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Editor's Note

Joseph Drew

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Editor's Note

The Comparative Study of Civilizations is a fascinating field that grips the imagination of many people. Don't agree? To prove the affirmative, let facts be submitted to a candid world, as the American authors of the Declaration of Independence so forcefully wrote.

1. If you Google "comparative civilizations," you are greeted with the possibility of 37,200 citations. On Bing, the total is 13,000.
2. If you Google "comparative study of civilizations," you confront a listing of 49,200 citations. On Bing, it's 9,940.
3. And if you Google "graduate study in comparative civilizations" (the Boolean delimiters one inserts diligently being removed by the computer program even without permission), an astounding total of 2,030,000 results will be presented. Bing's calculations are a bit more modest -- with 214,000. For masters programs in comparative civilizations, you'll find a total of 663,000 cites (Bing falls in at 280,000), and for doctorate programs in comparative civilizations, fully 584,000 citations are possible (with Bing, the number is an even more astounding 6,430,000).

So, there is your evidence. Objectively, there is a great deal of interest in and comment upon the topic of comparative civilizations. To the scholarly world, and others, it is even more clear that the topic has a magnetic quality, drawing thousands to it. Clearly, this field is not moribund.

But you might concede these points and yet still wonder, how successful is our journal at tapping into that considerable universe of interest, scholarly and general? It's certainly a question that this editor has pondered. Are we just talking to each other? Is there really a big public yearning to read more or does scholarly fascination with comparative civilization drive the subject, and are we serving that set of communities if the topic persists to entrance so many?

One way to find out is to try to garner some data on our journal. Truth be told, we circulate currently about 150 paper copies of the journal to members and libraries, not a huge number, to be sure.

So how many people read us in the virtual world, that is, electronically? How often is the journal searched by students and scholars of the field?

To find out the answer, we turned to Editor Connie Lamb. She is the intrepid, highly professional and knowledgeable Social Sciences Librarian at Brigham Young University, which graciously hosts our journal's electronic publication. We contacted her to find out

how popular the journal has been since it was first loaded onto the site via Brigham Young and launched into the online ether back in the fall of 2011.

“As for the statistics, the only one I can readily get is this: since its launch in the fall of 2011, there have been 826,676 page views (an average of over 206,000 a year),” Prof. Lamb reports.

What an amazing total! Imagine the hundreds of thousands of times – closing in on one million – that our articles have been accessed. The medium of paper is wonderful, and from Gutenberg on, the world has been reading and learning without regard to wealth or station, with the access this implied before the invention of movable type now available to all.

But electronically we reach so much further, and so much quicker.

But I wanted yet further proof of our reach. So, I next took a look at the ISCSC website and blog. As members know, our **Civilitas** blog, currently run by CCR Managing Editor Peter Hecht, can be accessed online either via www.wmich.edu/iscsc or by going directly to the URL www.civilitasblog.blogspot.com. And it’s been around even longer than the online version of the journal. In fact, **Civilitas** has just passed its five-year mark.

According to Mr. Hecht, since inception in May 2010 there have been 35,545 page views. In June 2015, there were 915 page views.

Further, a total of 156 posts have been uploaded to **Civilitas**, with fully 41 posts this year so far. In other words, we have seen a terrific gain in popularity over the past year and a half.

“That’s 26% of the total for all five years,” Mr. Hecht noted. “Further, participation is increasing, with rising numbers of views from over 20 countries and five continents.”

“Contributions are coming in from scholars around the world, and they cover the widest possible variety of topics. The entries on the blog are the opinions of the authors, of course, and not necessarily the opinion of the ISCSC. However, blog entries are reviewed before posting to ensure that content is representative of the intellectually stimulating and universally respectful spirit of the ISCSC,” he says.

Now the evidence comes in from three fronts: the topic of comparative civilizations itself, the reach of the CCR as a journal of record for comparative civilizations, and the central role of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations in its field; all are established and surging forth.

Given all this attention, and activity, we at the journal have responded by inaugurating several changes designed especially for this new era: two major steps are being taken. First, guided by Prof. Lamb at Brigham Young, we are in the process of migrating to a new and more powerful electronic platform upon which to mount the CCR’s online edition. It is

called Digital Commons, and it is operated by bepress. The transition will be completed before the snow flies later this year. This is a powerful search and presentation vehicle.

Second, following diligent research by Peter Hecht, we have moved our printing operations to The Sheridan Press. It's a nationwide operation, but our presses will be located in Hanover, Pennsylvania. This move will ensure that those reading the journal in hard copy will get their edition on time, every time. Additional services are going to become available to our subscribers. The Editorial Board will be weighing the value of these services against the projected expense in the next few months. Expect more details next time.

In tandem with these two steps, the society has seen a jump in participation of new scholars at our annual conferences. At the just-completed successful conference, held in beautiful Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the first annual meeting of ISCSA ever held in South America, the discussions were vivid and exciting. Since the *Proceedings* might not be published this year, I thought it would be good to at least list the topics that were covered in Rio.

The plenary session was addressed on Thursday evening, June 11, by Professor Emmanuel Carneiro Leão, Distinguished Professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Sidetracked by an illness, his paper on the topic "Our Crisis," was read by Ms. Noni Geiger.

On Friday mid-day the assemblage heard Pedro Geiger, Distinguished Professor of the State University of Rio de Janeiro, and major host of the event, offer his personal insights via "An Introduction to Brazil."

Overall, there were 14 panels held, involving 58 papers and presentations featuring representatives from 16 countries. Not unusually for an ISCSA annual conference, the papers and their panels dealt with a wide range of subjects. Here they are.

Panel Sessions 1

Room A

David Rosner, Chair

Theodor Damian, Metropolitan College of New York, USA.

"The Signs of the Time: With or Without Postmodernism."

Marek Jakubowski, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Torun, Poland.

"The Theory of Civilization by Felix Koneczny – Archaic or Inspiring?"

Adnan Çelik, Selçuk University, Turkey.

"Have the Global Crises a Philosophy? Who Creates Them and Why?"

David Rosner, Metropolitan College of New York, USA.

"On Civilizational Trauma: The Black Death and 'Values at the Crossroads' in Boccaccio's Decameron."

Room B
Michael Andregg, Chair

Dina Moscovici, Artigo de, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
“The Nomad Space of Art.”

Rochelle Almeida, New York University, USA.
“A Clash of Titans in India: Post-Modernist Quasi-Capitalism versus Socialism in Literature and Film.”

David Wilkinson, UCLA, Los Angeles, USA.
“Was there a pre-Columbian Civilization in the Amazon Basin?”

Michael Andregg, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, USA.
“Book reviews of ‘The Lowland Maya in the Late Pre-classic: The Rise and Fall of an Early Mesoamerican Civilization’ (2011) and Marek Celinski’s ‘Civilizational Crisis and Renewal’ (2015).”

Panel Sessions 2

Room A
Lynn Rhodes, Chair

David Wilkinson,
UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, USA.
“Matthew Melko: A Civilizationalist Looks at Real Peace.”

Tereza Coni Aguiar, Consultant on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
“Lebret’s Legacy to Humanistic Planning.”

Randall Groves, Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI, USA.
“The Origins of Religion and the New History of Reason.”

Room B
Michael Andregg, Chair

Abdulmajed Muhammed Wali, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
“Education Means Influencing the Sons and Daughters.”

Khalid Aleid, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
“The Impact of Islam on Strengthening Family Ties: A Value of the Civilized.”

Abdullah Saleh Alsaif, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“Islamic Cultural Values Regarding the Treatment of Children and Children with Special Needs.”

Essa Nasser Alduraibi, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“Civilizational Values in Dialogue, and Means for Promotion of Dialogue in Education.”

Panel Sessions 3

Room A

Michael Andregg, Chair

Carla Monteiro Sales, Rio de Janeiro State University, Brazil.

“Representations of North South Relations in an Inverted Map of South America.”

Mauricio Goncalves Silva, with Maria Monica Vieira Caetano O’Neill, and Claudio Stenner, Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

“Population Arrangements and Urban Concentrations in Brazil: Conceptual Aspects.”

Evandro La Macchia, with Jacob Binsztok and Julio Wasserman, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

“Petroleum Exploration and Production Policy: Brazilian Winding Paths.”

Mehmet Huseyin Bilgin, Istanbul Medeniyet University, Turkey.

“The Effects of Religious Beliefs on the Working Decisions of Women: Some Evidence from Turkey.”

Room B

Randall Groves, Chair

Abdulmajeid Aldarwish, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“Civilized Values of Dealing with Neighbors in Islam.”

Abdulaziz Saud Aldhowaihy, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“The Determinants of Prestigious Values in Islam.”

Khalid Alsharidah, Qassim University, Burayaday City, Saudi Arabia.

“Socio-Cultural Transformations in Saudi Arabia: Displacement vs. Resistance Theories of Change.”

Abdullah Alfauzan, Qassim University, Alqassim City, Saudi Arabia.

“Contributions of Civilization towards Social Freedom and Alienation in the Arabic City: A Literary Point of View.”

Panel Sessions 4

Room A

Michael Andregg, Chair

Hisanori Kato, Chuo University, Tokyo, Japan.

“Philanthropic Aspects of Islam: The Case of the Fundamentalist Movement in Indonesia.”

Juri Abe, Rikkyo University, Tokyo, Japan.

“The Role of Foreign Teachers in Modernizing Meiji, Japan.”

Room B

Lynn Rhodes, Chair

Sami Alkhalil, Mohammed A. Alsuheim, Ahmed M. Alkhalil, and Omar A. Alsedees
King Saud University and Qassim University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“Islamic Values that Regulate Finance and Economy.”

Kamel Saud Alonazi, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“Economic Crises: Reality and Solutions.”

Adel Mohammed Alabisy, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“Samples in the Economic System from an Islamic Perspective, and its Effect on Building Values.”

Bandar Al Anazi, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“The Values of Faith and Moral Values in Islamic Economics.”

Panel Sessions 5

Room A

David Rosner, Chair

Zoltan S. Novak, Budapest, Hungary.

“‘Panta Rhei’ as the Central Idea of Spengler’s Life Work.”

Vincent Ho, University of Macau, Macau, China.

“Chinese Heritage in East Asia: Comparative Approaches in Literature, Religion and Culture.”

Room B

George Von der Muhll, Chair

Habibollah Babaei, Academy of Islamic Science and Culture, Qom, Iran.
“Standards of Islamity of Civilization.”

Fahad Mohammed Alsultan, Qassim University, Buraydah City, Saudi Arabia.
“Was there an Ideological Impact on Saudi-Iranian Relations Prior to the Iranian Islamic Revolution in 1979?”

Saeed Ali Alghailani, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
“Alexis de Tocqueville and Muhammad on War: A Comparative and Historical Perspective.”

Nasser Mohammed Almane, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
“The Motives of Ethical Commitment in Islam – a Comparative Study.”

Panel Sessions 6

Room A

Lynn Rhodes, Chair

Ronald J. Glossop, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Illinois, USA.
“The Meaning of the Twenty-First Century: From Inter-Nationalism to Globalism.”

Anna Sobolewska-Bujwid, Wroclaw University of Technology, Wroclaw, Poland.
“Together or Separately? The Problem of Social Capital in Central Europe.”

Yitzhak Weismann, Haifa University, Haifa, Israel.
“Salafi Interpretations of the Civilizational Values of Islam.”

George Von der Muhll, University of California, Santa Cruz, California, USA.
“Civilizations and Their Frontiers: Identities and Imagery.”

Room B

David Rosner, Chair

Hamza Ates, Istanbul Medeniyet University Center. for Civilizational Studies, Turkey.
“Ethics-Based Civilization: What Can Islam Contribute?”

Sultan S. Alsaif, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
“Values between Religions in Islam.”

Ahmed Allhaib, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
“Civilized Values and Dealing with the Other in Islam.”

Ibrahim Guran Yumusak, Istanbul Medeniyet University Center for Civilizational Studies, Turkey.
“Economic Development: Management from Al-Siyasah Al-Shar’iyah.”

Panel Session 7

Michael Andregg, Chair

Nissim Mannathukkaren, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.
“Replicating or Reinventing Modernity? The Case of Kerala India.”

Ashok Malhotra, State University of New York (SUNY), Oneonta, NY, USA.
“Reflections on Clash or Reconciliation of Civilizations.”

Joseph Gualtieri, University of Hong Kong, China.
“Nature and the Crisis in Global Civilizational Values.”

Ahmed Alshbaan, Qassim University, Buraydah City, Saudi Arabia.
“The Role of Social Endowment Institutions in Promoting Geographic Trips to the Orient From the Sixth to the Eighth Century AH (1122 – 1322 of the Common Era).”

Panel Session 8

Lynn Rhodes, Chair

Andrzej Szahaj, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Poland.
“The Values of Multiculturalism.”

Ahmed Almazayad, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
“Values in Islam.”

Tarkan Oktay, Istanbul Medeniyet University, Istanbul, Turkey.
“Sister City Relationships of Municipalities in Turkey in the Context of Soft Power.”

Lynn Rhodes, Royal Oaks, California, USA.
“Community Trust and Law Enforcement around the World: a Key to Peace and Prosperity Everywhere.”

Two of the above presentations are being carried in this issue: the presidential address by Dr. Rosner and the Melko analysis by Dr. Wilkinson.

Thanks go out to all those who hosted this amazing conclave. We look forward to seeing everyone at future annual meetings and, as always, we on the journal invite those who wish to submit their papers to our peer review process to do so. If published, you will be widely read, that's for certain.

This year, as always, the annual meeting of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations involved people from all over the world. Many flew very long distances to be present. The ideas proposed at our annual get-togethers force a person to consider many new and challenging perspectives. The reason is that each annual conference features a wide range of papers, all offering what might be to most in attendance one or more unique perspectives on civilizations in our world; the presentations are almost universally rigorously constructed, thought-provoking, well worth the listening. Surely the same spirit and scholarly, institutional vigor will prevail next year, as the organization meets once again, this time at the beautiful campus of Monmouth University in New Jersey.

See you then!

Joseph Drew