and their causes at greater length than one is accustomed from a nongeographer, and then goes back into the past to explicate the role of the Ice Ages with regard to homo sapiens. Unfortunately, amid all this he errs in attributing our seasons to the "tipping" of the Earth's axis. The inclination of our planet's axis in relation to the plane of its orbit around the sun does vary and may have contributed to the occurrence of Ice Ages but not to seasonality.

As Quigley points out, the Ice Ages acted as very slowly moving pistons, expelling people Africaward during the glacial advances and sucking them back northward as the ice sheets melted. He sees the Neanderthals as possibly populations cut off from southward escape by ice-closed mountain passes. They then evolved differently from the most southerly human populations. (p. 185) Their extinction may have been due to too successful an adaptation to the harsh life in very cold climates. Some, however, intermarried with northward moving populations during periods of glacial retreat, producing round-headed Alpines, while a later migration of Longheads out of Africa, lightening slowly in successive generations, produced the Mediterraneans. Whether this passes muster among anthropologists today or not, it reveals Quigley as guilty of thinking of human populations in intimate interrelations with their natural environment, which is one among several traditional concerns of geographers.

There is one salient geographical concept which Quigley has utilized without being aware, apparently, that there is anything geographic about it: the idea of core and periphery. As Quigley has it, civilizations arise from a mixture of two or more cultures. "Since cultural mixture occurs on the borders of societies, civi-

lizations rarely succeed one another in the same geographic area.” (p. 80) He returns to this concept in discussing the fourth of his stages of expansion, writing that “the more peripheral states are consistently victorious over less peripheral states.” (p. 85) This fourth stage is one of growing “irrationality, pessimism, superstition, and other worldliness” in the core state which is also experiencing declining rates of growth, increasing class conflicts and imperialist wars. The point is that hegemonic vigor under such circumstances does not arise out of the old center, but in an emerging one peripheral to the old. Whether his scheme of stages, which he conceives as flexible approximations of actuality, are appropriate, and whether the attributes of stage four are normally as he has stated them, is not the subject of our critical analysis in this paper. Rather, the geographic nature of the core-and-periphery concept is the focus of our attention. It has surfaced occasionally in a remarkably diverse set of nongeographic scholars. The most fertile contemporary exemplar of this is Immanuel Wallerstein, in whose thinking this geographical concept is of central importance. (There is otherwise no point of contact between the thinking of Wallerstein and that of Quigley.)

We need not recapitulate the entire story as Quigley tells it, but it is essentially an attempt to explain the populations and cultures of the Middle East at the dawn of history, pursuing this concern up to contemporary modern Western civilization, in accordance with this model of seven stages of development and the “instruments of expansion” of civilization, with the geographical nature of his thinking as in the matrix chapter (chapter six) fading from view. With a more comprehensive appreciation of geography, Quigley would have had to write a much longer book. Treating the whole span of time from the Ice Ages to the modern West was an ambitious undertaking. His effort to provide “analytical tools that will assist the understanding of history” (vii) was also a very ambitious and laudatory goal. It is not our purpose to complain that he should have written a book other than the one his labors have provided, but rather to point out how his perception of geography had more in common with a popular notion of its meaning than with even the quite broader conceptions of geographers of his time, and to point out the considerable extent, especially in the matrix chapter, to which he was “geographizing”

without being aware of it, as has often been the case with other nongeographers.

A truly comprehensive geographic history or historical geography of civilized humankind, of course, is yet to be written. Though geographers do not seem much interested at the moment, a small but increasing band of historians doe seem to be moving in that direction. Perhaps the future may yet yield such an accomplishment.

Laurence G. Wolf

NOTES

1. Alfred Hettner, a leading German geographer of the early decades of the 20th Century, known for his contributions to geomorphology, climatology, and regional methodology. Richard Hartshorne is well known among American geographers for his "The Nature of Geography," the first attempt at summarizing American (and German) geography and its methodologies, in 1939.

2. Hans Heinrich Carol, "Geography of the Future," *The Professional Geographer*, v. 13, n. 1, 1961, 14-18.

3. Each natural or social science has as its central concern a set of processes, as for instance the life processes in biology, economic processes in economics, etc. These may be integrated temporally (history), spatially (geography) and/or by a combination of philosophy and logic.

4. "Scale" here is as commonly used, in which case families and even cities are "micro" and civilizations "macro." In cartography the usage is oppostie: a world map is a small scale map.