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Submittals

The Comparative Civilizations Review publishes analytical studies and interpretive essays primarily concerned with (1) the comparison of whole civilizations, (2) the development of theories and methods especially useful in comparative civilization studies, (3) accounts of intercivilizational contacts, and (4) significant issues in the humanities or social sciences studied from a comparative civilizational perspective.

By “a comparative civilizational perspective” we mean (1) the use of evidence from more than one civilization (the various national traditions of the modern West being regarded, if so desired, as constituents of a single civilization) and (2) a method likely to throw new light either on the origins, processes, or structures of civilizations or on the problems of interpreting civilizations.

This is a peer-reviewed journal. Please submit your papers in MS Word, Times Roman 12 font, as an email attachment for the reviewer’s consideration. Be sure to include on your paper itself your email address and your academic affiliation and position, or note that you are an “independent scholar.” Send your paper to CCR Managing Editor, peter.hecht@iscsc.org.

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The Comparative Civilizations Review thanks our Digital Media Editor, Connie Lamb, and her colleagues at Brigham Young University for making this free public access and electronically searchable index possible. Thanks, too, to Prof. Norman Rothman, Executive Editor, for working with Scholars Archive to produce these issues.

During the three months of the summer of 2017, there were 2013 full text downloads in June, 2197 full text downloads in July, and 2380 full text downloads in August. The number rose to 3991 in September.

Readers may also access all previous issues at https://ojs.lib.byu.edu/spc/index.php/CCR.

Web Site of this Organization

http://www.iscsc.org
Editor’s Note

The past year has witnessed an enhanced level of dedication, by many volunteers, to the sustainability of our parent organization, the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilization, as well as to the continuing quality of the Comparative Civilizations Review. Costs are down, membership is up, our journal is more popular than it has been in years, the new website continues to amaze, and our 2017 conference was a success.

Costs are down.

1. CCR has achieved a nearly 75% reduction in the cost of printing and distributing the journal. The savings are available to fund initiatives such as paid speakers for our annual conference, a first in a long time.

2. Administrative costs have been eliminated thanks to volunteers who have claimed responsibility for the necessary tasks. Liberated funds were immediately re-directed to the development of our new website, which is managed and regularly improved, for half of our previous administrative costs.

Membership is up.

Over the past year our membership has nearly doubled as a result of efforts from our journal editors, and thanks to the employment of an innovative idea to include membership benefits with our conference registration. All conference registrants are now granted a complimentary membership in ISCSC for one year.

Comparative Civilizations Review is more popular than ever.

The Comparative Civilizations Review continues to provide our membership with the journal they have come to anticipate every six months. Many of our members, as well as non-members, publish peer-reviewed papers, essays, and book reviews. The journal has been published continuously since 1979, which is a monumental accomplishment in the world of scholarly publications run by volunteer organizations. For the past 20 years Dr. Joseph Drew has served as Editor-in-Chief, shaping the journal to reflect the desires of the membership. He has been publicly thanked, most recently at the 2017 annual conference, by past-presidents of the ISCSC for saving the journal from an early demise.

The work of the editors encompasses hundreds of hours of volunteer dedication annually; it is a noteworthy example of the strength of the volunteer efforts that make the journal, and ISCSC, a successful reality.
Have you seen the NEW www.iscsc.org?

Our new website is under constant development, and will be replaced by an even newer edition in the coming months. Improvements on the website now provide a simple and easy way to renew memberships, subscriptions, buy back issues of CCR, and sign up and pay for conferences. Credit card processing for our site is provided by PayPal, a well known and secure website, which also provides the most cost effective payment processing ISCSC can obtain from any vendor. ISCSC is also able to accept donations using the same process, through the use of a button on the home page of the site. We hope you visit the "donate now" button regularly. Donations are tax deductible. Please consider becoming a life subscriber for $500.

2017 Annual Conference.

The 2017 annual conference was held at the beautiful Marconi Conference Center, just north of San Francisco, California. Our conference speakers were Eric Trager and Daniel Chirot.

From the Washington Institute website:

Eric Trager, the Esther K. Wagner Fellow at The Washington Institute, is an expert on Egyptian politics and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. He was in Egypt during the 2011 anti-Mubarak revolts and returns frequently to conduct firsthand interviews with leaders in Egypt's government, military, political parties, media, and civil society. His writings have appeared in numerous publications, including the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Foreign Affairs, the Atlantic, and the New Republic.

Trager is the author of Arab Fall: How the Muslim Brotherhood Won and Lost Egypt in 891 Days (Georgetown University Press, 2016), which chronicles the precipitous rise to power of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, culminating in the election of President Mohamed Morsi in 2012, and its sudden demise just a year later. The book also assesses the current state of Egyptian politics and the prospects for a reemergence of the Brotherhood.

Dr. Trager has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Pennsylvania, where his doctoral research focused on Egyptian opposition parties. From 2006-2007, he lived in Egypt as an Islamic Civilizations Fulbright fellow, where he studied at the American University in Cairo and received his M.A. in Arabic studies with a concentration in Islamic studies. He served as a research assistant at The Washington Institute from 2005 to 2006 upon graduation from Harvard University with a degree in government and language citations in Arabic and Hebrew.
From the University of Washington Department of Sociology website:

Daniel Chirot, Herbert J. Ellison Professor of International Studies at the University of Washington, has authored books about social change, ethnic conflict, genocides, Eastern Europe, and tyranny. He co-authored *Why Not Kill Them All?* about political mass murder and is the author of *Modern Tyrants* (both published by Princeton University Press).

He has edited or co-edited books on Leninism's decline, on entrepreneurial ethnic minorities, on ethnopolitical warfare, and on the economic history of Eastern Europe. Some of his publications have been translated into Chinese, Korean, Swedish, Finnish, Italian, German, Romanian, Polish, Hungarian, Albanian, and Lithuanian. His most recent works are textbooks called *Contentious Identities: Ethnic, Religious, and Nationalist Conflicts in Today's World* and a completely revised edition of *How Societies Change*.

He founded the journal *East European Politics and Societies* and has received grants from the John Simon Guggenheim, Rockefeller, and Mellon Foundations and from the United States State Department. He has consulted for the US Government, the National Endowment for Democracy, the Ford Foundation, and CARE. In 2004/05 he was a Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace working on African conflicts. He has a BA from Harvard and a PhD from Columbia.

**What next?**

In the past 12 months ISCSC has been working hard to reverse our several year decline in membership. As a result, our membership has nearly doubled. This increase in membership greatly enhances any efforts to expand the presence of our academic society in the international world of comparative civilizational studies.

CCR will continue to produce enjoyable journals twice each year that will feature a variety of scholars from the widest possible array of disciplines. We will continue to ensure that these papers are readable, and enjoyable for all members, and prospective members.

The website will continue to improve, offering more services and simpler solutions for members.

ISCSCC will lead the discussion about comparative civilizational studies and will support the development of the next generation of scholars who are dedicated to the comparative study of civilizations.
Most importantly, this progress will support the mission of ISCSC:

To provide means of cooperation among all persons interested in the advancement of the comparative study of civilizations.

The ISCSC mission, found on the homepage of our website, makes it clear that ISCSC is an organization open to all who are interested in civilizational studies. ISCSC and CCR have a proud history of serving a variety of academic interests. ISCSC encourages participation from scholars of all types and levels of study. CCR encourages submissions from professional scholars and academicians, as well as from interested parties and independent scholars. The membership of ISCSC is proud of this legacy.

ISCSC also recognizes that in the modern world, professional success often requires specialization, and this may lead to increasingly rigid dogma. In academia this sometimes equates to a style of writing that is only interesting, or even discernible, to experts in a field of study. That ISCSC and CCR provide an accessible forum, encouraging inter-disciplinary research, and big-picture thinking, may be this society’s most important contribution. In a period when intellectual thought has been eclipsed by thuggish populism, ISCSC stands as an example of respect for ideas and people, appreciation of accumulated wisdom, and hope for a future of measured reason and communal responsibility. By providing this forum, through CCR and our annual conferences, ISCSC hopes to fulfill the original mission set forth by UNESCO, which founded the organization in 1961 in Salzburg, Austria.

The Society is committed to the idea that complex civilizational problems can best be approached through multidisciplinary analyses and debate by scholars from a variety of fields. The *Comparative Civilizations Review*, which welcomes submissions from the Society's members as well as other scholars, has been published continually since its inaugural issue in 1979.

Michael Palencia-Roth, former President, ISCSC

All of us here at the *Comparative Civilizations Review* view the future of the society with optimism. We thank our members for their continuing interest and hours of volunteer dedication, and welcome all interested readers to visit our website, www.iscsc.org, and to join the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations.

Peter Hecht
Managing Editor
Comments on Toby Huff's "Civilizational Analysis and Some Paths Not Taken"

Johann P. Arnason

The Weberian legacy

There is much to agree with in Toby Huff's paper, and quite a few things to qualify.

He is, in particular, right to underline the exceptional significance of Max Weber's 1920 Vorbemerkung to collected essays on the sociology of religion. This text outlines a comparative perspective still relevant to civilizational studies. Given the recurrent attacks on Weber as a “Eurocentric,” it is worth reiterating the points that most effectively disprove this claim. Weber's analysis of the path taken by the Occident focuses on a “concatenation of circumstances,” not on any foundational cultural traits or inherent developmental logic. The circumstances are, as a closer look at Weber's comparative studies shows, of multiple kinds: environmental, geopolitical, institutional and cultural. As for the long-term trends, the main emphasis is on rationalizing transformations, but not in a way that would reduce or subordinate history to an evolution of rationality.

The rationalizing processes that brought the Occident to world-historical prominence unfolded in different spheres of life, with correspondingly specific contexts of meaning irreducible to rational premises; comparisons of different civilizations deal with varying combinations of such processes, rather than with contrasts between presence and absence of rationalizing capacities; the particular combination that prevailed in the West and shaped its course is not a guarantee of enduring harmony or continuing progress. Finally, it seems clear that Weber regarded universalistic claims on behalf of Western ideas or institutions as unfulfilled aspirations (he refers to a “developmental direction of universal meaning and validity”), but also as assumptions to be tested through comparative inquiry (that is the implication of “wie wir uns wenigstens gern vorstellen”).
All this sets Weber apart from Eurocentrism, at least in the sense of the half-imaginary monster now under fire from mostly even more imaginary post-colonials of all countries. But he adopts – and cannot avoid adopting – the position described by the German historian Wolfgang Reinhard as a reflected and enlightened Eurocentrism. As Weber notes at the beginning, a European scholar setting out to reflect on world history must start with the European historical experience, and with a more or less articulate but revisable pre-comprehension of it. The evidence for a certain Euro-centricity during a given period cannot be ignored; on the other hand, the interpretive and normative projections developed on that basis must be re-examined and scaled down, but that is a matter of long-term inquiry rather than a priori denunciations.

That said, it should be added that Weber's perception of the “West as it is” (Huff's formulation), or was in 1920, calls for some comments. In the context of the times, and, even more so, in retrospect, the neglected aspects of the West merit closer consideration. Weber did not take due note of European expansionism, distinctive and sustained already in the Middle Ages but incomparably more ambitious in intent and global in scope during the modern era. Nor did he consider the other side of this expansionism, the possibilities for reinvention of European patterns in new settings, both by overseas settlers of European origin and by non-European modernizers.

In this connection, his fundamentally misconceived view of Japan should be mentioned. He saw Japan as a case of imported capitalism and argued that this transfer had been facilitated by the lack of clearly defined cultural identity (he refers to a religious “tabula rasa.”) Such interpretations were already at odds with the record of the Meiji period (1868-1913); this was a clear-cut pattern of reinvention rather than mere import, and Japan's very distinctive historical legacy left its mark on the results.

Last but not least, Weber wrote the abovementioned text – his most programmatic one – in the aftermath of a great civilizational disaster, World War I; he lived through this event as a passionate observer, and it can hardly be doubted that his commitment to the German cause, critical though it was, limited his grasp of the unprecedentedly self-destructive turn. There are clear indications that he took a bleak view of post-war prospects (especially in Politics as a Vocation), but he certainly did not integrate the experience of the war into his image of the West. Historians now widely agree that World War I was the inaugural catastrophe of the twentieth century; civilizational analysts have yet to take the measure of the war and its consequences, including – in particular – the rise of two major counter-models of modernity, Communism and Fascism.

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Eisenstadt’s contributions

Huff is also right to stress the importance of Benjamin Nelson’s response to Weber’s work, as well as his moves beyond it. Nelson took the historical genealogy of modern science further than Weber had ever done; he also opened up new comparative perspectives. He overestimated Needham’s work on China, but this reference helped him to identify a cross-civilizational field of inquiry, barely visible in Weber’s work.² But given Huff’s emphasis on Nelson, it is all the more surprising that he should not even mention another scholar who also took a civilizational turn in the 1970s (even if slightly later than Nelson), and was also interested in continuing the Weberian project with more adequate conceptual tools and on a broader historical basis. Here I cannot discuss Shmuel N.Eisenstadt’s work in detail, but four crucial contributions to civilizational analysis should at least be mentioned.

First and foremost, though formulated late in Eisenstadt’s career, his definition of the civilizational dimension in history and society is, in my opinion, the best of its kind.³ It highlights the intertwining of world-articulating meanings with social institutions, the latter understood as frameworks of interaction, arenas of conflict and configurations of power.

This frame of reference can be understood as an enriched reformulation of Weber’s well-known statement on ideas and interests, with the institutional channelling of interests brought into the picture and the world horizon of ideas made more explicit, but also with stronger emphasis on the involvement of power structures in the application of the ideas. Within this framework the interrelations of religion and politics are particularly important; they, more than any other aspect, seem to demarcate the space for differentiation and development of institutions across the social spectrum. It may be objected that this idea of the civilizational dimension does not incorporate the Durkheimian notion of a “family of societies”; but although it is not explicitly mentioned in the quoted text, Eisenstadt’s comparative studies show that he took it into account.

A second contribution, best understood as a specification of the first, is Eisenstadt’s interpretation of the Axial Age (roughly defined as the eighth to fourth centuries BCE). This was a period of fundamental cultural change in several civilizational centres. Earlier authors (notably Karl Jaspers, who coined the term) had dealt with this theme from the viewpoint of a philosophy of history; Eisenstadt was the first to translate it into the language of historical sociology. For him, Axial transformations consisted in interconnected changes to world-views, power structures and socio-cultural elites. That said, his view of the Axial Age has come under well-founded criticism for being over-generalized and one-sided, putting too much emphasis on a supposedly uniform distinction between transcendental and mundane reality.⁴ It is the definition of a problematic that remains important, rather than specific theses.

A third point is less developed in Eisenstadt’s writings, but potentially very important. It is the idea of modernity as a new civilization, centred on a vision of human autonomy. This core meaning is open to divergent interpretations, applicable in different spheres of social life, and adaptable to various civilizational legacies. It is the background to the more widely discussed notion of “multiple modernities”, introduced by Eisenstadt in the 1990s. The multiplication of modernity is based on variations to its common but problematic core.

Finally, Eisenstadt’s book on Japan remains one of the most significant works in the history of civilizational studies, although it has not attracted the discussion that it merits. Its argument, and notably the claim that Japan represents a non-Axial civilization surviving into the modern world, is open to fundamental objections; but that also applies to major texts in the sociological canon, beginning with that arch-classic, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*.⁵

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Encounters and transformations

I am in basic agreement with Huff’s views on the outcome of intercivilizational encounters in the West, the Islamic world and China. But some contextual qualifications seem appropriate. If we place the two first cases in the context of the transformation of the modern world, we should rather speak of Western Christendom (including what we now call Western and Central Europe) than of a single European or a continuing Western civilization (if we accept Eisenstadt’s model); the early modern era saw the beginning of a new civilization, more marked in Western Europe than elsewhere. The question of the “great divergence” between the three post-Roman constellations – Western Christian, Byzantine and Islamic – is not irrelevant to the issue of the “great divergence” between the West and the rest.

Recent scholarship clearly suggests a late date for the full geopolitical, geo-economic and geocultural development of this divergence, but the internal prehistory of that global shift was a long-term process, cumulative but neither teleological nor deterministic, and it did not begin in the High Middle Ages. Trends and patterns of the early medieval period contributed to the specific historical path of Western Christendom. In particular, certain divisions within the religio-political complex had a significant end enduring impact. Most importantly, the problematic and for a long time conflictual relationship between empire and papacy became one of the most formative factors in medieval history (the close alliance forged under the early Carolingians was very short-lived).

The tension between these religious and political centres (both best understood as mixtures of the sacred and the secular) was a key part of the background to the flowering of the High Middle Ages; as the Norwegian medievalist Leidulf Melve has shown, the most acute phase (the so-called investiture controversy of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries) gave rise to a public sphere, a phenomenon previously unknown to the medieval world. This development paved the way for the invention of universities. But there were further divisions on both sides. In the political sphere, the imperial centre – restored by the Carolingians in the late eighth century - coexisted on varying terms with territorial kingdoms. The empire never exercised the kind of civilization-wide authority that the papacy managed to acquire, but it remained one of the defining institutions of Western Christendom, it tried –intermittently – to win more power to match its status, and when the territorial kingdoms gained strength, one of the legitimizing devices used by their rulers was to claim imperial dignity within their realms.

6 Leidulf Melve, *Inventing the Public Sphere. The Public Debate During the Investiture Contest (c.1030-1122)*, Leiden and Boston, Brill 2007.
The surviving Holy Roman Empire became the historical nucleus of Central Europe, whereas territorial monarchies predominated in Western Europe and shaped its path to modernity. Finally, the division between the secular clergy and the monasteries was a key feature of Western Christian religious culture. It enabled the monasteries to become protagonists of reform.

Comparison with the other post-Roman constellations is needed, but it seems clear that traditional views on Byzantine and Islamic patterns have proved inadequate. Neither the “caesaropapism” long attributed to the Byzantine empire, nor the fusion of religion and politics thought to be characteristic of Islam from the outset, can be substantiated. A more nuanced comparative approach should probably allow for a combination of partial similarities and a set of deflecting factors.

As for the takeoff during and after the High Middle Ages, there is no doubt about the importance of the legal revolution. But it is hardly possible to isolate it as the single decisive factor. The complexity of the context in which it occurred is well described by one of the most distinguished contemporary medievalists: “the strength of local, cellular politics, plus the extension of literate practices to ever-wider social groups, plus a continuing high-equilibrium economic system, plus a newly intrusive state, made possible by taxation, communication and, once again, literacy, helped to create political systems across Europe which allowed engagement, nearly everywhere. This marks the last century of the Middle Ages, not the supposedly late medieval features which mark so many textbooks: crisis, or anxiety, or the Renaissance, or a sense that the continent was, somehow, waiting for the Reformation and European global conquest.”

Constraints of time and space prevent me from discussing the Islamic and Chinese worlds at any length. But one brief remark on each may be ventured. Islam was, as recent scholarship has made clearer than before, the product of a highly conflictual inter-civilizational constellation: the encounter between Sassanid Persia, two Christian empires (the East Roman and the Axumite), the elusive but clearly important South Arabian civilization, and Judaism, the last-named with strong indigenous footholds on the Arabian peninsula. During the rest of the “middle millennium,” 500-1500 CE, the Islamic world experienced more varied encounters across the Afro-Eurasian macro-region than any other civilization of the times. It is nevertheless clear that these contacts did not translate into anything on the scale of the changes unfolding in Western Christendom, where encounters combined with internal dynamics to trigger the processes mentioned above.

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9 This expression is used by the editors of the new Cambridge World History.
Some of the Islamic encounters may even have limited the effects of others. Did the resurgence of Persian culture from the tenth century onwards play a role in marginalizing Greek influences? There seems to be room for further discussion of that question. In any case, the character of what Marshall Hodgson called the “middle periods” of Islamic history (950-1500) remains controversial. It is no doubt legitimate to speak of decline in some fields, but the ongoing re-evaluation of this phase (beginning with Marshall Hodgson’s classic work, and continued by various recent authors) casts doubt on the notion of all-round decline or regression. A balanced judgment will have to take multiple trends into account, e.g. the development of Sufi orders and innovations in state formation. Is the affinity with the scientific revolution the only criterion for a comparative history of philosophy? I do not think so. And what about Ibn Khaldūn, the most genuine founding father of historical sociology?

As for China, I think it is now a well-established fact that the reception of Christianity and the early modern scientific revolution was obstructed by an entrenched world-view (in this context, the work of Jacques Gernet deserves particular mention). The decomposition of the Chinese tradition began later, and was closely linked to geopolitical setbacks. This does not mean that the cultural crisis was only a by-product of the political one. It opened up a space for extensive and diversified rethinking of the tradition; it is now safe to say that the Marxist-Leninist conversion was a less definitive turn than it seemed at the time. Comparative studies of European and Chinese traditions still have a long way to go. Huff’s points about Chinese law seem valid, as far as they go, but how decisive are they? A more contextual analysis of Chinese statecraft might reveal some counterbalancing factors. And the question of “laws of nature” in Chinese thought remains a matter for debate. In 1957, Derk Bodde took issue with Joseph Needham on this point, arguing that while Chinese thought had undoubtedly moved in a direction quite different from European conceptions of law-governed nature, there was some evidence of Chinese thinkers referring to natural regularities in terms not very different from the idea of laws. This would, in other words, be a matter of degree, overall emphasis and long-term direction, rather than a stark contrast between presence and absence. To judge from what I have read on the subject (including, not least, writings of Christoph Harbsmeier), this position is still plausible.

11 See the very insightful essay by Mark Elvin, “How did the cracks open? The origins of the subversion of China’s late traditional culture by the West”, *Thesis Eleven* 57 (1999), 1-16.
Reply to Johann Arnason’s Comments

Toby Huff

It is an honor to have the comments of Johann Arnason on my paper. He has raised many issues and important questions. No doubt we will disagree of some minor issues but agree on major ones and I appreciate this opportunity to discuss matters vital to civilizational analysis. There are more issues here than I can address in our limited space, so I shall confine my reply to what I see as the most important of the questions raised.

I agree with Arnason’s comments on Max Weber’s legacy and his overlooking of imperialist consequences of Europe’s ascendency. Likewise, his comments on Eurocentric issues and the now excessive attacks on Weber seem to me justly put. No doubt Weber’s understanding of Japan was deficient and given his sparse comments on Japan and his extraordinary knowledge of many other cultures and civilizations, his missteps on Japan seem forgivable.

I shall return, however, to his reference to “normative projections” that most likely refer to Weber’s notion of “world-historical” consequences. I will also return to the question of why I put so much stress on the unfolding of the European legal revolution in the late medieval period.

A basic difference between us is the role of evidence versus theory in doing civilizational analysis. I believe one should start with a reasonably clear problem and then dig into the empirical/historical evidence. Eisenstadt’s approach seems to start at the other pole. His paper cited by Arnason is an entirely theoretical and vast survey, impressive as it is, that covers huge sweeps of time and space (from 500 BC to about 100 AD, and even later “modern” developments), suggesting all sorts of developments, structurations and “crystallizations.” But the paper does not cite a single historical or sociological study that could support his many generalizations during the Axial Age.13 So it should not be surprising that my comparison of three civilizational encounters (the West, Islam, China), based as it is on decades of trying to find and master the best historical sources, finds little help in what Eisenstadt has written.

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A perplexing feature of the Eisenstadt discussion is the fact that it proceeds with an unclear conception of civilizational analysis that constantly verges back-and-forth between the putative civilizational complexes (ancient Greece, Israel, China, Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.) and references to “societies.” It is pretty much agreed among sociologist that “societies” are social groups with distinct boundaries established by their governments and economies. Having a formal governmental structure is the defining characteristic of societies in this sense. In my understanding civilizations are much larger units of two or more societies (or peoples) as articulated by Durkheim/Mauss and Nelson. This concept is a breakthrough in thinking about civilizations as trans-national complexes. Such entities often have unclear boundaries because they generally are voluntary entities, not empires or coercive entities (though this could happen). This gets us to what it is that allows cultural phenomena to grow and transcend national boundaries. The Durkheim/Mauss problematic asks: what is the nature of this “coefficient of expansion” that some cultural phenomena have that allows them to become translocal if not universal? Eisenstadt does not at all address this question of how and why civilizational phenomena are trans-societal.

Eisenstadt does make an interesting suggestion that the “core” idea behind the concept of “civilization” is an “ontological or cosmological vision.” He suggests that such visions generally involve sacred, cosmological references and often entail tensions with the mundane world. But does this help us understand the fundamental differences in orientation between the Greek/Hellenic complex, Islamic civilization, Western and Chinese civilizations?

Of course, one could improve on my description of the three encounters (between the West, Islam, and China) but for the purpose of why the three took such different approaches to naturalistic inquiry, it is far more useful to consider their alternative philosophies of nature (which may have ontological references). These somewhat metaphysical notions are more easily described and there is considerable literature on the subject.

Thus, the ancient Greeks created a philosophy of nature (later adopted by Europeans) that suggested that the natural world is a lawful, autonomous order, probably made up of small particles, and a natural world that human beings can know and explain with the aid of reason and logic.

15 Ibid., p. 811.
16 Eisenstadt, ibid., p. 2.
In contrast, the Islamic philosophy of nature denied such rational-causal principles, insisting instead that God is always in control, and that humankind can only know what God enables or permits one to know.\(^\text{18}\) This is, of course, only one part of the story, as my paper shows. Moreover, even with the aid of all the Greek-into-Arabic translations of the core Greek scientific and philosophical texts, the Muslims did not institutionalize the Greek modes of inquiry. Consequently, there was early success that soon dissipated.

The classic Chinese philosophy of nature entailed the polarities of yang/yin, the five elements (water, wood, fire, earth, and metal) and the elusive energy called Chi. Here no causal laws operate, there is no push-pull mechanism(s) operative. There is also a notion of cyclical change over long periods of yang and then yin domination in timeless cycles. In the long run (from ancient times to the 20\(^{\text{th}}\) Century) no group of scholars emerged who could or would overthrow that Confucian worldview (even with the help of the European missionaries and thousands of translated books\(^\text{19}\)). In a word, we can understand these three intercultural encounters without resorting to Eisenstadt’s loftier locutions such as “world-articulating meanings” and so on. From my limited reading on the subject, I do not know of useful discussions of “multiple modernities” that also take into account what I see as the fundamental grounding of European civilization and its “modernity,” to which I shall return.\(^\text{20}\)

Although I have difficulty with Chris Wickham’s precise time-line in the long citation from his work, it strikes me that the general thrust of his statement endorses the multiple factor and historical approach that I set out in the Epilogue to *Intellectual Curiosity and the Scientific Revolution*.

Moreover, whatever point one wants to make with regard to the Holy Roman Empire and its role in Central and Eastern Europe, the fact is that like all the other territorial entities in Europe of the time, it adopted and operated with the aid of the *ius commune*, the common law of Europe.\(^\text{21}\) This was the new and revised legal system that the canonists and Romanists fashioned as one part of what I have called the legal revolution of the long 12\(^{\text{th}}\) century.

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\(^{18}\) This is the well-known Islamic philosophy of occasionalism also discussed in *The Rise of Early Modern Science*.


\(^{20}\) This idea was advanced by S N. Eisenstadt: “Multiple Modernities,” *Daedalus* 129 #1 (2000): 1-29. Eisenstadt deserves credit for advancing this idea, but by claiming that the new modernity was an 18\(^{\text{th}}\) century phenomenon with its “first expansion” in the Americas (p. 13) seems to me off the mark. I shall return to this.

Moreover, this new Romano-canonical system was taught in universities across Europe. As a result, advocates across the Continent (and England) had to know both the Ecclesiastical and civilian version of canon law, both based on the same legal principles. This they had to do because they might have to try a case in an Ecclesiastical court.

This new legal system, above all other cultural factors, is what gave “Europe as a civilization” its center and “framework of interacting” in all sorts of encounters and transactions, that is, its modus operandi. In this sense, I am not “isolating” a single factor but pointing to the multiple revolutions in institutional arrangements that gave Europe an entirely new footing for virtually every aspect of political, economic, and educational life. As I stressed in the first part of my Plenary paper, the European legal revolution of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries laid the foundations for what we now recognize as modern political institutions. These include due process of law, the notion of elective representation in all forms of corporate bodies, the very idea of legally autonomous organizations, and not least of all, legally autonomous professional associations (of doctors and lawyers), charitable organizations, universities, as well as cities and towns. All of these innovations, including the rise of parliamentary governance, arose out of medieval canon law and contributed to the stability of economic enterprises and made local self-government possible. Each of these developments was part of the emergence of constitutionalism as understood in the Western world.

Of course, the emergence of the universities created an institutional space for relatively undisturbed public discourse on all sorts of subjects, most importantly by institutionalizing the study of the (Greek-fashioned) natural sciences and incubating modern science. There were further discussions within the universities and no doubt they reverberated back on other political, economic, and political issues.

If, à la Eisenstadt, one would prefer to call this a “new civilization,” I would not greatly object. I would insist, however, that this crystallization occurred long before the 17th century and the Reformation, and that it produced the first real fusion of Greek philosophy, Roman law, and Christianity, a position articulated by Ben Nelson and many other historically minded scholars. That would also, in my view, place the title, the “Axial” shift in the “long 12th century,” whether one wants to call it a “new” Christian civilization or plainly, European civilization. That fusion was unique and was soon exported to the U.S and “Europe overseas.”

Furthermore, that spiritual, legal, scientific complex is in my mind, at the heart of the raging debates today about the rise or “decline” of “the West.” Whatever its fate, that cluster of revolutions centered on the legal domain suggested above has no counterpart in Islamic or Chinese civilization.  

One can explore the early history of Islam and influences on its formation as much as one would like (as Patricia Crone and others have done), but the fact remains that the canonical texts centered on the Quran and the hadith collections came to be the central core of Islamic civilization, and there was no influence of the Roman Civil law. The religious scholars (the ulama) worked assiduously to preserve and protect that central legacy, rooted in faith, with the result that there were no revolutions (or reformations) in religious thought, and no breakthroughs in theology or law. There is no Islamic Peter Abelard, Thomas Aquinas or other intellectual innovators equivalent to those in Western philosophy or theology. There were no innovative legal scholars parallel to Gratian, Tancred, or Durand in Western Europe. Beyond that, and with more details provided in Intellectual Curiosity, the fact remains that there was no Copernicus, Galileo, Tycho Brahe, or Kepler in the history of Arabic-Islamic science.

Arnason also raises the question of how significant law and legal structures were in China, so I offer this short account. Commentators on China who accent the “Chinese bureaucracy” often forget to note that throughout the empire from before the Sung dynasty (960-1279) throughout the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), the whole regime was based on a legal code borrowed from earlier dynasties. The earlier Tang and Ming codes were simply restated with additions and put in place without basic modification. That code was based on a complex set of punishments and mitigations and many hidden assumptions. The Code lacked a section detailing due process so that the actions of the magistrates and all others followed their own whim, with no effort to compile formal case records in order to achieve uniformity of outcome. This also meant that there were no zones of autonomy, no independent associations of doctors or lawyers (lawyers did not exist), nor were there any independent scholars who could decide philosophical and educational issues as European scholars did. All that was controlled by a small elite of official officeholders.

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24 I have explored these comparative questions in several chapters in the third edition of my Rise of Early Modern Science. Whether we could say that Japan experienced such revolutions of thought and institutional arrangement, I leave to specialists on Japan to determine.


During various periods of time it was unlawful (and hence backed by punishments) to own books on mathematics or astronomy while astronomical observation was strictly controlled and forbidden outside the royal aegis. Likewise owning or using a telescope was regulated by royal decree when the devices arrived in the 17th century.

Given that there were no law schools and there was no independent body of legal scholars, there was little chance for legal evolution or for advanced legal thought. With this background in mind, it would be an exaggeration to suggest that the Chinese had anything like the Western legal system of due process that I mentioned earlier (and have discussed in more detail elsewhere). There were no rights for legal challenge, no strict procedures for getting a case heard by the magistrate who was in effect a person with only “on-the-job training.” Moreover, he had a variety of options that would allow him to ignore any petition that he did not want to deal with, or simply send it back to the lineage elders for resolution.

Because of this state of affairs in which the Emperor’s decree was law (on top of the official legal code), and with the total absence of a notion of legal autonomy, all sorts of activities were proscribed. Here I shall just mention the innocuous practice of official examination of deceased bodies that were suspected of foul play. Postmortems as such were conducted “by the book” by two novices: the magistrate who had no medical training, and the ostensor, a lowly self-trained, often illiterate person who might have been a barber. The book was called the Washing Away of Wrongs, dating from the 12th century and by decree could not be changed in any detail all the way to the early 19th century. The book contains diagrams of mortal and non-mortal places of wounds on the body and which had to be identified by the two officials as they examined the corpse. This was not a proper autopsy (such as Europeans had been carrying out since the 13th century) and in this case without the aid of a properly trained physician, simply followed the book with the ostensor calling out information that he extracted from observing the body to the magistrate who recorded it on the form. It has been observed, however, that even when more informed medical examiners discovered anomalies in the corpses they studied, they were not allowed to make any changes to the official manual.

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In this way the rigidities of the Ming and Qing legal codes prevented learning in this area of human anatomy, which, one would think, had no political implications, but significant benefits for human well-being if subordinates had any leeway to speak and record their new findings. Clearly there were many inhibitive effects of the Chinese legal code on the advance of science and economic activity.

Perhaps there are alternative “modernities” that might be designated as modernity$_1$, modernity$_2$, and so on. There is a problem, however, if we are following Eisenstadt’s model. That is, just like the sociologists against whom he is arguing as he attempts to forge the idea of multiple modernities, Eisenstadt adopts a socio-psychological approach which means that he looks at personality characteristics not societal characteristics.$^{29}$ He talks about conceptions of “human agency,” and “reflexivity” instead of identifying societal (and/or civilizational) structures and institutions. If, however, one thinks about the deep roots of Western culture and civilization and the unique institutions it invented, then one arrives the following suggestion.

In the first type of modernity I would place the presence of a public sphere (including the right to assembly), the unfettered pursuit of science, a free press, a clear sense of due process of law buttressed by articulated rules (not just conventions), the presence of an independent legal profession, parliamentary democracy and constitutionalism, along with legally autonomous commercial enterprises buttressed by secure property rights. The seeds of all these ideas and institutions were planted long before the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the Americas.

These I think are the likely “normative” implications that would flow from a Weberian civilizational analytic. It would be most fascinating to see how a denizen of another culture or civilization would construct an alternative modernity (modernity$_2$). And what kind of Westerners would choose it?

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$^{29}$ The examples of supposed unilinear development on the roads to modernity that Eisenstadt cites are: Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 1958); and Alex Inkeles, Becoming Modern: Individual Changes in Six Developing Countries (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press, 1974). As much as I admire the work of Lerner and Inkeles, it has to be said that their work is entirely ahistorical insofar as it does not reflect upon the cultural and historical foundations of Western modernity as it unfolded far earlier than the Enlightenment. But that was not their problematic. Ben Nelson was well-aware of this problem in Inkeles’ work.
In a long letter written in the last year of his life, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) notably defended the philosophical and religious conviction of China from some Catholic missionaries. “[Far] from being blameworthy,” he proclaimed, the Chinese “merit praise for their idea of things being created by their natural propensity and by a pre-established harmony.”\(^1\) Because of his apparent endorsement of Chinese belief in terms of his well-known credo, Leibniz has been viewed as “the only major philosopher of the period to hold that the Chinese possessed a spiritualistic doctrine compatible in some of its aspects with Christianity,”\(^2\) but he has also often been seen at the same time as someone whose “ecumenism was not purchased at the expense of European or Christian chauvinism.”\(^3\) “Leibniz’s standard argument,” as Roger Ariew says representatively, “was that a particular aspect of the Chinese religion was compatible with his own thought—and was therefore compatible with Christianity.”\(^4\)

The cosmology of China is indeed strikingly similar to the metaphysics of Leibniz, but precisely where the two resemble each other, the former is unmistakably different from Christianity. Scholars of Leibniz have so far generally taken it for granted that he was ideologically aligned with Christianity, but his paradigmatic similarity to China should alert us of a surprisingly different story. Leibniz was indisputably “the greatest of the seventeenth century sinophiles”\(^5\) and key Chinese cosmological ideas were introduced to Europe long before he formulated his worldview. Together, these two facts can help us decide whether he “owes to Chinese organic naturalism … a deeply important stimulus”\(^6\) or his doctrinal affinity with China resulted merely from “[the] spontaneous generation of similar ideas in cultures removed in time and distance from one another.”\(^7\)

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The Metaphysics of Leibniz

As revealed by his long 1716 letter to Nicholas Remond de Montmart who incidentally was also the confidential recipient in 1714 of The Monadology or the definitive statement of his final philosophy, what is innovative and significant about the metaphysics of Leibniz is the idea of things being created by their innate capacity or a pre-established harmony which he most aptly used in his profoundly insightful and positive interpretation of Chinese cosmology. Away from his discussions of China, however, he largely buried this distinctive innovation under a totalizing conceptual framework known as the best possible world. “[The] more we are enlightened and informed in regard to the works of God,” as he alluded in 1686 to this all-encompassing matrix of ideas early in Discourse on Metaphysics, which constituted the first systematic pronouncement of his then still evolving mature philosophy, “the more will we be disposed to find them excellent and conforming entirely to that which we might desire.”

“[Among] all the possible plans of the universe there is one better than all the rest,” as he more palpably touched on this overarching panoramic vision in 1710 in The Theodicy, which was the only one of his main philosophical works published in his lifetime, “and … God has not failed to choose it.”

“[In] creating the universe,” as he most clearly said in 1714 in “The Principles of Nature and of Grace, Based on Reason” which, no less than The Monadology, embodied his final philosophical manifesto, “[God] has chosen the best possible plan, in which there is the greatest variety together with the greatest order; the best arranged ground, place, time; the most results produced in the most simple ways; the most of power, knowledge, happiness and goodness in the creatures that the universe could permit.”

With God being characterized prominently as the raison d’être of everything and with the anthropomorphized divine personage being imagined implicitly as all powerful and all beneficent, the world simply could not have been other than the best of all possible alternatives. Even though the undeniable presence of evil made it easy in the 18th century for Voltaire (1694-1778) to satirize in Candide the theocentric optimism of Leibniz, his all-embracing metaphysical frame of reference centered on a supernatural agent is, as Nicholas Jolley astutely points out, “not the complacent nonsense that it appears to be.” If anything, its pedigree started long before Leibniz.

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It is Plato (427 BCE-347 BCE) who in *Timaeus* first described the world as emerging miraculously out of chaotic disorder at the hands of a reformist deity who “put intelligence in soul, and soul in body, and framed the universe to be the best and fairest work in the order of nature.”

Since the divine artificer “was good, and … being free from jealousy, he desired that all things should be as like himself as possible,” as the eponymous hero of Plato’s work explained it to Socrates, “the world became a living soul and truly rational through the providence of God.”

Even though in *The Republic*, *The Symposium*, and other works Plato had unequivocally disparaged the phenomenal world of becoming as transient, ever-changing, and illusive and glorified the noumenal world of being in contrast as eternal, constant, and true, he surprisingly moderated the antithetical evaluation of his dualistic vision momentarily in *Timaeus* via what Arthur O. Lovejoy perceptively calls “a bold logical inversion” by binding up the ideal with the real as near equivalences in a tight and inseparable relationship of cause and effect.

On the basis of the Platonic Good and the related principle of plenitude explaining the rich and divergent emanation of the multifarious from the originally singular one, Aristotle (384BC-322BC) built his theory of four causalities and his hierarchically structured and downwardly graded great chain of being (*scala naturae*). After being synthesized with Stoicism by Plotinus (204-270), this part of European humanist antiquity was eventually absorbed into the rationalist theology of European scholasticism. The Platonic and Neo-Platonic myth of the world as being created or recreated from disorder to order by a highly artistically-minded supernatural agent was noticeably different from the doctrinal belief of Judeo-Christianity which involved the divine seven-day creation of the world out of nothing, the history of humanity descending from Adam and Eve, and the cosmic warfare of Christ against Satan. However, the former nevertheless provided a most useful complementary service for the latter with the theocentric orientation of its logic and the easy amenability of its cosmological claims to monotheism. In *Candide*, Voltaire singled out Leibniz for attack, but the best possible world scenario was never the idiosyncratic vagary of any individual person. When poking fun at Leibniz, Voltaire was therefore consciously taking to task the entire theistic heritage of Europe.

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As part of his Lutheran upbringing, Leibniz was introduced to the usual theocentric tradition of European philosophy and religion when he started attending one of his hometown Leipzig’s two main Latin schools at the age of seven. The strictly propaedeutic mission of that educational establishment meant no special facility in or encouragement to any in-depth study of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, or music, but the emphasis of the curriculum on grammar (Latin and Greek), rhetoric, and logic helped as much to seed a lifelong habit of seeing things theistically by reference to a singular original cause as to provide him with the necessary linguistic tools for learning about those ancient European writers who were most exemplary in connecting rational thinking with theism.

Even before his formal schooling, he had already been guided informally into the European world of learning centered on God by his father Friedrich Leubnitz (1597-1652) who was a professor of moral philosophy at the University of Leipzig and who had great expectations for his precocious son. Leibniz lost his father when he was only six years old, but one year after his father’s death, he gained free access to the family library which, beyond the philosophical books of his father and the legal books of his maternal grandfather Wilhelm Schmuch (1575-1634), included a great deal of ideologically indiscriminate material left behind by Bartholomäus Voigt, father of his father’s second wife Dorothea Voigt (?-1643) and a bookseller and publisher in Leipzig. Unsupervised and unstructured, his entirely fortuitous exploration of writers, often at doctrinal variance with each other, enabled him to mythologize himself later as an autodidact and to evolve his characteristic eclecticism in theistic thinking.

At the University of Leipzig and long afterwards, Leibniz subsequently continued his intellectual apprenticeship in the theocentric tradition of European philosophy and religion. From writers of European antiquity and their Renaissance revival, he progressed in time to scholastic philosophy and theology and their revisions in the Reformation, ending finally with the brave new ideas of the modern period. In turn he was exhilarated, but the sequentially late attraction of the new complicated rather than erased his earlier attachment to the old. During his fateful stay in Paris from 1672 to 1676, for instance, the geometrically phrased new teaching of René Descartes (1596-1650) decisively inspired his intense interest in mathematics and logic while helping to wean him from the heavily Aristotelian scholasticism of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) and from the materialist philosophy of Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655) and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679).
No matter how he was then captivated by the mechanistic worldview of Cartesianism, however, he never lost his affection for the old cosmology of Platonism and Neo-Platonism. With the God-centered theory of the best possible world, he doubtlessly wished to accommodate as much the past and the present of his formative influences as the ancients and the moderns of his intellectual heritage. However, as will be shown later, in relation to his true metaphysical innovation, his attempt at such an accommodation within the existing parameters of European philosophy and religion worked out mostly as an elaborate cover.

The Reconciliation of the Old and the New

Leibniz was born two years before the end of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). Confined initially to a religiously instigated regional revolt within the Holy Roman Empire, the hostilities had quickly spilled over into a full-blown pan-European conflict, embroiling most of the major European powers and inflicting unprecedented pain and devastation from protracted military violence and collateral famines and diseases. As much as the unusual exposure to doctrinal diversity in his father’s library at a young and impressionable age and the subsequent influence of teachers at the University of Leipzig such as Jakob Thomasius (1622-1684) who strove to synthesize the scholastically mediated classical philosophy with the fundamental tenets of Lutheran theology, the historical circumstance of Leibniz’s birth in a world debilitatingly fragmented but yearning for unity and peace contributed to the development of his characteristic inclination for open-minded reconciliation and eclecticism.

Even in his youth, as a recent biographer of him points out, he already saw it as the mission of his life “to put the pieces together to achieve a universal synthesis for the glory of God and the happiness of mankind.”15 When he came to formulate his mature philosophy later in life, it was not surprising that he spared no effort in showing off his continuing desire in this direction and in making it perceived by others as what he was doing.

Within his theocentric theory of the best possible world, he managed to make peace between writers who were objectionable to each other. “[T]he writings of distinguished men of ancient as of modern times,” as he wrote in 1695 in Specimen Dynamicum, “apart from their too sharp polemics against opposing thinkers, contain for the most part much that is true and good and what well deserves to be excerpted and deposited in the common treasury of knowledge.”16 For his ostensible purpose of intellectual and ideological irenicism, he was particularly interested in discovering common ground between the ancients and the moderns of his European heritage.

16 Leibniz, Specimen Dynamicum, in Leibniz: Selections, 121.
Both inspired and emboldened by revolutionary changes in Post-Renaissance astronomy and physics, the mathematically based new teaching of Descartes had daringly challenged the scholastically filtered old thinking of European antiquity by demanding to explain everything in terms of the sequential logic of causal relations. In its turn, it had opened itself to attacks from defenders of the old because of its suspected tendency to atheist materialism and its apparent inability to deal with issues such as the coordination of the body and the soul. Rather than taking sides in the heated dispute, Leibniz went between the old and the new. “It appears more and more clear that although all the particular phenomena of nature can be explained mathematically or mechanically by those who understand them,” as he said in *Discourse on Metaphysics*, “yet nevertheless, the general principles of corporeal nature and even of mechanics are metaphysical rather than geometric, and belong rather to certain indivisible forms or natures as the causes of the appearances, than to the corporeal mass or to extension.”

Here as elsewhere, the logical and rhetorical maneuver of Leibniz’s argument was, first of all, to expose the deficiency of the moderns so as to cut down to size their proud achievement, but the very fact of him attempting this already implied significant prior recognition of what the moderns had claimed for themselves. In the same complex way, Leibniz defended the honor of the ancients so as to direct attention to their enduring usefulness, but in the study of nature he conspicuously limited this usefulness to metaphysics and this limitation could not but give implicit validation to some of the ideological challenges which the ancients had received from the moderns.

At once critical and appreciative though in different ways, Leibniz never shied away from differences between the old and the new of his intellectual inheritance, but he deftly chose to construe the differences as indicating a relationship of complement rather than irreconcilable conflict or contradiction. So far as he could see, the moderns were preoccupied with the mechanical explanation of specific natural phenomena or the study of efficient causes, while the ancients were concerned with the metaphysical understanding of underlying reasons or the consideration of final causes. “Both explanations are good;” as he said conciliatorily in *Discourse on Metaphysics*, “both are useful not only for the admiring of the work of a great artificer, but also for the discovery of useful facts in physics and medicine.”

Through a sort of division of labor or a conceptual sleight of hand, Leibniz brought the ancients and the moderns together under his theocentric canopy of the best possible world. Rather than embodying something innovative, however, this very reconciliation of the old and the new exposed problems with the existing framework of his intellectual heritage which to all appearances he was espousing.

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18 Ibid., 321.
To be specific, the notions of efficient and final causes which he used respectively to delineate the quasi-separate spheres of influence for the moderns and the ancients were both derived from what Aristotle in *Metaphysics* called “knowledge of the first causes.”\(^{19}\) In *Physics*, Aristotle identified the efficient cause as the third of the four causalities and presented it as having to do with “the primary source of the change or coming to rest; … and generally what makes of what is made and what causes change of what is changed.”\(^{20}\) Classifying the final cause as the last of the four causalities, Aristotle described it in contrast as understandable “in the sense of end or ‘that for the sake of which’ a thing is done.”\(^{21}\) Alike, the efficient and final causes were ultimately about a primordial original cause which, as the singular unchanging external source of the changing multifarious inside the world, had to be understood theistically, but in the quotidian exercise of this logical thinking which emphasized the distinction of before and after, the invocation of the final cause could potentially or actually cause confusion for the application of the efficient cause and vice versa. With Aristotle, as with Leibniz, it is this actual or potential confusion which made these two causalities problematic alike.

In *Physics*, for instance, Aristotle explained the final cause via a situation involving the activity of walking about and the state of being healthy. Insofar as the state of being healthy could be perceived as an end or goal while the activity of walking about could be seen as the means or instrument to achieve that end or goal, the former could be considered as the final cause of the latter. “[Health],” as Aristotle said in *Physics*, “is the cause of walking about.”\(^{22}\)

The problem with this way of logical analysis is that the relationship between the state of being healthy and the activity of walking about could also be explained by the efficient cause so that the activity of walking about was the prior cause while the state of being healthy was the subsequent effect or result, but the invocation of the final cause decidedly overturned this temporal sequence of causal relations and consequently made the very concepts of before and after or cause and effect potentially or actually confusing. In the 17th century it is this kind of potential or actual confusion which drew the critical attention of Spinoza (1632-1667) who, in the process of formulating his radically new philosophy, dismissed all final causes as “nothing but human fictions” and characterized the ultimate identification of the final cause with divinity as “[taking] refuge in the will of God, i.e., the sanctuary of ignorance.”\(^{23}\)


\(^{21}\) Ibid.

\(^{22}\) Ibid.

Just as Spinoza targeted Aristotle in his criticism of the final cause, so Voltaire set his satirical focus on Leibniz in his repudiation of the same idea. “Observe: noses were made to support spectacles,” as he had his fictional character Pangloss say in an obviously ludicrous way in *Candide*, “hence we have spectacles.”24 “Legs, as anyone can plainly see, were made to be breeched,” as the plainly misguided philosophical teacher of Voltaire’s creation went on to remark idiotically, “and so we have breeches.”25 “Stones were made to be shaped and to build castles with;” as he concluded his ridiculous mini-lecture about the idea of an end for everything in the best possible world to his pupil Candide, “thus My Lord has a fine castle, for the greatest Baron in the province should have the finest house; and since pigs were made to be eaten, we eat pork all year round.”26

From this kind of attacks Voltaire lodged against him or Spinoza launched against Aristotle, Leibniz was in reality largely immune, but it was so only because his discussion of the final cause was always vague and he never quite made clear what specific end was achieved through what specific means in his cosmological thinking. “There seems to be no followable route from Leibniz’s basic metaphysic to the notion of doing something for the sake of an end,” as Jonathan Bennett says incisively, “let alone the more fully teleological notion of doing something because one thinks it will lead to a certain end.”27

**The Metaphysical Innovation of Leibniz**

Rather than the reconciliation of the old and the new within the existing boundaries of his intellectual heritage, what was truly innovative about the metaphysics of Leibniz was, as pointed out earlier, the idea of things being created by their natural propensity or a pre-established harmony which he used most aptly in his profoundly insightful and positive interpretation of Chinese cosmology. “[Every] soul,” as he said as early as 1686, “is as a world apart, independent of everything else but God.”28

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25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
By itself, the idea of every predicate being necessarily included in the subject (principle of sufficient reason) was not new, since it was closely related to the notion of *ex nihilo nihil fit* (nothing comes from nothing) which was a major pillar of Aristotelian logic and a crucial part of scholasticism, but it became innovative in Leibniz’s use of it, because he not only extended the implied notion of self-sufficiency to the totality of subjects to which all predicates belonged but also did it in a very unusual way. “[Every] substance expresses the whole sequence of the universe in accordance with its own viewpoint or relationship to the rest,” as he proclaimed in the same 1686 treatise, “so that all are in perfect correspondence with one another.”

Free from external compulsion, each thing was independent. Rather than engendering chaos, this independence ensured the good and mutually beneficial coordination of everything. “God,” as Leibniz wrote in 1695, “has from the first created the soul or any other real unity in such a way that everything arises in it from its own internal nature through a perfect *spontaneity* relatively to itself, and yet with a perfect *conformity* to external things.”

The world was never without order, but the order resulted from the independent state and action of everything rather than any immediately discernible external determination. More than anything, this unusual notion of things being free individually but well-coordinated collectively at the same time in their independent relationship distinguished Leibniz from his contemporaries in a competition of ideas. In addition to being unable to explain any meaningful interaction between the body and the soul, as mentioned before, the dualistic vision of Descartes had opened itself to the accusation of atheist materialism. To remedy this situation, Nicholas Malebranche (1638-1715) developed the doctrine of Occasionalism so that the body and the soul could impact each other, but the cause was always external and ultimately a singular and personal God who continuously intervened to bring about the miraculous result. To confront the same problem but away from the mechanistic worldview of Cartesianism, Ralph Cudworth (1617-1688) and Henry More (1614-1687) drew on Plato’s concept of world soul or its Neo-Platonist variation and enrichment and came up with the vitalist idea of plastic nature which supposedly acted “as a Subordinate Instrument of Divine Providence, in the Orderly disposal of Matter.” Leibniz roundly rejected the involvement of miracles or divine interventions (direct or indirect) in the explanation of nature, thereby clearing the way for his metaphysical innovation.

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29 Ibid., 98.
From the Cartesians (Malebranche) and the Cambridge Neo-Platonists (Cudworth and More), Leibniz differed superficially only in limiting the role of the deity to before the creation of everything so that the world was still a supernaturally-made machine or watch or automaton but everything in it always ran in perfect order and nothing ever required any supernatural adjustment or maintenance. In reality, the palpable autonomy of the world in its actual operation from any direct control of a supernatural agent implied that the world was an organism rather than a machine and as such it cried out for a cosmological explanation which involved a significantly different conceptualization of divinity and a significantly different understanding of causality. Even though things could and did impact each other, for instance, why everything was the way it was could not be explained ultimately by the usual efficient causes. Even though things could be related to each other in terms of means and ends, the routine coordination between them could not be understood ultimately by the usual final causes. Since freedom or self-determination was as characteristic of each individual thing as of the totality to which all things belonged, in other words, neither the operation of everything individually nor its independently well-coordinated cooperation with everything else was explainable by the Cartesian idea of mechanism or the Platonically mediated Judeo-Christian notion of teleology.

Being free, the activity of everything individually or in its cooperation with everything else was contingent, but being conducive to the well-being of each thing and the totality of all things alike, the same activity was also necessary. Both contingent and necessary at the same time rather than either the one or the other, the paradoxical sounding causality cannot but push the search for the ultimate explanation right inside the operation of the world rather than outside it and cast light in the process on the intricacies of Leibniz’s theistic attitude. In public, he never stopped touting himself as a staunch defender of a unified Christian church and he always prompted others to perceive him as such under his theocentric rubric of the best possible world. In private, however, as reported after his death by Johann Georg von Eckhart (1664-1730) who was his secretary during the last nineteen years of his life, he was never more than a nominal Christian who rarely went to church and never took communion. Around the House of Hanover he was widely known as a non-believer, being nicknamed Loewenix or “believer in nothing.” Even on his deathbed in 1716, he rejected repeated appeals of Eckhart to allow a priest to come and give him the last sacraments, and he reportedly protested both angrily and rhetorically by asking what he should confess since he had stolen or taken from no one.
Just as his habitual use of the efficient and final causes for the reconciliation of the ancients and the moderns provided no real insight into the innovation of his cosmology, so his customary parade of ideas supposedly taken from European antiquity generally obscured rather than clarified the real and radical import of his inspiration. In The Monadology, the most eye-catching and seemingly most important word is of course monad which in the plural he defined notoriously as entities which “have no windows through which anything can enter or depart.” This account of the monads has been most appropriately characterized by Bertrand Russell as “a kind of fantastic fairy tale, coherent perhaps, but wholly arbitrary.” Other allegedly ancient ideas he invoked are not as bewilderingly mystifying, but they do not obfuscate things any the less. Entelechy or entelechies, for instance, is a term which he was fond of throwing around and which he explained in 1695 as meaning “primitive Forces which do not contain only the act or the complement of possibility, but further an original activity.” Here, as if providing an etymological origin for his notion of things being created by their natural propensity, he was willy-nilly reminiscent of Cudworth and More who had resorted to similar concepts of vitalism for the explanation of nature and for the related understanding of an external God.

In reality, Leibniz differed drastically from the Cambridge Neo-Platonists because what was most important in his innovative vision of the world was not how everything was divinely animated to operate predictably in a downwardly spiraling chain of being but how everything was independent of everything else in their well-coordinated cooperation and how this independent correlation cannot be easily understood by reference to the externally conceptualized God of Judeo-Christianity or the similarly understood Demiurge of Plato and Aristotle.

In light of his true metaphysical innovation, both Leibniz’s habitual promotion of the efficient and final causes within the theocentric theory of the best possible world and his routine parade of ideas supposedly taken from European antiquity can be seen as largely and even intentionally red herrings. Rather than identifying him ideologically with his intellectual and religious heritage as is still generally and problematically assumed today, they most importantly provided him with a convenient defensive or self-defensive cover so that he was iconoclastic while being shielded somewhat from any accusation of heresy. “It was necessary,” as he wrote in “New System of Nature and of the Communication of Substances,” “… to recall and, so to speak, rehabilitate the substantial forms so decried today, but in a way which would make them intelligible and which would separate the use we should make of them from the abuse that has been made of them.”

In the name of resurrecting moribund old ideas, he then went on to be daringly revolutionary about a brave new world which was organic rather than mechanistic or vitalistic. The new may still sound like being closely connected with the old, but the connection was much more in rhetoric than in substance. To see this, it is crucially important to take note of “an astonishing correlation [of his ideas] with various schools of Chinese thought”\(^{36}\) which, from time to time, has been pointed out but which has not so far received adequate attention.

**The Paradigmatic Similarity to China**

In the 20\(^{th}\) century the person who most influentially pointed out the striking resemblance between the metaphysics of Leibniz and the cosmology of China was Joseph Needham. For Needham, the key to this resemblance is the historical context. As mentioned earlier, Leibniz developed his metaphysical thinking in the late 17\(^{th}\) and early 18\(^{th}\) centuries in response to Malebranche on the one hand and to Cudworth and More on the other. No matter how different from each other in their accounts of the communication between the body and the soul, the mechanistic worldview of Cartesianism and the vitalistic cosmology of Cambridge Neo-Platonism were at the same time similar to one another in the theistic orientation of their efforts and in their consequently questionable attribution of the ultimate cause (be it efficient or final) to the idea of God who was conceptualized as singular, personal, and existing outside the natural process. With his notion of things being made by their innate capacity or a pre-established harmony, Leibniz not only kept any direct supernatural intervention away from his explanation of nature but also changed the European understanding of the world from a machine to an organism. It is in the stunning success of this quietly iconoclastic effort to surmount “the characteristic European schizophrenia or split-personality” or “to overcome the European antinomy between theological vitalism and mechanical materialism”\(^{37}\) that Leibniz most vividly and ineluctably reminded Needham of China.


To Needham, Leibniz’s metaphysical innovation is particularly reminiscent of the Chinese Daoist worldview. In the human body, as the famous Daoist philosopher Zhuangzi (369 BCE-286 BCE) once explained it by way of an example, there were nine openings, six organs, and hundreds of joints which came together and kept good order, but being uncompelled, the good coordination of the bodily parts did not result from their being commanded in any way. “The hands and feet differ in their duties;” as two Chinese scholars annotated Zhuangzi’s idea in the third century, “the five viscera differ in their functions.”38 “They never associate with each other,” as the two scholars quickly pointed out, “yet the hundred parts (of the body) are held together with them in a common unity.”39 “They never (force themselves to) cooperate,” as they went on to say, “and yet, both within and without, all complete one another.”40 “This is the way in which they cooperate in non-cooperation,” as they concluded, “… Heaven and Earth are such a (living) body.”41

To protect himself from any accusation of atheist heresy, Leibniz understandably invoked the idea of God, but the essence of his metaphysical innovation, like the Daoist worldview, consisted in what Needham calls “a kind of harmony of wills” or “a system of correlative thinking,”42 and his habitual invocation of the deity was not only largely perfunctory but also helped in that way to highlight his paradigmatic similarity to the Chinese Daoists. “It would seem,” as Zhuangzi said about the cooperation of the bodily parts in their independent relationship, “as though there must be some True Lord among them.”43 “But whether I succeed in discovering his identity or not,” as he pointed out bluntly, “it neither adds to nor detracts from his Truth.”44

In the history of modern science since the late 17th century, organism is arguably the single most important idea which liberated Western conceptual thinking from the Cartesian and Newtonian understanding of the universe as a machine and consequently enabled drastic and revolutionary advances in field physics and evolutionary chemistry and biology. As early as the third century BCE, Chinese Daoist philosophers like Zhuangzi already talked about the idea.

39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid., II. 302 and 504.
44 Ibid.
The decisive breakthrough of modern science was not achieved in China, and why this did not happen is intriguing and important for any study of modern Chinese history, but the crucial and indispensable idea of organism which made possible the scientific revolution of the modern world was characteristically Chinese rather than European and it was indisputably introduced in the early 17th century to Europe from China by Jesuit missionaries who, furthermore, made crystal clear its fundamental difference from European theistic and secular logical thinking by repudiating it.

In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, Leibniz was among the very first European philosophers to think about the world innovatively as organic rather than mechanistic or vitalistic. He has since been followed by a very long line of Western thinkers going all the way to Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) in the 20th century, but in his day could Leibniz have taken his inspiration from the Chinese organismic worldview which was then verifiably accessible to him?

Needham apparently believed that Leibniz owed a crucially important inspirational debt to China. “[Leibniz’s] own, the first, great attempt at a synthesis, which should surmount the dichotomy of either theological vitalist idealism or mechanical materialism,” as he put it, “was strongly stimulated by, if not indeed derived from, the organic world-outlook which we have found to be characteristically Chinese.”45 Before Needham, other scholars of China already drew attention to various points of contact between Leibniz and China. In 1687, for instance, Leibniz had in his possession a copy of Confucius Sinarum Philosophus which Jesuit missionaries to China published that year and which, in addition to three Confucian classics in Latin translation, included a lengthy discussion of the greatest Neo-Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi (1130-1200) and his organismic theory of Li (principle) and Qi (material energy) which was known to have been heavily influenced by Daoism and Buddhism. In 1689, Leibniz met in Rome Jesuit missionary to China Claudio Filippo Grimaldi (1638-1712) to whom he subsequently sent a list of thirty questions about a wide range of topics concerning China. In 1697, Leibniz also started a correspondence with Jesuit missionary to China Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730) which continued for several years. Needham knew all these facts and more, but, as he readily admitted, none of these could have proved any decisive influence, because “all the essentials of [Leibniz’s] system were worked out in the Discourse on Metaphysics (written in the winter of 1685-86), the terminology of monads being alone missing.”46

Chronologically, as implicitly acknowledged by Needham, it is plainly not the case that Leibniz first studied Chinese cosmology consciously and then evolved his metaphysical innovation. In his day, Leibniz was accused of plagiarizing Newton in the development of the infinitesimal calculus. Leibniz strongly denied it and he was later largely vindicated.

45 Needham, Science and Civilisation in China, II. 498.
46 Ibid. 504, Footnote G.
During his correspondence with Joachim Bouvet beginning in the late 1690s, Leibniz was amazed to find resemblance between his binary arithmetic and the hexagrams of the ancient Chinese classic *Yijing* (Book of Changes), and so far there has been no evidence that the resemblance was anything other than coincidence.

However, the case with organism is different. For his difficulty to link Leibniz’s iconoclastic worldview with his knowledge of Chinese philosophy, Needham’s attribution of Leibniz’s inspiration to China has been rightly challenged by David Mungello, but in the context of the fact that organism was a characteristically Chinese idea and was circulated in Europe before Leibniz even began to philosophize, Mungello’s explanation of Leibniz’s paradigmatic similarity to China as “[the] spontaneous generation of similar ideas in cultures removed in time and distance from one another” is in its turn highly problematic, especially because his speculated independence of Leibniz from China has since been used implicitly by some recent scholars to deny the reality of Leibniz’s ideological affinity with the Far East and to perversely characterize his insightful and positive interpretation of Chinese cosmology in the long 1716 letter as, at worst, part of a show of “European or Christian chauvinism,” and, at best, a misguided display of “hermeneutic generosity.” Leibniz may not have studied the organismic idea of China consciously until very late in his life, but long before that he could have absorbed it without knowing it consciously. The crucial clue for this is his long 1716 letter.

**The Chinese Connection of Leibniz**

The long letter of Leibniz to Remond in 1716 contained his most important thoughts about Chinese cosmology, but the thoughts were given in the form of a carefully measured response to the separate discussions of the same topic by two Catholic missionaries to China: Nicholas Longobardi (1565-1655) and Antonio Caballero a Santa Maria (1602-1669). A Jesuit and a Franciscan respectively, both Longobardi and Santa Maria were important in the history of the early modern East-West intellectual interaction and in any study of Leibniz because of their principled and spirited opposition to the legacy of Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) who pioneered the evangelical enterprise of the Catholic Church in the Middle Kingdom.

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48 Cook and Rosemont, “The Pre-established Harmony Between Leibniz and Chinese Thought,” 261.  
From Macao, Ricci first entered the Chinese mainland and founded the Jesuit China mission in 1583. After years of study about the Chinese language and Chinese culture, he gradually came to recognize the special importance of Confucianism which was dominant in Chinese society both ideologically and politically. To win official acceptance or at least tolerance, Ricci simply had to befriend Confucianism, but to advance his apostolic agenda, he also had to distance himself from the official Chinese ideology and repudiate it at the same time. Out of the contradictory needs of this situation evolved eventually his carefully calculated strategy of evangelism which had two main components: acceptance of ancient Confucianism as prefiguring Christian monotheism and rejection of Neo-Confucianism as corrupted by Daoism and Buddhism.

Ricci’s complex attitude of simultaneous acceptance and rejection toward Confucianism inaugurated a longstanding Western prejudicial view of the Chinese as being acquainted with ethics or natural theology but “[having] no conception of the rules of logic” and “[having] obscured matters by the introduction of error rather than enlightened them.”50 To a large extent, Leibniz’s surprising neglect of Chinese metaphysical thinking reflected this. As early as 1667, as he revealed it in a letter to Landgrave Ernst von Hessen Rheinfels, he was already intrigued by China. So eager was he to lay his hands on everything about the Far East that he proudly boasted to the Electress Sophia Charlotte (1668-1705) in 1697 that he should post a notice on his door: Bureau of Information for Chinese Knowledge. In spite of his well-known consuming interest, there were always blind spots up to the late 1690s. “His interests extended beyond collecting data,” as Franklin Perkins says recently while echoing Mungello’s doubt about Needham’s attribution of Leibniz’s metaphysical inspiration to China but overlooking Mungello’s simultaneous recognition of Leibniz’s real paradigmatic similarity to the Far East, “but did not extend to philosophy.”51 When Leibniz wrote toward the end of the 17th century about the need of Europe for missionaries from the Chinese “who might teach us the use and practice of natural religion, just as we have sent them teachers of revealed theology,”52 his underlying assumption about the relative strengths and weaknesses of Chinese and European philosophical and religious paradigms was still largely informed by Ricci.

51 Perkins, Leibniz and China, 168.
Not until the late 1690s or early 1700s did Leibniz realize that the supposed weakness of the Chinese in having no conception of the rules of logic and in having obscured metaphysical thinking by the introduction of errors was a Jesuit code phrase for the idea of organism for which Ricci denigrated Chinese philosophy but in which Leibniz found his closest affinity with the Middle Kingdom. Long before he achieved that realization, Longobardi and Santa Maria already prepared that process by challenging Ricci. For his purpose of both endorsing and attacking the dominant Chinese ideology, in particular, Ricci claimed to have detected in ancient Confucianism monotheistic tendencies which were then lost in Neo-Confucianism under the corrupting influence of Daoism and Buddhism.

Because of his ostensible acceptance of ancient Confucianism, Ricci has been celebrated as epitomizing what Wolfgang Reinhard calls “one of the few serious alternatives to the otherwise brutal ethno-centrism of the European expansion over the earth.”53 In reality, his monotheistic reading of ancient Chinese texts was nothing more than what Edward Said terms “a kind of Western projection onto and will to govern over the Orient.”54 No matter how he seemed to be inclusive in his ambiguous accommodation of Christianity to Confucianism, his supposedly inclusive reading of Confucianism was actually exclusive because, as Urs App perceptively points out, “it also hijacked other people’s histories and religions and embedded them in a fundamentally biblical scenario.”55

Longobardi was one of the very first in the small Jesuit China mission to be critical of Ricci’s specious division of Confucianism into a pristine early part and a degenerate later part. Entering China in 1597 and staying in the country until his death in 1655, he knew that the organismic worldview was not limited to Daoism or Buddhism but was the crucial cornerstone of a productive relationship of concurrent competition and complement among the three main philosophical and religious traditions of the Middle Kingdom. Ricci was aware of Longobardi’s criticism. Before his death in 1610, he could have meant to acknowledge its validity quietly and to silence it at the same time when he promoted Longobardi to be his successor as the leader of the Jesuit China mission.

Longobardi did not stay loyal and submissive to the legacy of Ricci for long. Soon after Ricci’s death, he started an internal Jesuit debate about Ricci’s dubious reading of Confucianism, and as one of Ricci’s most vocal critics, he also wrote a long and feisty treatise. Things did not go his way in the debate and he was even ordered to have his treatise destroyed, but his anti-Ricci text was leaked out and Santa Maria was the one who got it and made it possible for it to be published in Europe.

On the basis of Longobardi’s information, Santa Maria also wrote out his opposition to Ricci. Both of these texts were sent by Remond to Leibniz for a response, but before Leibniz wrote his long 1716 letter, there is evidence that he not only already knew the contents of the two treatises but also already put two and two together about his paradigmatic similarity to China.

The doctrinal fight Longobardi and Santa Maria had with Ricci was over the Chinese idea of *tianren heyi* (humanity’s unity with heaven) or *wanwu yiti* (ten thousand things in one body) which Leibniz dealt with in the most important first two parts of his 1716 letter (the last two parts treated Confucian rites and the similarity of his binary arithmetic to the hexagrams of *Yijing*). Ricci first discussed the Chinese idea in the early 17th century when he described the Chinese as believing “that the entire universe is composed of a common substance; that the creator of the universe is one in a continuous body, a continuum as it were, together with heaven and earth, men and beasts, trees and plants, and the four elements, and that each individual thing is a member of this body.”

For the tactical maneuvers of his proselytizing enterprise, Ricci willfully characterized the view as a Daoist and Buddhist corruption of Neo-Confucianism, but relying on testimonies of Chinese scholar-officials either friendly or hostile to Ricci, Longobardi and Santa Maria proved that it was a fundamental belief always shared by Confucianism with Daoism and Buddhism. Just as European mechanistic and vitalistic views of nature both distinguished God clearly from everything else, so all three Chinese philosophical and religious traditions considered everything in the universe in contrast as intertwined with heaven because the latter as an ever on-going organic process was actualized only in the independent exercise of a cooperative principle by each participant and because “Heaven and Earth … are void of Reason, that is, of Will and Deliberation, but do all things by a certain natural Propension.”

In the form of *tianren heyi* (humanity’s unity with heaven) or *wanwu yiti* (ten thousand things in one body), the organismic worldview of China was apparently absorbed into the monistic philosophy of Spinoza in the middle of the 17th century. Spinoza is not widely recognized today as a Sinophile, but when he was expelled from his synagogue in 1656, he was reportedly accused of teaching children of the Jewish Sabbath school “that the Bible was not the history of the world, that Chinese history was independent of biblical history, and so on” and his Latin teacher Van den Enden (1602-1674) is known to have believed “that nature had to be considered the only God.” Between 1619 and 1633 Van den Enden was a Jesuit.

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To the European public, China was then the pride of the Jesuit missionary effort outside Europe, but behind closed doors, debates about the Chinese organismic cosmology were raging between Ricci’s supporters and detractors and both sides sent their views back to their Jesuit superiors and confreres in Europe. With his insider’s information, Van den Enden evidently played a most instrumental role in the formulation of Spinoza’s radical philosophy which, reminiscent of the Chinese organismic idea of humanity’s free and entirely voluntary conformity with heaven, conceptualized the highest ideal of life as freedom or “a firm existence, which our intellect acquires through immediate union with God, so that it can produce ideas in itself, and outside itself effects agreeing well with its nature, without its effects being subjected, however, to any external causes by which they can be changed or transformed.”

Leibniz’s substantive contact with the organismic conviction of China was via Spinoza. On the way from Paris to the Court of Hanover in 1676, he made a special detour to The Hague and met the Dutch philosopher in person for at least three days and possibly a week. Before that momentous encounter, he had already learned diligently about the main contents of Spinoza’s monistic philosophy in 1675 in Paris from Walther Ehrenfried von Tschirnhaus (1651-1708), a mathematician and fellow German compatriot, who had earned the trust and respect of Spinoza in 1674 and had been given extracts by Spinoza from his then unpublished masterpiece the Ethics. “In a philosophical as well as a literal sense,” as Matthew Stewart points out in a recent study of the two European philosophers, “Spinoza opened a door for Leibniz.” Leibniz did not seem to have any idea then of any possible connection of Spinoza with the Far East, but in the late 1690s he could not have remained unaware of it, because Pierre Bayle (1647-1708) had already drawn public attention to the similarity of Spinoza to the doctrinal beliefs of Chinese Buddhism and to what he called “[a] hypothesis, that is very much in vogue among the Chinese” by which he meant Neo-Confucianism. In Theodicy published in 1710, Leibniz alluded to Bayle’s reference to Chinese Buddhism when he described how the belief about the annihilation of all things belonging to us was shared by the Quietists of Europe and “the Quietism of Foë, originator of a great Chinese sect,” but he did not mention Bayle’s concurrent reference to Confucianism or Neo-Confucianism. Given the reputation of Spinoza as a materialist and atheist philosopher and the need of protection for himself, Leibniz’s omission could not have been accidental.

60 Spinoza, Short Treatise, in The Collected Works of Spinoza, 149.
61 Matthew Stewart, The Courtier and the Heretic: Leibniz, Spinoza, and the Fate of God in the Modern World (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006), 293; the direct and indirect contacts of Leibniz with Spinoza are all carefully documented in chapters 1, 8, and 12 of this book.
63 Leibniz, Theodicy, 79.
In a short piece about the civil cult of Confucius written in 1700/1701, Leibniz first mentioned Longobardi by name and showed knowledge of the internal Jesuit debate about the nature of Chinese metaphysics. He claimed then that he did not “know if it is sufficiently clear what in fact is the authentic doctrine of the Chinese literati (especially of the classical ones), officially approved, based on their classical texts,” but he quickly supported Ricci by praising him as “a great man, for following the example of the Church Fathers who interpreted Plato and other philosophers in a Christian fashion.”

In another short piece about Chinese rites and religion written in 1708, he more clearly sided with Ricci in the internal Jesuit dispute, claiming that “nothing prevents us from thinking well of the ancient doctrines until we are compelled to proceed in any other ways.”

In his 1716 letter to Remond, Leibniz superficially maintained his usual support for Ricci. Close to the start of his treatise, he advised against repudiating Chinese cosmology, because “[it] would be highly foolish and presumptuous on our part, having newly arrived compared with them, and scarcely out of barbarism, to want to condemn such an ancient doctrine simply because it does not appear to agree at first glance with our ordinary scholastic notions.” It was reasonable, he suggested, “to inquire whether we could give it a proper meaning.” Here, as in his habitual promotion of the new in the name of the old in his own metaphysical thinking, he was reminiscent of Ricci, but the Jesuit father read monotheism into Confucianism for the purpose of subverting it while Leibniz lined Confucianism up with Christianity for the different purpose of deflecting criticism from both it and himself.

Longobardi, for instance, disputed Ricci’s identification of the Chinese Heaven with the Christian God by mentioning how the Neo-Confucian Li “is the natural law of Heaven and by its operation all things are governed, according to weight and measure, and conforming to their state; not, however, on the basis of intelligence or reflection, but only by propensity and natural order.” In response, Leibniz did not distinguish ancient Confucianism from Neo-Confucianism as Ricci would have done. Instead, he simply embraced the Confucian and Neo-Confucian idea of Tian (Heaven) or Li (principle) by pointing out its similarity to his metaphysical innovation. “For me,” as he said, “I find all this quite excellent and quite in accord with natural theology.” “It is pure Christianity,” as he said in a different place, “insofar as it renews the natural law inscribed in our hearts—except for what revelation and grace add to it to improve our nature.”

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64 Leibniz, “On the Civil Cult of Confucius (1700/1701),” in Writings on China, 63 and 63.
65 Leibniz, “Remarks on Chinese Rites and Religion (1708),” in Writings on China, 71.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
70 Ibid.
Without hesitation, he included Neo-Confucianism in his approval. “Thus one can even find satisfaction with modern Chinese interpreters, and commend them,” as he said, “since they reduce the governance of Heaven and other things to natural causes and distance themselves from the ignorance of the masses, who seek out supernatural miracles—or rather super-corporeal ones—as well as seek out Spirits like those of a Deus ex Machina.”71

Leibniz’s iconoclastic view of the world as organic rather than mechanistic or vitalistic was indeed uncannily similar to the cosmology of China including Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism, but precisely because they so much resembled each other, his metaphysical innovation could not be Christian in character as he claimed or as scholars of him have so far generally followed him in taking it to be.

**Conclusion**

One of the things which Leibniz in his long 1716 letter cited Longobardi as saying about Confucianism was the idea of an esoteric or secret doctrine. Leibniz showed no trust in Longobardi on this issue, but the idea of a contrast between a well-hidden private belief and a well-advertised public conviction seems to be most apt and illuminating about Leibniz’s metaphysical thinking and about his interest in China.

In public, he never stopped prompting others to see him as a great conciliator who brought the mechanistic worldview of Cartesianism and the vitalistic cosmology of Platonism and Neo-Platonism together under the theocentric umbrella of the best possible world. In reality, in the name of resuscitating moribund old ideas from his intellectual heritage he quietly and iconoclastically promoted his brave new vision of the world as organic.

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71 Ibid., 116.
Similarly, he appeared in public to be as much motivated in his interest in China by international politics or by what Yuen-Ting Lai calls “a grandiose vision of a world-society, to be realized by the elimination of Islam, the conversion of China and Tartary, and the reconciliation of Protestants and Catholics in Europe”\textsuperscript{72} as in his famous or notorious Egyptian Plan which he concocted around 1672 with his friend Johannes Christian von Boineburg (1622-1672) for the purpose of diverting the aggressive urge of Louis XIV (1638-1715) from Holland. In reality, the most important connection of him with China was the quiet absorption of the characteristically Chinese philosophical idea of organism and the related Chinese monistic doctrine of \textit{tianren heyi} (humanity’s unity with heaven) which, as the noted 20th century Chinese scholar Qian Mu contends, “constitutes the greatest contribution of Chinese culture to mankind.”\textsuperscript{73} In relation to what he was in private, what Leibniz appeared in public was rarely more than smoke and mirrors. To understand the real and radical import of his metaphysical thinking and his inspirational debt to China in this regard, it seems crucially important to recognize this fact.


\textsuperscript{73} Qian Mu, \textit{Shijie Jushi yu Zhongguo Wenhua} (The World Situation and Chinese Culture) (Taipei: Lantai Chubanshe, 2001), 376.
Introduction

Discussions of the atomic bomb and Hiroshima have to be deeply troubling for anyone. The natural inclination is to turn one’s eyes away or to remain silent. Avoidance and silence, however, were not valid options immediately after the Second World War and are not valid options today. The decision – or decisions, for there were many – to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and later Nagasaki raises issues of profound importance for the human community. It compels us to ask who we are as individuals and as members of a society engaged in actions with such devastating consequences. We must ask ourselves as well how otherwise ordinary people come to such decisions and how they justify them – consciously or unconsciously – before or after the fact.

Thousands of pages have been devoted to the topic of the atomic bomb and Hiroshima, but relatively little attention has been paid to the role that narrative played. Yet stories shape the actions of individuals and of cultures. “Narrativized ethics” – which is my own term – may help in understanding how the “Hiroshima narrative” informed the attitudes and decisions of many involved in the Manhattan Project.

Narrativized ethics is primarily of two kinds. First, there is the story that is deliberately constructed, at the conscious level, for explanatory and justificatory purposes. The most frequent use of this kind of narrativized ethics on a national stage occurs in politics, especially during an election or in the run-up to an initiative like going to war, which requires at least the implied, if not the formal, consent of the populace. Second, there is the story that operates at a more unconscious level. This story may sometimes not look like a conventional story, for it tends to be determined by hidden motivations, somewhat like the dreams that are motivated by unconscious desires in Freudian psychoanalysis. This is the story behind the story. In general, at whatever level of awareness, narrativized ethics provides justifications for the beliefs, thoughts, and actions of an individual, a nation, or a culture.

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1 Reprinted, with permission, from Studies in Moralogy, No. 74 (February 2015), the academic journal of the Research Center for Moral Science in the Institute of Moralogy in Kashiwa-City, Japan. Professor Palencia-Roth is a senior academic adviser for the Center.
Narrativized ethics can be a useful analytical tool in a number of areas in comparative history, especially when historical circumstances lead to and seem to require the threat of force and/or its application. Consider, for example, the drive toward the East by Alexander the Great, the Roman colonization of much of the known western world, the Muslim expansion which began in the 7th century, the Crusades, the Spanish conquest and colonization of the New World, the treatment of Indians by North Americans, the English colonization of India, the European push into Africa in the 19th century, Russian expansionism, the Japanese occupation of Taiwan, and the so-called War on Terror.

The appeal to justificatory arguments favoring aggression has a long history in the West, especially with the rise of nationalism. The rationale for “Just War Theory,” articulated by St. Thomas Aquinas, who took the term from St. Augustine (*The City of God*), even made its way into 19th-century American law. Chief Justice John Marshall, in an 1823 Supreme Court decision, basing his argument on the Just War Theory used by the Spanish in the New World, delivered a judgment that he named “The Doctrine of Discovery.” The doctrine stated that Christian nations – in this case, the United States – had the right, by virtue of their “discovery” of non-Christian nations, to appropriate property from Native Americans. The Doctrine of Discovery became part of international law in the 19th century and into the 20th. All justificatory arguments are based on narratives of one kind or another.

The names which triangulate the subtitle of this essay would seem to have little in common. Yet the events leading up to and following August 6, 1945, acquire a profoundly ethical resonance when viewed through the prism of the cultural values underlying both Homer and Aeschylus as they were refracted through the classical and biblical frames of reference of President Truman and a few other central players in this drama. That prism is a kind of narrative lens through which we may better understand not only the past but also the challenges of the present moment. Of course, the manufacture and use of the Atomic Bomb were not a direct consequence of Homer and Aeschylus, or of the Judeo-Christian worldview.

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2 Francisco de Vitoria, in the 16th century in Spain, convincingly argued against the Just War Theory in the Spanish conquest of the New World, saying in effect that the Spanish Crown had no authority, moral, legal or natural, to appropriate land that, by natural right, belonged to the natives. Chief Justice Marshall ignored that argument. See Vitoria, *Relaciones sobre los indios y el derecho de guerra*, written in 1532.
But Hiroshima and Nagasaki became caught in the web of a grand narrative\(^3\) with a largely pre-determined plot\(^4\) made justifiable by an appeal, conscious or not, to the logic and consequences of the excluded middle, the dropped middle, and the classical form of the Aristotelian syllogism.

**Narrativized Ethics I: Harry S. Truman**

Although President Truman could have decided against using the atomic bomb, he decided in favor of it because, I believe, he was influenced by two kinds of narrative structures. The first was a plot in which he was a major actor with little freedom to improvise, and the second was a moral tale which provided ethical support for his decision. I do not wish to excuse that decision but to explain how I believe that it became justifiable to him.

President Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945. Thirteen days later President Truman, having previously been kept in the dark, on President Roosevelt’s instructions, learned of the Manhattan Project for the first time. He was informed of it by Henry Stimson, the Secretary of War, and General Leslie R. Groves, the general who directed the project to develop the atomic bomb. We do not have a record of Truman’s response at the time, but we do have the memorandum by Secretary Stimson which was the basis of the conversation. For my purposes, the most important points are the first, the fifth, the seventh, and the eighth:

1. Within four months we shall in all probability have completed the most terrible weapon ever known in human history, one bomb of which could destroy a whole city.

5. The world in its present state of moral advancement compared with its technical development would be eventually at the mercy of such a weapon. In other words, modern civilization might be completely destroyed.

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\(^3\) The term “grand narrative” comes from Jean-François Lyotard in his book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1979). By grand narrative Lyotard means a narrative structure that is totalizing and is characterized by the appeal to a truth that is considered to be transcendent and universal. All grand narratives contain an ethical component.

\(^4\) George Steiner, in his influential book on cultural studies entitled *In Bluebeard’s Castle: Some Notes toward the Redefinition of Culture* asks with reference to the Holocaust a question that is relevant to my concerns in this essay: “What had turned professional, essentially limited warfare into massacre?” (p. 31) His answer: the massacre was due to a “matter of automatism” in which there is an unstoppable momentum to a process which has been set in motion. In my view, the process which makes the Holocaust or Hiroshima possible comes from a deeper source, narrative itself and the predictive nature of plot. At its deepest level narrative offers perhaps the most fundamental explanation of the world. It is therefore no accident that the first cosmogonies were all narrative in structure.
7. In light of our present position with reference to this weapon, the question of sharing it with other nations and, if so shared, upon what terms, becomes a primary question of our foreign relations. Also our leadership in the war and in the development of this weapon has placed a certain moral responsibility upon us which we cannot shirk without very serious responsibility for any disaster to civilization which it would further.

8. On the other hand, if the problem of the proper use of this weapon can be solved, we would have the opportunity to bring the world into a pattern in which the peace of the world and our civilization can be saved.5

From this moment until the end of the war, Stimson and Groves – joined, late in the process, by Secretary of State James F. Byrnes – controlled Truman’s access to information concerning the Manhattan Project.

In White House discussions, arguments for the use of the bomb were emphasized, while arguments against its use were discounted or suppressed.6 For example, it is now commonly accepted that General Groves made certain that Truman would not see a petition of July 1945 signed by 69 scientists involved in the Manhattan Project based in Chicago; that petition urged that “purely on moral considerations” the bomb should not be used against the Japanese without explicit warning.7

We have nothing in Truman’s own hand which refers even indirectly to the Manhattan Project or the atomic bomb until June 17, 1945, after a boat ride on the Potomac River with some friends. He writes in his diary: “I have to decide Japanese strategy – shall we invade Japan proper or shall we bomb and blockade?”8 It is possible that the word “bomb” refers to the atomic bomb, but it could also refer to the more conventional yet also devastating bombing which was already taking place.

6 In his massive and detailed study, The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb and the Architecture of an American Myth, Gar Alperovitz departs from two questions. First, to what degree was President Truman apprised by his staff of the probability that the Japanese would have surrendered “unconditionally” if they had known that they would be allowed to keep the emperor? Second, how well did President Truman’s staff help him to understand that Russia’s entry into the war would itself force the Japanese to surrender quickly? (pp. xiii-xiv)
8 Harry S. Truman, Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman, p. 47
What appears to have happened in the White House in the spring and summer of 1945 is that whenever moral issues concerning the atomic bomb were raised they were dropped from the discussion. Why this happened is itself a moral issue and central to my concerns. I suggest that narrativized ethics played a role.

In *Hiroshima in America*, Robert Jay Lifton and Greg Mitchell characterize the months before and after August 1945 as a time of “psychic numbing”. For instance, Secretary Stimson in his own diary referred to the bomb as “the gadget,” “the thing,” “the secret” or “the diabolical,” as if he were afraid to name it directly. A different kind of numbing occurred with President Truman. That is evident in his diary entries made during the Potsdam Conference, which took place between July 17th and August 2nd in a suburb of Berlin which had not been destroyed by the Allies. The day before the conference, Truman toured Berlin and saw the destruction caused by war. He wrote in his diary:

“I thought of Carthage, Baalbek, Jerusalem, Rome, Atlantis [sic], Peking, Babylon, Nineveh; Scipio, Rameses II, Titus, Herman, Sherman, Jenghis Khan, Alexander, Darious the Great. But Hitler only destroyed Stalingrad -- and Berlin. I hope for some sort of peace -- but I fear that machines are ahead of morals by some centuries and when morals catch up perhaps there’ll be no reason for any of it.”

Several points are of interest here. First, Truman may have been an autodidact, but he was a devoted student of history: he could name a number of cities -- east and west, classical and biblical -- destroyed by war. Second, he could name the perpetrators. Third, he identified Hitler as responsible for the destruction of his own city. Fourth, he expressed the fear that the instruments of war would outpace ethical considerations.

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9 Lifton and Mitchell, *Op. Cit.*, 119. In his excellent study on the myth and psychology of war entitled *A Terrible Love of War*, James Hillman calls this rhetorical strategy a kind of magical thinking which transmutes the potential and actual horror of war into something more acceptable to the mind: thus the language of body counts, scenarios, collateral damage, smart bombs, and so on (p. 3ff).

10 Truman, *Off the Record*, p. 52. There is a curious slip of the pen here, as Truman appeared to have associated the destruction of Atlantis with the destruction of Atlanta by General Sherman in the American Civil War.

11 In the final analysis, we cannot determine whether or not Truman intended his diaries to remain completely private forever. The question of Truman’s intentions is an interesting one but does not alter the kind of rhetorical analysis I am pursuing. Either he was justifying and explaining things to himself or he was speaking to “history.” In either case, narrativized ethics influenced both the substance and form of what he thought and wrote.

12 One of his favorite classical authors was Plutarch, whom he read frequently. As he wrote in the first volume of his memoirs, entitled *Year of Decisions* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955), “[as a young man] I pored over Plutarch’s *Lives* time and time again . . . . I read the standard histories of ancient Egypt, the Mesopotamian cultures, Greece and Rome, the exploits of Genghis Khan and the stories of oriental civilizations, the accounts of the developments of every modern country. . . . Reading history . . . was solid instruction and wise teaching” (p. 119). Truman continued to read Plutarch and to think about the lessons of history well into his presidency. See also Merle Miller, *Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman*, pp. 69-70.
All this is fairly clear. Yet most revealing is the stance that Truman took toward the events described and what he did not say. He removed himself from the calculus of war and placed the responsibility for destruction elsewhere. He even removed himself from the moral debate about the machines of war. He did this even though he was at the center of it all.

On July 18th, after being told of the successful testing of the atomic bomb, Truman confidently wrote in his diary: “the Japs will fold up . . . when Manhattan appears over their homeland.”\textsuperscript{13} The term “Japs” is characteristic of the mentality of the 1930s and 1940s. There is no record in Truman’s diaries of him referring to the Italians as “Wops” or to the Germans as “Krauts” or “Fritzes”. The stereotyping of the Japanese in this manner became part of the psychic numbing which made the decision to deploy the atomic bomb easier.

On July 25\textsuperscript{th} Truman made of the longest diary entry of this period of his presidency. It is worth quoting at some length:

\begin{quote}
I had a most important session with Lord Mountbatten and General Marshall before [meeting with Stalin and Churchill]. We have discovered the most terrible bomb in the history of the world. It may be the fire destruction prophesied in the Euphrates Valley Era, after Noah and his fabulous Ark.

This weapon is to be used against Japan between now and August 10th. I have told the Sec. of War, Mr. Stimson, to use it so that military objectives and soldiers and sailors are the target and not women and children. Even if the Japs are savages, ruthless, merciless and fanatic, we as the leader of the world for the common welfare cannot drop this terrible bomb on the old capital [Kyoto] or the new [Tokyo].

He [Mr. Stimson] and I are in accord. The target will be a purely military one and we will issue a warning statement asking the Japs to surrender and save lives. I’m sure they will not do that, but we will have given them the chance. It is certainly a good thing for the world that Hitler’s crowd or Stalin’s did not discover this atomic bomb. It seems to be the most terrible thing ever discovered, but it can be made the most useful.\textsuperscript{14}
\end{quote}

In this remarkable diary entry, Truman first placed Japan into a Judeo-Christian context by describing the bomb as somehow related to biblical prophecy which is then somehow also connected to Japan itself. In addition, Truman linked Japan to the sinful races around Noah after the Great Flood. Put another way: Truman has brought Japan within the moral orbit of the West in order to account for its destruction.

\textsuperscript{13} Truman, \textit{Off the Record}, p. 53.
\textsuperscript{14} See Truman, \textit{Off the Record}, pp. 55-56.
Second, he adopted the passive voice, saying that the bomb “is” to be used; this strategy distanced Truman from the decision itself; it also suggests that, psychologically, Truman was merely acquiescing to a decision which had been taken earlier. Third, the target is to be military only. This twice-repeated statement is either an outright lie or a self-protective delusion on Truman’s part, for he knew full well that a single atomic bomb could destroy an entire city and therefore that most of the casualties would be civilian. Fourth, Truman described the Japanese people, not just the military, as “savage, ruthless, merciless and fanatic,” a description which merged the civilian with the soldier and made the entire Japanese nation, including women and young children, into an army. Fifth, Truman placed himself and the Allies on the high moral ground as “the leader of the world for the common welfare” and, because of that, decided to “save” Kyoto and Tokyo. Sixth, Truman said that the Allies will first warn the Japanese of the bomb. In fact, however, Truman had already agreed with the Select Committee’s recommendation not to warn the Japanese but to drop the bomb as a surprise in order to “shock” them into surrender. The word “shock” comes up in several documents of this time period. Seventh, Truman described the United States as the only nation moral enough to possess this “most terrible thing ever discovered.” Eighth, Truman considered that this most terrible thing “can be made the most useful,” a point to which I will return later.

We know from several first-hand accounts that Truman’s reaction after the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima was one of “extreme excitement and pleasure,” with no immediate thought of innocent victims. After both bombs were dropped, Truman received letters and telegrams of all sorts, the majority congratulatory but some critical. He replied in blistering language to a telegram critical of his decision from the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

15 I find it ironical that Kyoto was originally the first city on the intended target list and later, on August 10th and 11th, as Truman became impatient for Japan to surrender, Tokyo went to the head of the list as the next target of the Atomic Bomb. Yet after the war ended, one of the ways that Truman defended his decision to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki was to say that he had spared Kyoto and Tokyo.
16 I have sometimes wondered if the “Shock and Awe” campaign in the first Iraq war were not a reference by some in the Bush administration, their hubris intact, to the Hiroshima bomb and its effects, in the expectation of a sudden capitulation and then the glorious reconstruction of a devastated Iraq. If so, then the Manhattan Project and Hiroshima became a narrative influential in the run-up to that war.
17 The words are from Gar Alperovitz, *Op.Cit.*, p. 513. A United Press reporter wrote that Truman “had never been happier” (p. 513).
Truman wrote: “Nobody is more disturbed over the use of Atomic bombs than I am but I was greatly disturbed over the unwarranted attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor and their murder of our prisoners of war. The only language they seem to understand is the one we have been using to bombard them. When you have to deal with a beast you have to treat him as a beast.”\(^{18}\) Vengeance and payback are motives. Moreover, he considered the atomic bomb to be fully justified because, after all, the Japanese were “beasts.” The attitude behind Truman’s words is of great significance.

**Narrativized Ethics II: Homer, Aeschylus, and Logic**

How is all this related to Homer and to Aeschylus, to excluded and dropped middles, and to the syllogism? Let us focus on a single passage from Book 9 (ll. 105-115) of the Odyssey, both in Greek and in Robert Fitzgerald’s English translation. Since Homer’s language is relevant to my analysis, his terminology requires comment:

\[\text{ἔνθεν δὲ προτέρω πλέομεν ἀκαχήμενοι Ἑτορ. (105)}\]
\[\text{Κυκλώπων δ’ ἐς γαῖαν ὑπερφιάλων ἀθεμίστων ἱκόμεθ’, οὐδὲ τρεῖς δεξάμεναι ἄθανάτοισιν οὔτε φυτεύουσιν χερσίν οὔτ’ ἀρόωσιν, ἀλλὰ τὰ γ’ ἀσπαρτα καὶ ἀνήροτα πάντα φύονται, πυρὸι καὶ κριθαὶ ἡμετ’ ἀμπελωὶ, αἱ τε φέρουσιν (110) οἶνον ἐριστάφυλα, καὶ φινὶ θεοὶ ἀμβρώμεθαι ἀπόχριει, τοῖσι δ’ οὔτ’ ἀγοραὶ βουληφόροι οὔτε θέμιστες, ἀλλ’ οἱ γ’ ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων ναίουσι κάρηνα ἐν σπέεσι γλαφυροῖσι, θεμιστεύει δὲ ἕκαστος παίδων ἠδ’ ἀλόχων, οὐδ’ ἀλλήλων ἀλέγουσιν. (115)}\]

In the next land we found were Kyklopes, giants, louts, without a law to bless them.
In ignorance leaving the fruitage of the earth in mystery to the immortal gods, they neither plow nor sow by hand, nor till the ground, though grain—wild wheat and barley—grow untended, and wine-grapes, in clusters, ripen in heaven’s rain.
Kyklopes have no muster and no meeting, no consultation or old tribal ways, but each one dwells in his own mountain cave dealing out rough justice to wife and child, indifferent to what the others do.

*Odyssey*, 9: 105-115

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One may ask why Odysseus is telling King Alkinoös at this very moment about the Cyclops, this monstrous race he has encountered. It is a familiar story. Having arrived at King Alkinoös’s kingdom, exhausted and near death, Odysseus has been revived by food and drink and by celebrations in his honor, though no one yet knows his name. After the celebrations, he hears a blind minstrel sing about the exploits of the great hero Odysseus. Overcome with emotion, he cries. Seeing his tears, King Alkinoös asks about them. Odysseus confesses that he is the person whom the minstrel has just praised. Then he begins to recount his adventures in such a way as to let King Alkinoös know that he, too, is civilized, and therefore worthy of the hospitality he has just received. This he accomplishes by telling the King of a race that is as different from the two of them as it is possible to be, a race that is non-civilized, barbarous, and even inhuman. His main narrative strategy depends on the logic of the excluded middle.

In western philosophy, the principle of the excluded middle is one of the logical principles at the foundation of precision in logic. A standard formulation of the excluded middle is to say “either A is B, or A is not B.” That is, every individual in the universe is a member either of the class “A” or of “not-A” (B). There is no middle; it is excluded. In Latin, this is known as the principle of tertium non datur, there is no third term. There are only two terms (“A” and “not-A”): such binaries are absolute and exclusive.

In the cited passage, the first important word in Odysseus’s binary conceptual universe is “Kyklopes” in the English or “Κυκλώπων” in the Greek which means Cyclops in modern English and refers to a race of beings characterized by a single round eye in the center of their foreheads and gigantic size. This appearance distinguishes them from every other race. Odysseus is here depending on certain traditions in Greek ethnography of both actual and fabulous races. Even today, the classification of peoples may be based in part on such characteristics as appearance, eating habits, and language. As far as we know, the Greeks originated this kind of thinking in the West, and in addition to being the origin of anthropology it is as well the origin of stereotyping as a mental process. Stereotyping generally depends on the exaggeration of a physical quality like skin color or noses, which results in the objectification of the person.19

This passage is built on a series of negations around the idea of the differences between civilized and non-civilized cultures. These “louts” are “without a law” to bless them. One of the terms for law in Greek is “θέμις.” Therefore these louts are “ἀθεμίστων” or “lawless.” “θέμιστες,” the plural form of “θέμις,” is a mostly untranslatable term which means “right custom” or “the proper procedure” or “the proper social order,” and it was considered to be one of the main gifts of the gods to humankind.

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19 For an excellent overview of the images of stereotyping, see Katérina Stenou, *Images de l’Autre: La différence: Du mythe au préjugé.*
As good as this English translation by Robert Fitzgerald is, it does not transmit to the reader how effectively the repetition of “θέμις” as a literary device builds toward a concluding condemnation of the Cyclops. Variants of the word are used three times in the passage: ἀθεμίστων (106), θέμιστες (112), θεμιστεύει (114) – as a genitive plural adjective in the negative, as a noun, and as a verb. To be “ἀθεμίστων” is to be unable to behave in society according to proper custom. To be non-civilized is to be ignorant of agriculture as well as the importance of assembly; it is to be indifferent to others; it is to live not in cities or communities but in isolated caves.

If non-civilized societies are characterized by these and other negatives (the neither nor structure, οὔτε . . . οὔτ’, is also used), then civilized societies are going to be the opposite. They are going to be lawful and law abiding; they will conduct themselves according to proper custom; they will know something of agriculture and viniculture; they will conduct their business in democratic meetings; they will live in communities and they will care about their citizens and their opinions. Upon hearing Odysseus speak in this manner, Alkinoös, being civilized, recognizes him as someone who is also civilized. Without actually saying so, Alkinoös accepts Odysseus’s characterization of the Cyclops, despite being the son of Poseidon, as irredeemably “other”.

It is a brilliantly successful strategy on the part of Odysseus. The complete otherness of the Cyclops will be considered as sufficient justification for aggression. Odysseus blinds Polyphêmos, plunging a burning stake into that single eye-socket so that, in Homer’s words, the eyeball burned and, as the blood flowed out of the socket, its roots crackled and hissed around the stake.

One sometimes forgets, because of the terrible beauty of Homer’s language and the heroic sweep of the narrative, just what the cultural values are in Homer’s epics, and what kind of behavior is being advocated as a survival tactic and in the name of civilization. There is no middle position in this episode. The middle is excluded.

President Truman is not Odysseus and the Japanese are not a Cyclopean people, but the attitudinal structure of the relationship is linguistically similar. Truman arrogates to himself the high ground of civilization, of right conduct, of moral authority, of justice, of reasonableness. The Japanese are stereotyped as “Japs,” they are savage, ruthless and fanatic, their conduct of the war is unwarranted and murderous, they are beasts. For Truman – as for Odysseus and Alkinoös – the middle has been excluded. Neither dialogue nor compromise is even considered. Surrender must be unconditional. The only alternative to unconditional surrender is total destruction.

20 There is enough blame to go around. Odysseus and his men have violated the guest-host relationship by entering the Cyclops’ cave uninvited, lighting a fire and helping themselves to some of the Cyclops’ cheese while the Cyclops is absent. Upon returning to his cave, the Cyclops also violates the guest-host relationship by killing and eating several of Odysseus’ men. Vengeance thus becomes an additional motive.
There is no third outcome. *Tertium non datur.* On August 7th, *The New York Times* published a front-page article announcing the bombing of Hiroshima. President Truman is quoted as saying that if the Japanese did not accept the American ultimatum of unconditional surrender, “they may expect a rain of ruin from the air the like of which has never been seen on this earth.” Biblical and apocalyptic language has been added to Greek categories of thought and of ethnographic distinctions.

Up to this point, my analysis still does not explain how Truman could have come to such a morally dark and difficult decision that he knew would kill perhaps 100,000 people in an instant. For that part of the story we turn to Aeschylus’s *Oresteia,* in particular to the end of that trilogy, *The Eumenides.*

At this climactic point a trial is underway. Orestes has been accused of the murder of his mother. Apollo is his defense attorney. Knowing that Orestes really did kill his mother, Apollo shifts the grounds of his defense in order to prove that the killing of one’s mother is not a serious crime and that therefore Orestes must be declared innocent. “The mother is no parent of that which is called her child, but only nurse of the newly-planted seed that grows. The parent is he who mounts” (ll. 658-660). This statement is so astonishing and on the surface so indefensible that Apollo knows that he must quickly win his argument or lose the trial. Dramatically, he states, “I will show you proof. . . . There she stands, the living witness, daughter of Olympian Zeus” (ll. 662-664). He points to the goddess Pallas Athene, who, along with the chorus, must decide Orestes’s guilt or innocence. She agrees with Apollo’s argument and, declaring that “there is no mother anywhere who gave me birth” (l. 736), casts the vote which results in the acquittal of Orestes.

Pallas Athene agrees to what she knows is a lie. She and the rest of the chorus know that Pallas Athene had a mother named Metis. When she was pregnant with Pallas Athene, Metis was swallowed by Zeus and kept in his stomach. Pallas Athene was then born through Zeus’s head rather than through the birth canal of her mother. In Apollo’s argument, the mother disappears, the middle term is dropped. Orestes, therefore, cannot have killed his mother because, in this argument, he had no mother.

Let us not dismiss this argument as ludicrous. Let us acknowledge, rather, that it has a strangely seductive logical power. That power may perhaps best be visualized through applying Leonard Euler’s circles for the distribution of terms to this story. Euler was an 18th-century Swiss mathematician.

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21 Since I am depending on plot and not on the use of language for my analysis here, I quote only from the English translation by Richard Lattimore, *Orestia, The Eumenides,* pp. 158-162, ll. 657-753.
Using Euler’s circles, we may say that if we take class A (or Zeus) and then class B (or Metis) with the element C (or Athene) within it, then the most succinct way of describing the position of C (Athene) if B (Metis) is made a class within A (Zeus) is to draw the circles in the following manner:

Therefore, C is within A; C is within class A:

It is no longer necessary to cite B, the middle element, in order to describe the position of C. Therefore, the middle is dropped and B (or Metis, Athene’s mother) “vanishes.” In this line of argument, as strange as it may seem, there can be no matricide. Athene supports Apollo’s argument further when she states that she is “always for the male with all [her] heart and strongly on [her] father’s side” (ll. 737-738).

Perhaps another reason why Apollo’s argument appears convincing is that, by analogy, it makes an appeal to syllogistic processes in which the middle also appears to be dropped. This is a classic form of the syllogism: If A, then B; and if B, then C; therefore, if A, then C. The middle term, B, is dropped in the concluding third movement of this process.

One should note, however, that even though the middle is dropped, this does not mean that it has actually ceased to exist. In fact, logicians could argue that it continues to exist because it is the carrier of the meaning, because it links A with C. But Apollo asks the jury to conclude that the middle has vanished in fact. And Athene accepts the story and the argument. Her decision is the result of narrativized ethics at work.
President’s Truman’s decision to obliterate Hiroshima in an instant – men, women, and children, civilians as well as soldiers – owes its justificatory logic to a distribution of terms resembling that of Euler’s circles. Truman’s thinking, like that of Aeschylus, may also be visualized with the aid of Euler’s circles.

Let us take the city of Hiroshima as class A:

![Diagram of class A]

Let us take the people of Hiroshima as class B, within the city itself:

![Diagram of class B]

Let us take, further, the Japanese military as class C, which is stationed among the people of Hiroshima. The most succinct way of describing the position of C or the Japanese military, if it is made a class within B or the people of Hiroshima, and the people of Hiroshima are made a class within A or the city itself, is to say that class C is within class A.

![Diagram of class C within class A]

Class B becomes superfluous as a logical class in order for the position of C to be described. Class B was dropped in Truman’s thinking and Hiroshima re-defined as a purely military target; in effect, he willed the non-combatant population of Hiroshima out of existence in a theoretical sense. The dropping of the middle at this stage of the process resembles what happened in White House meetings in spring and summer of 1945 when sustained discussions of the morality of the atomic bomb were also dropped.

Recall that Truman stated emphatically in his diary entry of July 25, 1945, that “women and children” are not to be the target of the atomic bomb. Yet, inevitably, they were the target, along with the military, because they occupied an actual space, despite Truman’s theoretical and abstract redefinitions of them. Reality will always trump theory and logic, but theory and logic, even twisted logic, may have an effect on reality. Narrativized ethics here becomes a kind of narrativized logic, subservient to ends which justify means.
Narrativized Ethics III: Consequences

The story that Truman told himself is either a gigantic lie or a gigantic self-deception. That he somehow felt this narrative to be a lie, despite relying on it at the time, is evidenced by the fact that in later years, while not admitting guilt for being responsible for the instant annihilation of some 200,000 people, most of them civilians, he attempted over and over to restore a moral component to his decision. Thus, he repeatedly drew attention not to the lives that were actually lost because of the atomic bomb but to all those other lives that might have been lost had the atomic bomb not been deployed. He said that he dropped the bomb in order to save American lives and in order to save those Japanese lives – all the women and children – that an invasion of Japan would have cost. In later years, the characterization of the Japanese people as beasts is dropped from his public and private ruminations. To me, that is a sign of a private expiation that is too horrible to be made conscious.\(^\text{22}\) The story protects the psyche.

President Truman was of course not the only important American to have relied on narrativized ethics for a justification of his actions and thoughts. As an interpretive method, narrativized ethics may be applied to several of the major figures involved in the Manhattan Project, from its generals to its scientists, even to its most famous journalist, William L. Laurence. The Greek and the biblical frames of reference were never very far from the thoughts of these men, as the following examples demonstrate.

Let us review the most famous version of the Aristotelian deductive syllogism. All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore Socrates is mortal. John Stuart Mill criticized deductive logic on the grounds that it could not lead to the discovery of new knowledge and that it merely could be used to confirm the truth of the major premise. For John Stuart Mill, in this case the major premise of “all men are mortal” already contains within it both the minor premise and the conclusion. J. Robert Oppenheimer, the scientific director of the Manhattan Project, recognized this truth about atomic bomb research when he admitted that the use of the bomb was implicit in its discovery and testing.\(^\text{23}\) He was not the only one.

\(^{22}\) One can sense regret, as well as perhaps suppressed guilt, in notes that Truman made for a speech delivered on December 15, 1945. The decision, he wrote, was difficult because it meant “the wholesale slaughter of human beings . . . blotting out women, children, and noncombatants” (Cited by Alperovitz, \textit{Op. Cit.}, pp. 566-567). This kind of language is nowhere to be found in the lead-up to Hiroshima and Nagasaki or in his immediate reactions afterwards.

The Interim Committee on the use of the bomb took that use for granted in its meeting of May 31, 1945, as did the Scientific Panel in its report of June 16, 1945. In his memoir, *Year of Decision*, Truman himself said: “I regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubt that it should be used” (p. 419). In other words, once the Manhattan Project was conceived, once the atomic bomb became a reality, Hiroshima was logically inevitable. Narrativized ethics became part of the justification of that inevitability.

Let us return now to a statement from the end of Truman’s diary entry of July 25th. There Truman muses that “this most terrible thing ever discovered . . . can be made the most useful.” I think of this comment as a Promethean moment, a justification found in Aeschylus’s drama, *Prometheus Bound*. As is well known, Prometheus stole fire from the gods and gave it to humankind, thus making all sorts of technological advances possible. As dangerous as fire may be, it is also potentially useful and beneficial. Whether or not he was actually aware that he was doing so, Truman was echoing a view common within the scientific community that atomic bomb research was itself a Promethean enterprise. It was daring and dangerous, even perhaps “forbidden,” for the scientists all knew that they were probing the deepest secrets of the universe itself in order to create a weapon of unimaginable destructive power.

William L. Laurence, science correspondent for the *New York Times*, was hired in secret by General Groves to follow the Manhattan Project from start to finish so that, at the appropriate time, he could tell its story to the American people. He wrote two influential books on the subject. His frame of reference for both books is Greek and biblical. In this first of these books, *Dawn over Zero: the Story of the Atomic Bomb*, published in 1946, he entitles its three parts as “Genesis,” “Atomland-on-Mars,” and “Armageddon.” “Genesis” narrates the first atomic test in the New Mexico desert on July 16, 1945. He reports his initial reaction: “One felt as though one were present at the moment of creation when God said: ‘Let there be light’” (p. 11). Another observer, Professor George Kistiakowsky of Harvard, thought that the scene was one of “doomsday” and he imagined that this is how “the last millisecond of the earth’s existence” would look (p. 11).

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Laurence later compares the search for the atomic bomb with the search for the legendary and impossible philosopher’s stone that transmutes elements into gold (p. 254), and he ends his book with a hymn to Prometheus, calling him “the first scientist” (p. 273), the great “liberator,” implying that his modern avatars have liberated the world from “bondage” (p. 273) and created the potential for “a new promised land of plenty” (p. 274). In a second book entitled Men and Atoms: The Discovery, the Uses and the Future of Atomic Energy, published in 1959, he entitles Part I (of five) “The Second Coming of Prometheus,” mingling in that single phrase narratives from Greek and biblical cultures.26

This rhetorical hubris exalting scientists and decision makers, using narrativized ethics, is in my view dangerous. Such a narrative divinizes the human intellect, divinizes human power, and exalts the United States above all other nations, arrogating to America the authority to determine the fate of other nations in an absolute manner. One wonders, finally, about the real meaning of J. Robert Oppenheimer’s reaction to that first atomic test of July 16, 1945. He said that as he saw the atomic flash, two lines from the Bhagavad Gita, which he had studied in the original Sanskrit, flashed through his mind: “I am become death, the shatterer of worlds.”27 Was he thinking of the bomb itself? Was he thinking of himself and his fellow scientists? Was he thinking of the human race in general? Or was as he, in essence, pointing directly at us? We are, after all, the stories that we tell ourselves, and we use those stories, consciously or not, to justify our thoughts and actions.

26 In this regard, let us note the title of a recent biography on the principal scientist on the Manhattan Project: American Prometheus: the Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer by Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin.

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Civilizational analysis, political discourse, and reception of Western modernity in post-Soviet Russia

Yulia Prozorova

Introduction

Russian history of the 20th century reveals abrupt and radical changes to the fundamental visions and trajectories of Russian society. The “post-Soviet” era unfolded a distinct perspective on modernity that attempted to combine the Western liberal democracy model with the legacy of Soviet Communism, along with some perpetuating traditional structures.

The Western influence on Russia after 1991 was remarkable. The “reencounter” with Western modernity, the “historical choice” to implement its cultural and political forms in Russia, and intense interactions between Russia and the West after the collapse of the USSR have been crucial driving forces for modernization and transformation processes in contemporary Russia. Russia as the inventor of an alternative modernity project that had been in a long conflict with the West made a critical step toward Western modernity seen as the only possible civilizational pathway. The early 1990s were transformational in Russia’s history when its society demonstrated an ultimate “openness” to the Western models. Russia initially borrowed Western cultural ideas and institutional forms, but they became more limited, regulated, or filtered out later.

This era was marked by new societal opportunities and heated debates about alternative social and political trajectories for post-Soviet society. Discussions of the new constitution and legal foundations for the Russian society indicated a conflict between neoliberal and neoconservative political programs, and between the parliamentary and the presidential republican projects of political architecture, in which intellectuals, law specialists and political agents took part.

The assumption that Western liberal democracy had become the universal model was proclaimed in the late 1980s. However, after almost three decades have passed, this belief has proven unrealistic. Modern societies, including post-Communist ones that acknowledged the adherence to the “Western idea,” demonstrate persistent differences in their cultural and institutional characteristics. Western-inspired projects gave rise to patterns and orientations that differ greatly from the original ideal. Diverse reactions, reflections, and evaluations of the Western-type liberal democracy, which emerge in different discourses, contribute to the articulation of Russia’s post-Soviet version of the modernity project.

1 This study was funded by the Russian government, project “Foundations and trends of the Russian civilizational dynamics in culture, politics, economy”, No. AAAA-A17-117030110143-6.
Official political discourse retains a special importance since the communicative practices of the political elites generate interpretations and meanings, which are able to become programmatic for the design and arrangement of the main societal domains. This paper considers civilizational analysis and associated multiple modernities theory as a promising framework for understanding of the post-Soviet Russians experience of modernity in Russia. It also provides a review of how contemporary Russian political discourse receives and interprets the Western modernity project.

**Theoretical background: civilizational analysis and multiple modernities theory**

After the Communist project failed, it was declared that Russia had “returned to civilization” and had integrated into the European “civilized community.” This was accomplished by having made the “historical choice” to adopt political liberalism, democracy, and the free market, which constitute the core of Western modernity. The following radical transformations have been interpreted by political elites and some academics as the next stage of modernization for the previous Soviet endeavor.

The “Post-Communist transition” and “modernization” experience are seen to be the principal trends and the most influential frameworks in the post-Soviet period. Teleological assumptions and the idea of the universality of the Western project of democratic market-based society regarded as the epitome of modernity and a “blueprint for the future,” constitute the core of “transitology.” Transition is regarded as a cultural and political convergence of post-communist societies with the West. This frame of reference calls for a singular developmental pathway towards modernity that post-Soviet Russia can follow only by implementing the Western ideas and institutional forms.

In that political discourse, the concept of modernization appeared to be a symbol of the long-term reform initiatives undertaken by the Russian government representing Russia’s adherence to the “community of civilized states.” In the discourse of the social sciences, modernization theory has become an umbrella approach that has covered a number of models explaining the peculiarities of the post-Soviet transformation.

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However, the proposed models of Russian modernization (e.g. the “convergence,” “catch-up modernization,” and “recurrent modernization”), as well as the transitology framework disregard the socio-cultural and historical legacies that have shaped the diversity of the modernization experience and its outcomes. The diversity and variety of modernity are undertheorized in those frameworks.

Critics of such a modernization approach proposed alternatives that claimed to be more sensitive to Russia’s cultural and institutionally different frameworks (institutional divergence, sociocultural modernization, world-system theory and the local civilizations theory). However, these frameworks provide deterministic and reductionist explanations and are unable to grasp the social transformations with their diverse and internally controversial cultural characteristics. They also neglect historical contingency, cultural autonomy and the creative potential of social imaginaries and cultural interpretations.

The renaissance of the civilizational perspective in sociology was inspired by a critical reaction to the prevalence of the teleological and universalistic Eurocentric conception of modernization. Convergence and transition models revealed their epistemological weakness given the indisputable diversity and heterogeneity of contemporary societies. Civilizations are viewed as long-term historical complexes constituted by a combination of cultural orientations and institutional patterns. Although civilizational analysis comprises different theoretical approaches, the common focus is on the cultural dimension – the variability of cultural visions and interpretations of the world, and on their potential in shaping institutional formations. These complexes entail a cultural and institutional diversity of “transitional” modernizations along with well-developed modern societies that call into question the idea of “the end of history” when all ideological and societal differences disappear.

7 Benjamin Nelson, Shmuel Eisenstadt, Johann Arnason, and Toby Huff articulated the most important ideas and frameworks for understanding of civilizational phenomena, although the research field remains heterogeneous.
The assumption of “historical contingency” set against the cultural domain seen as an autonomous symbolic reality, open to various competitive interpretations and imaginaries in such a way that emergent meanings and orientations have the capacity to transcend the existing social frameworks. The ideas of contingency, discontinuity, and creativity of action and social imagination, along with openness and indeterminacy of societal development oppose the evolutionistic and structuralist approaches as well as the historicity, determinism and teleologism of the widely accepted modernization theory. The cultural and the imaginary constitute an irrevocable dimension of the institutions. It is this potentially creative aspect of the institutions that facilitates the radical transformations in the history of societies.

One of the principle themes of civilizational analysis is the dynamic of “intercivilizational encounters.” B. Nelson, who coined the term, focused on the relations between different “structures of consciousness” comprising cultural world-views, ideas, logics and key images (of experiences, self, etc.) that direct human thinking, perception, agency and experience. The concept of intercivilizational encounters can be understood more broadly as a relationship between different civilizational complexes or “paradigmatic cultural patterns” and their respective elements. The expansion and the adoption of the Western modernity project by the recipient societies with different historical and civilizational backgrounds, produce a crucial modern form of intercivilizational encounters.

Such encounters “often result in decisive cultural borrowings, adaptations of alien ideas and creative syntheses emerging from challenges to inherited ways of thinking […] in new cultural creations which decisively modify the future civilizational landscape for one or more of the parties involved.”

Civilizational analysis assumes the multiplicity of civilizational complexes and traditions that account for the diversity of responses to Western innovations. Multiple modernities theory, introduced by Shmuel Eisenstadt, is a crucial contribution to the theoretical debate on the dynamics of contemporary societies, especially the post-Communist ones.

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It proclaims that “modernity and Westernization are not identical” and that “Western patterns of modernity are not the only "authentic" modernities”\(^{13}\). The modernity project (liberalism, democracy, capitalism, nation-state) that had originated in the West constitutes a crucial (albeit ambivalent) “basic reference point” for other societies across the globe; however, its diffusion entailed “the interaction of new orientations with older legacies” that gave rise to the diverse interpretations of its basic components.

Intercivilizational encounters presume a selective acquisition and possible mutation of originally borrowed patterns incorporated into a civilizational context with its local cultural traditions and institutional premises.

[...] in societies belonging to the other major Eurasian civilizational complexes, the modernizing transformations induced or at least accelerated by Western influences were at the same time conditioned by socio-cultural backgrounds that left enduring marks on the resultant patterns of modernity\(^{14}\).

As Arnason suggests, the encounter between the West and the rest should not be regarded as “the Westernization of the world,” or a triumph of civilization in the singular, but they should be understood as “the global projection of a problematic that remains open to diverse interpretations in the West and alternative ones in the non-Western arena”\(^{15}\).

The multiplicity of forms of modernity arises from the ambiguity of interpretations and responses to the constituent *problematiques* of modernity (self-determination, human autonomy and emancipation, rationality, reflexivity, progress, etc.)\(^{16}\) are open to rival interpretations, since modernity itself is poly-interpretative. The variety of competing versions of political, social and economic orders may derive from the different reactions to Western modernity, and its internal tensions between different conceptions of civilizational identity and imaginaries (e.g. Slavophile, Westernizers, Eurasian), etc.\(^{17}\)


\(^{17}\) For the historical examples, which demonstrate the plurality of responses to the Western project, see: Sudipta Kaviraj, "Modernity and Politics in India," *Daedalus* 129, no. 1 (2000): 137-62; Blokker, Post-Communist Modernization; Paul Blokker, “Confrontations with Modernity: Openness and Closure in the Other Europe,” *Eurozine Online*, 2010 http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2010-06-15-blokker-
The intercivilizational encounter framework allows for studying the post-Soviet version of modernity as a reinterpretation of the original Western institutional models and cultural ideas. In his study of diverse experiences of modernity in several post-communist Eastern European countries, Blokker\(^{18}\) acknowledges the importance of the communist legacy, which in various ways shapes transformations in these societies. However, he disregards the significance of the pre-Communist traditional structures, histories of long-term intercultural contacts, and the imperial background that have left their marks on the post-Communist experience. In the case of post-Soviet Russia, both the pre-revolutionary legacy and the Soviet Communist experience must be taken into account. Some of the features of the Russian civilizational complex define the context in which the post-Soviet reception of the Western modernity takes place. There are some crucial differences between Russian and Western civilizational complexes, among them religious, legal, and how power is used.

Donald Nielsen identified a set of differences between Russia and Western Europe which shaped the specificity of Russian civilizational structures. They include: the Byzantine path of inheritance and reception of classical and early Christian traditions; the interconnection and quasi-separation of church and state; religious sects and movements that “failed to sustain ‘liberal’ political ideas, rationalized and universalistic orientations”; and the patriarchal and communal orientations that differ from the notion of “associations” that predominate in the Western social structures and institutions\(^{19}\).

Medieval Russia was mostly unfamiliar with the antique classical legacy (the works of Plato, Aristotle, late Greek philosophy, Hellenic science, Roman law), and aware only to a limited extent of early Christian theology, all of which had an immense effect on the cultural orientation of Western Europe and carried marked civilizational consequences\(^{20}\).

\(^{18}\) Blokker, Post-Communist Modernization.


The profound formative influence of Byzantium on the Russian civilizational complex is widely accepted. The diffusion of Byzantine civilization (its law, religion, political and ideological forms, literature, and art) was welcomed by the Russians of the Middle Ages, however, their adoption was remarkably selective. Various elements of the Byzantine complex were accepted, rejected and transformed\textsuperscript{21}. Although Russian legal proceedings and codes of the 10\textsuperscript{th} -17\textsuperscript{th} centuries contain some norms of the Roman Law adopted through the translation of the Byzantium legal texts\textsuperscript{22}, Russian secular law showed few signs of direct Byzantine influence\textsuperscript{23}.

The systematic reception and incorporation of Roman law into the Russian legal code and practices happened only in 18\textsuperscript{th} -19\textsuperscript{th} centuries. The legal modernization and codification of the late imperial period in Russia tended to admit the European ideas of human rights and freedom, but at the same time the vision of the traditional monarchical and autocratic power structure remained mostly intact. “Legal dualism,” that is, the controversial coexistence of the rational law imposed by the state versus the traditional common law based on popular practices of justice and paternalism, is a characteristic feature of the Russian legal tradition\textsuperscript{24}. The legal system has little autonomy while the principle of “informal justice [that] is above any formal law,” is still conventionally accepted\textsuperscript{25}.

The impact of Byzantium and the Mongols on the evolution of distinct cultural and political patterns appear to be the most significant. According to Obolensky, Byzantine civilization was more efficiently assimilated in the Eastern European countries characterized by an evolving or already established centralized form of government. Another important observation is that the relationship between the development of monarchical institutions and the acceptance of Byzantine culture was often reciprocal – “not only did political centralization pave the way for Byzantinization; the reverse was equally true”\textsuperscript{26}.


\textsuperscript{23} Obolensky, The Relations Between Byzantium and Russia.


\textsuperscript{26} Obolensky, “The Relations Between Byzantium and Russia,” p.11.

https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/ccr/vol77/iss77/20
The Muscovite state formation and its power structure is undeniably the major domain where Byzantium and Mongol influences coalesce and where the Oriental tradition of political culture culminated. It is only possible to name briefly some of those peculiarities that shape the contour of the Russia state-society pattern: fusion of secular and sacral power; patrimonialism; centralization and concentration of power and resources of control; a tight connection between state formation and territorial control and expansion; and cultural distance between the rulers and the masses; and establishment of a “state-conditioned society”, an institutional framework which presupposes the systematic subordination of society to the imperatives of state formation, etc. (Arnason 1993).

Peter the Great fundamentally reformed the state in accordance with the Western model of the “well-ordered-society.” His epoch is marked by an articulated imperial project and a practice of transformation-from-above with deliberate assimilation of Western forms. The radical Westernization and modernization of Peter the Great contributed to the rationalization process, and to secularization, as well as scientific and technological development. Nevertheless, there exists a persistent internal contradiction underlying the incentives to impose the rule of law, with its associated codification, modernization and liberalization of the legal sphere. The centralized autocratic state system requires submission of the person to the state that maintains almost unlimited power. State domination continues to be the legitimate embodiment of all power. In this context, the emergence of a public sphere, legally autonomous entities and the development of human rights, along with individual and collective autonomy, have always been complicated by the traditionally strong patrimonial state that intruded, absorbed and controlled the society.

European modernity with its “the disembodiment of power” (in Claude Lefort’s terminology) has never happened in Russia. The ruler has always been a physical and symbolic incarnation of the state, society, and law. Historically, Russia has evolved as a patrimonial-bureaucratic state with a sacralized authority and power, organized around a single ruler/leader. One of the most important adoptions came from the late Byzantine era conception of Caesaro-papism, that is, a subordination of Church to the secular ruler as a cornerstone of Russian absolutism.
The Orthodox Christian worldview, which is characterized by a general otherworldly orientation found their reflection in the relevant “structures of consciousness,” and in visions of secular social orders. These frameworks were applied to government, to images of power, to the roles of authority and elites, and to the definition of economic ethics and rationality\textsuperscript{27}. In comparison to Protestantism in Western Europe, Russia’s ascetically oriented sects of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century did not become a driving force in the formation of “modern” structures, and exerted a very limited influence on the main aspects of life. The traditional structures continued to dominate, including the mystic-contemplative nature of Orthodox Christianity\textsuperscript{28}.

Russian particularism, the notion of “sobornost” (conciliarity), as well as the distinct social, cultural and political orientations of a more communal and patrimonial type, contributed less to social differentiation and rationalization in Russia, and in fact opposed “universalism” and social, cultural and political institutions of a more "associational" character “rooted in a series of historical transformations towards a more rationalized, differentiated, universalistic and individuated system” of the West\textsuperscript{29}.

In Russia, a service state system evolved that corresponds to the “liturgical state”\textsuperscript{30} described by Max Weber. This is a state whose needs are met by a contrived system of duties and the individual’s position in the social structure. The Russian state is also characterized by a unification of authority and property, sacralization of power, and the role of authority in distribution of wealth and in the implementation of radical reformation “from above.” According to Medushevsky, this system reached its apogee during the Stalinist era\textsuperscript{31}.

The Soviet experience in the creation of communist society and its modernization program demonstrates the continuity of certain traditional pre-revolutionary Russian models. The pre-revolutionary complex of the patrimonial rulership, caesaro-papist state and church continued in the Soviet period in “the new Communist ideological form of articulation of “religion,” state, and society.”\textsuperscript{32}


\textsuperscript{29} Ibidi, pp.499-501.


\textsuperscript{32} Nielsen, “Sects, Churches and Economic Transformations,” p.516.
The core of the Soviet model was a fusion of an imperial and revolutionary traditions\(^{33}\). The Soviet program of modernity was characterized by integration of ideological, political, and economic power represented by the party-state; “interconnected principles of organization”: party-state, command economy, and ideological orthodoxy; the conception of “socialism in one country”; the fantasy of a shortcut to affluence through total social mobilization; an ideology analogous to a secular religion. At the same time, the Soviet model attempted to embrace rationality, the ideas of progress, and mastery of nature\(^{34}\). It adopted a superficial universality and introduced a selective and repressive “socialist law.” This complex legacy, together with diverse cultural interpretations, evoke a reshaping of the assimilated Western models and suggest the character of the resultant modernity patterns in post-Soviet Russia.

Post-Soviet “re-encounter” with the West: political discourse on the Western project of liberal democracy

As mentioned before, the multiplicity of modernities resulted from the diversity of civilizational backgrounds; it is inspired by the societal reflexivity represented by various visions of societal development and evaluations of Western innovations that grow in different discourses and comprise the interpretative-discursive dimension of “intercivilizational encounters.” Discourses may reflect indigenous structures of consciousness, with ideas and images of the historical experience and collective identity that resonate with preconditions of the political and economic models of the Western project.

Although diverse responses emerged in different discourses outside of the political realm and agents of modernization come from various fields, the ideas and visions that were articulated by the political officials have had a profound impact on the policy-making process and the shape of post-Soviet Russia’s institutional landscape; indeed, more so than non-political elites. Compared to the various political and public actors who have limited access to the main communication arenas, state officials have acquired more communication resources to express and propagate their ideas, to control and dominate the discourse. In present-day Russia, the political arena tends to be more isolated, homogeneous and state-regulated. Critical reflections on Western democracy and liberalism are expressed through different genres of political communication. These include presidential addresses, interviews, political articles, official statements and documents, and the like.

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An important aspect of the debates on the direction of post-Soviet modernization and the question of the relevance of the Western project, is the broad civilizational discourse and the competing frameworks of the Russian civilizational identity, for which the Western conception is a crucial reference point. Such discourse was revitalized during perestroika, when a critical revision of the Soviet project of modernity and reconsideration of Western capitalism took place.

In the 1980s, the idea of a “common European home” and the concept of Russia’s civilizational identity as part of Western civilization, were articulated along with the novel political paradigm of “new thinking.” By the late 1980s, the possibility of implementing the Western capitalist model in Russia was introduced. On the eve of the USSR’s collapse and throughout the early post-Soviet years, the idea of the universality of the institutional forms and cultural orientations of Western modernity dominated. As it was proclaimed, and having acknowledged the necessity of modernization according to Western standards, Russia had “returned to civilization.” Even after the dissolution of the USSR, this concept and the scenario of Russia’s integration into the European “civilized community” retained its relevance.

Boris Yeltsin’s Addresses to the Federal Assembly of 1994-1999 reflect Russia’s aspiration to assimilate the Western-European civilizational variant and the necessity of introducing the “civilized” institutions and practices such as a market economy, rule of law, civil society, and private property. However, by the mid-1990s, this vision of Western modernity was supplemented with Russian particularism. In his Address of 1996, he noted that Russia is following the common developmental path of civilization, but in its own distinct way. Yeltsin argued that Russia is a unique country with its own interests and its own logic of development.

Yeltsin’s presidency ended with the Address called, “Russia at the Turn of the Epoch.” He concluded that the choice of the pathway toward a market economy made in 1991 “was and still is right” and “we do not have another path.” Vladimir Putin’s article, “Russia at the Turn of the Millennium” continues this narrative: Russia “has entered the highway by which the whole of humanity is travelling.” It has no alternative and characterizes the Soviet period as a wrong “dead-end route.”

35 Mikhail S. Gorbachev, Perestroika i novoe myshlenie dlya nashey strany i dlya vsego mira (Moskva: Politizdat, 1988).
That political discourse highlighted Russia’s strong cultural connection with Europe. Putin noted that Russia is a part of Western European culture, and Russians are Europeans. This position supports Russian borrowing of the “universal economic mechanisms and democracy” from the West.

Since the mid-2000’s, “modernization” has become one of the key topics of the government’s economic and political programs integrated into the universalist civilizational discourse. This modernization is based on democratic values that themselves will allow the country to proceed to the next stage of civilization.

Since the mid-1990s, radical Westernism has competed against exceptionalism and nationalist trends in the discourse identifying Russia as a distinct civilization. Although Yeltsin claimed Russia to be “an integral part of the civilized world,” he also stressed that Russia “cleaves to the traditional values.” The idea of a Russian civilizational uniqueness continued to grow in the late 2000’s, along with the conception of a multipolar global political architecture.

“The multiple forms of the contemporary world reflect its more fundamental characteristic–cultural and civilizational diversity.” It was argued that global competition acquired a civilizational dimension. Russia’s mission lies in its “contribution to the cultural and civilizational diversity of the contemporary world and to the development of an intercivilizational partnership and dialogue.” The ultimate point of this argument is that Russia is a unique “state-civilization.”

This conception of Russia’s distinct civilizational status among other existing historical civilizational complexes justifies its “special path” to modernity. This civilizational framework incorporates ideas that subsequently entailed original interpretations of democracy and the market economy.

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Putin began his presidency with the claim that Russia needed to search for its own way of renewal, not to copy the experience of others or transfer “abstract models and schemes to the Russian soil.” It should also combine “the universal principles of market economy and democracy with Russia’s reality.”

There is not and could not be a political choice for Russia other than democracy. At the same time, I would like to say and even stress: we share the universal democratic principles that are accepted across the world. However, the Russian democracy is the rule of the Russian people in particular, with its own traditions of self-government, and not at all an implementation of the standards that were imposed upon us from the outside.

“Adaptation” marked the beginning of a decisive turn towards a revisionism and critique of the Western liberal democracy. The revisionist trend in political discourse summed up several fundamental “values” rooted in Russian traditions: the concept of the “Russian idea” (Rossiyskaya ideya). It proclaimed that Russian democracy should rest upon traditional orientations.

“Traditional consolidating values” highlighted in the late 1990s have turned out to be key for the political discourse and institutional development of the following years. It took the form of accenting

- Patriotism,
- “Greatness of authority” (derzhavnost),
- Social solidarity with an “inclination to collective forms of life that dominate over individualism,” along with
- “Statism” (gosudarstvennichestvo), a deep-rooted paternalistic disposition.

The idea of a “strong state” is crucial for the post-Soviet political discourse. The traditionally important role of the state and state institutions was proclaimed as Russia’s major difference from the developed Western countries, such as Great Britain and the US.

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44 Putin, “Rossiya na rubezhe tysiacheletiy”.
46 Putin, “Rossiya na rubezhe tysiacheletiy”.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
The state, its institutions and structures have always played an exceptionally important role in the life of the country and its people. A strong state is not an anomaly for a Russian man, not something to be fought, but, on the opposite, a source and a guarantee of order, an origin and the major driving force for any changes. Society desires a reinstatement of the regulatory and leading power of the State to the extent, which would be required, considering the traditions and the current condition of our country.

The “strong state” is seen as a prerequisite for Russia’s democracy since “many Russian democratic institutions are created from above.” “Civil society requires a strong state as an instrument of development and maintenance of order, for defense and strengthening of democratic institutes.”

Despite public activism, wide social support and contribution to democratic changes in late-1980s and early 1990s, the introduction of democratic institutions and practices or reformation of the state on democratic grounds after the collapse of the Soviet Union was to a greater degree a state-supervised policy. The articulated vision of the state and its central role in the democratic reformation of post-Soviet Russia suggests the continuity of the transformation initiated from above, much as it was in pre-revolutionary imperial Russia and the Soviet “revolution from above” and Gorbachev’s reformist project.

These ideas articulated and elaborated in political discourse laid the foundation for alternative interpretations of the original Western models. Disagreements with Western democracy, reconsideration of the relevance of the Western-type democracy to Russian society, and a critique of the West for its hegemony and monopolization of the democratic model (dissemination and intrusion of a specific form of democracy), became more pronounced after the mid-2000s.

The conception of a “sovereign democracy” was introduced that suggested an independent character for Russian democracy and that negated the relevance of other democratic models. The new ideological framework became the climax of the political discourse on the unique and national character of Russian democracy. The concept of “sovereign democracy” was invented to propagate the Russian version of a “political language” or “philosophy” that competes with other “languages” and “discourses” (predominantly the Western ones) and communicates Russian-born ideas and interpretations.

49 Ibid.
This conception emanates from the notion that the foundation of the “sovereign democracy” lies in the “cultural matrix” defining political practices: “striving toward political wholeness through the centralization of power functions,” “idealization of the goals of political struggle,” and “personification of political institutions.” In the present context, Russia’s modern political arrangement focuses on patrimonialism embedded in a strong centralized state with personified authority. Power and authority, embodied by President Putin, is again recognized as the source, the producer, and the guarantee of the modern reforms.

The personification of political institutions is obvious. People say that in our country personality displaces institutions. It seems to me that in our political culture the individual personality is an institution—by no means the sole institution but a very important one. The holistic outlook is emotional. It demands the literal embodiment of images. Doctrines and programs do, of course, matter. But they find expression, above all, through the image of a charismatic personality, and only then with the aid of words and syllogisms.

A special place in the discourse is devoted to the formula “if there is Putin – there is Russia, if there is no Putin – there is no Russia.” In this statement, the President is recognized as a condition for the Russia’s very existence in the current historical epoch, and also as an embodiment of power and the nation. This contradicts the principle of the “disembodiment” of power, law, and knowledge as a fundamental orientation of Western democracy.

The fundamental principles of the Putin state — the primacy of the state, the consolidation, centralization and monopolization of power through the personification of authority in the figure of the President as the embodiment of Russia, and as a condition for the existence of the state — imply a fusion of the spheres of politics, law, economy and culture. All this stands in opposition to the autonomy and independent functions found in democratic societies.

Personified centralized authority concentrates resources and monopolizes the functions governing these realms. It also awards itself the right to know and understand the needs and paths of development of each sector, oftentimes ignoring public opinion, while co-opting institutions of civil discussion and participation.

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52 Surkov, Russian Political Culture, p.12.
53 Ibid, p.14
54 As formulated by V.Volodin, the deputy head of the Administration of the President of the Russian Federation, at the Valdai International Discussion Club (October 22 2014, Sochi, Russia).
Apart from this, the centralized structure of political life is in contention with the pluralist dispositions of Western modernity, its ideals of openness and accessibility of the political arena, distributed decentralized power and blurring of borders between the center and the periphery. Political officials still pay lip service to the Western democratic ideals of a civil and open society, the primacy of law, respect and support for human rights, although they support the concept of “the special path” and the “Russian world.” Conservative and traditionalist values emphasized in Putin’s last presidential term, along with anti-Western rhetoric and the critique of Western liberalism, stress the distinction between “we” and “the Western Other.” Conservatism, traditionalism, and the increased intolerance of “multiple forms of life” reveal a tension between traditional and modern orientations. Interactions with the West assume a more revisionist shape.

Nationalistic and patriotic discourses in Russia respond to the lack of social solidarity and a search for a national idea that integrates and unites numerous regions with diverse cultural, religious, and historical backgrounds and different ways of interacting with the central authority. Apology for the Soviet period and its imperial imaginary and continuing nostalgia for that very period remain key themes, along with patriotism and Russian historical and cultural greatness.

According to Blokker, “the dual return of nationalism and religion” in some European post-Communist societies where it had gained wide social support is a “form of critique and response to the predominant narratives of liberalism and Europeanism, bemoaning the lack of local autonomy, the fragmentation of societies, and the undermining of traditions and social cohesion.” Two types of responses compensate for the state of uncertainty and lack of identity accompanying the post-Communist transformations: reliance on the universality of Europeanness and liberal democracy, or invocation of local traditions and identities. In reality “this dual understanding of modernity is strongly intertwined” as “a duality of openness and closure.” The case of Russian post-Communist experience of modernity clearly approves of this ambivalent and contradictory orientation.

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58 Ibid.
Conclusion

The modernization that took place in Russia in the post-Soviet period cannot be considered in the normative perspective of a replication of the Western model of liberal democracy. The experience of other post-Soviet and post-Communist countries demonstrates a variety of responses to the Western modernity project. The post-Soviet transformations should be regarded as a version of modernity originating and unfolding in response to the post-Communist “re-encounter” with the Western democratic project. It entailed complex interactions between traditional and modernizing forces, new understanding and creative interpretation of modernity inspired and derived from certain aspects of enduring civilizational forms, traditional structures, and historical legacies.

The Western project of modernity was a factor in Russia’s turn toward liberal democracy and market economy, along with its themes of individualization, autonomy, emancipation, and pluralism. In 1994, Yeltsin defined Russia as a “democratic, federal, constitutional, social and secular state.” Political discourse of the early 1990s was characterized by a positive perception of Western ideas and models as constituents of a reliable universal project of a modernization that might be able to open and emancipate Russia from a totalitarian past. This initiative was supported by a civilizational discourse stressing a “return to civilization”. However, since the end of 1990s, the Western program has been criticized. It was challenged by the concept of Russia’s “special path,” the “Russian idea” (Rossiyskaya idea), “Russian world” (Russkiy mir), Russian “state-civilization”, and a messianic framework.

The political discourse on Western modernity strongly corresponds with the discourse on Russia’s civilizational identity (European, “unique civilization,” Eurasian, “state-civilization.”) It revives traditional orientations and representations (“collective forms of life”, statism, paternalistic attitudes, the “strong state,” transformation from above, and imperial imagery.) They provide contextual interpretations of some basic components of the Western project (e.g., the conception of “sovereign democracy”) that support and legitimize a reshaping of the Western models. At the same time, the exceptionalist political conceptions are dissonant with the universalistic orientation of Western modernity.

http://www.intelros.ru/strategy/gos_rf/psl_prezident_rf_old/58-
poslanija_prezidenta_rosii_borisa_elcina_federalnomu_sobraniju_rf_1994_god.html
The imperial legacy and the experience of Soviet modernity have intervened to confront the Western program with the local Russian traditions of political culture and political participation. The repercussion of imperial imaginary is noticeable in the cultural-political frameworks of Eurasianism and Russkiy mir (Russian world), apology and nostalgic images of the USSR as a superpower, and in the political messianism designed to oppose the Western hegemony.

Official discourse presents the West in terms of messianism, universalism, absolutism and imperialism and defines Russian/Eurasian/Orthodox civilization in opposition to these aggressive tendencies\textsuperscript{60}. The opposition of the “Russian world” to the West and the idea of an external threat to Russian sovereignty, traditional values and uniqueness, are apparent in the new ideological project and discourse that emerged in recent years. However, on the historical “fork in the road,” signified by “Russia has chosen democracy”\textsuperscript{61} and self-isolationism is “the way we will never follow”\textsuperscript{62}. Democratic values are understood to be universal, although the universality of the Western framework for the construction of a democratic society and its relevance for contemporary Russia are now contested.

Retraditionalization and restoration of the symbolic and ideological repertoire from the recent non-democratic past are on the march with the introduction of a series of legal, political, and social reforms that strengthened state capacity, promoted centralization, and consolidation of power and constrained the public sphere and autonomy. The modern Russian political system model has evolved into a super-presidential republic, which is characterized by the lack of any considerable separation of powers, as the president is vested with near-absolute executive and legislative powers. Such a system resembles the preceding historical forms of absolutism and constitutional monarchy and restores historical continuity of the legal tradition\textsuperscript{63}. This regime can be defined as “authoritarian democracy”. The definition expresses “an opinion made up of a unique combination of democracy and authoritarianism, whose contradictory relations are dialectically reproduced at a new convolution, each time creating a similar synthesis”, and “there can emerge and exist various forms of restricted democracy and authoritarianism.”\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{60} Kerstin, Rebecca Bouveng, \textit{The Role of Messianism in Contemporary Russian Identity and Statecraft}. Durham theses, (Durham University, 2010.) E-Theses Online: http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/438/


\textsuperscript{63} Medushevsky, \textit{Rossiyskaya pravovaya tradicia}, p.112; Medushevsky, \textit{Russian Constitutionalism}, pp. 226-229.

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid, p. 230.
The idea of a strong state is characteristic of some modern democratic regimes, although “high-capacity states” always run the risk of de-democratization\textsuperscript{65}. The civilizational dimension of this problem is fundamental, although “fragility and instability are inherent in the very constitution of modern constitutional-democratic regimes”\textsuperscript{66}.

The revival of the meanings and ideas of the traditional political culture is a twofold issue. It is instrumental in the sense that it provides cultural infrastructure that is able to legitimize the restauration of the patrimonial-authoritarian configuration behind a democratic façade. However, in Russia, it is also a reflection and an effect of a broader cultural context of meanings and imaginaries integrated into the long-term civilizational pattern of culture and power.

Although one may conclude that Russia cannot escape her non-democratic historical path, the post-Communist era is notable for a renewed and expanded horizon of meanings enriched by the democratic imaginary. Along with creative interpretations of traditions, this intensifies the tension and competition between different perspectives and social imaginaries that may inform and produce new societal forms and projects.

\textsuperscript{65} Charles Tilly,\textit{ Democracy} (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

The Challenge to Religious Tolerance: 
Fundamentalists’ Resistance to a Non-Muslim Leader in Indonesia

Hisanori Kato

Introduction

The largest mosque in Southeast Asia, called Istiqlal, stands across the street from a Catholic cathedral in the center of the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. These two major religious buildings in Indonesia stand in a rather peaceful setting. In addition, Candi Borobudur, which is located in Central Java, is the largest and oldest single Buddhist monument in the world, with more than a 1,200-year-long history. Despite the fact that Indonesia is the most populous Muslim nation in the world, Indonesia has boasted of its religious tolerance for centuries.

Indonesia’s multi-religious character has necessitated mutual respect and harmonious co-existence among religions throughout its recorded history. Indonesia’s national motto, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, which means unity in diversity, constitutes an ideological pillar of the country. Not only do cultural heritages express mutual tolerance, but also the political arrangement of the country has been pledged to religious tolerance since the establishment of the Republic of Indonesia.

In fact, at the end of World War II, the preparatory committee for Indonesia’s independence drafted a constitution that promised the implementation of Sharia law for Muslims. However, the sentence that stated this constitutional obligation was deleted when the constitution was officially promulgated. Moreover, the national policy to respect all religions has been installed as Pancasila in the constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. This political disposition clearly shows Indonesia’s commitment to the creation of a harmonious society, in which the majority religion, Islam, and other minority religions can coexist peacefully.

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1 According to the official statistics, the proportion of the followers of the six major religions in Indonesia is as follows: Islam 87.18; Protestant 6.96; Catholic 2.91; Hindu 1.69; Buddhism 0.72; Confucianism 0.05 and others. See, the official website of National Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik) at: http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?search-tabel=Penduduk+Menurut+Kelompok+Umur+dan+Agama&tid=320&search-wilayah=Indonesia&wid=0000000000&lang=id
2 This state motto was mentioned in the poetry of Tantular in the time of the Majapahit Kingdom (1293-1527). The original meaning is “they are different, but they are same”.
4 Pancasila includes five major principles: Belief in God; National Unity; Humanitarianism; People’s Sovereignty; Social Justice and Prosperity. The first principle “Belief in God” refers not only to Allah but also to God of any religion.
Nonetheless, it is also true that religious tolerance in Indonesia has been disturbed from time to time in history, such as the nationwide 1998 riots at the time of the fall of the Suharto regime.\textsuperscript{5} We witness another example that challenges religious tolerance in Indonesia in 2017: a politician who is a non-Muslim Christian (Protestant) and of Chinese descent was running for the governorship in contest with Muslim candidates. This Chinese-Christian politician, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, or popularly known as Ahok, has been criticized and accused of blasphemy for his comments on \textit{al-Quran} during his campaign in September 2016. As a result, he was defeated in the gubernatorial election in April 2017 and was sentenced for two years imprisonment for blasphemy after the election.\textsuperscript{6}

It is important to question whether a long-standing tradition of religious tolerance in Indonesia has been overturned by this political event. Equally important is that we explore the influence of religion in relation to the socio-political behavior of people. In the following parts of this paper, we attempt to find answers to these questions and to comprehend the meaning of this political event thoroughly.

\textbf{The Background of Ahok}

Ahok rose in political prominence when he paired with Joko Widodo, known as Jokowi, then the mayor of Surakarta, for vice-governorship of Jakarta in 2012, although his political career started in 2005, when he was elected to serve as the regent of east Belitung.\textsuperscript{7} He was also a member of parliament between 2009 and 2012 until he joined the gubernatorial race with Jokowi. This newly emerging pair from outside of Jakarta with business backgrounds gained a great amount of popularity with the masses and were successfully elected governor and vice-governor, respectively, of Special Designated Capital Jakarta (or DKI Jakarta) in 2012.

The political path of Jokowi, however, continued to the highest position of the republic, when he was elected the president of Indonesia in 2014. Consequently, the vice-governor, Ahok, was elevated to become governor of DKI Jakarta. It was his first gubernatorial election as a governor in 2017, when he paired with a former mayor of the east Javanese town of Blitar, Djarot Saiful Hidayat, who became a deputy in Ahok’s administration in 2014.

\textsuperscript{5} During that time, ethnically Chinese Indonesian became a target, and a vast amount of Chinese descendants were victimised by murder, plunder and rape.
\textsuperscript{6} Ahok is preparing to appeal to the higher court in May 2017 (the time at which this paper is being written).
\textsuperscript{7} Belitung is an island near Sumatra and belongs to the province of the Bangka-Belitung Islands.
During his governorship, Ahok confronted DKI Jakarta parliament members accused of corruption. He made the decision to make the process more transparent by broadcasting the meetings live via YouTube. With these novel means regarding governing DKI Jakarta, Ahok, in spite of his religious and ethnic background, has become one of the rising stars in Indonesian politics. On the other hand, Ahok has often been criticized for his outspokenness and straightforwardness, as it is culturally thought to be more acceptable and polite if one is modest and indirect in Indonesia. However, Ahok believes it is far more important to be professional than to follow traditional Indonesian manners.8

Controversial Comment and the Reaction from Muslims

It was widely expected that Ahok would be the first non-Muslim and non-\textit{pribumi}9 governor of Jakarta until the end of September 2016, as his popularity was high. However, the tide started to drastically turn for him after he delivered a speech on Pulau Seribu, an island near Jakarta, during his campaign on 27 September 2016. He explained the social welfare programs that his government intended to implement and encouraged the constituency of the island to vote for him. However, during his speech, he mentioned one of the verses of \textit{al-Quran} related to the relationship between Muslims and non-believers such as Christians and Jews. The following is the script of his comment:

Bapak/Ibu (ladies and gentlemen) may not vote for me, because (you have been) lied to by (someone using) Surah \textit{al-Maidah} verse 51 etc. … So if you cannot vote for me because you are afraid of being condemned to hell you do not need to feel uneasy as you are being fooled. It is all right.10

Verse 51 of \textit{al-Maidah} reads as follows: “Believers, take neither the Jews nor the Christians for your friends. They are friends with one another. Whoever of you seeks their friendship shall become one of their number. God does not guide the wrongdoers.”11 This verse is often cited as a theological ground to reject a non-Muslim leader in a Muslim-dominated community.

After the edited footage of his speech was uploaded on YouTube, severe condemnations and criticisms of Ahok became ubiquitous, in which Ahok was accused of “insulting” Islam. Ahok swiftly made a public apology for his comment and attempted to subdue the antagonistic sentiments targeted at him. His own words read as follows:

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8 The author of this paper was told this by Ahok during a meeting with a group of Presidential Friends of Indonesia on 13 August 2014.
9 \textit{Pribumi} means native, and it usually refers to an ethnically Indonesian Muslim.
10 Jakarta Post, 10 October 2016. The original script of his speech in Indonesian can be found on the BBC website at: http://www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-37996601 (last accessed 5th June 2017)
11 \textit{Al-Quran} 5-51
I apologize to Muslims or other people who feel offended. I never intended to insult Islam or al-Quran. I am not an Islam specialist…. If you watch it (the video), you know that I have no intention to insult Islam. …. Even people (Muslims) who were there laughed over my comment.\footnote{Republika, 10 October 2016; The Jakarta Post, 10 October 2016. Some Indonesian parts have been translated by the author of this paper.}

Despite Ahok’s effort to minimize the political damage caused by this incident, the situation became threatening to him as the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI), the highest Islamic authority in Indonesia, issued a statement to condemn him. The MUI concluded that Ahok was subject to punishment, as he insulted both Islam and the ulama (Muslim scholars) in the statement. In the same document, the MUI also encouraged judicial authorities to take a swift legal action against Ahok.\footnote{The original text is available at: http://www.berita.islamedia.id/2017/02/inilah-tanggapan-lengkap-mui-atas-tuduhan-pengacara-ahok-terhadap-ketua-MUI.html}

It seems that MUI’s statement played an important role in bringing about an emotional reaction from umat Islam (Islamic community) in Indonesia in the face of Ahok’s comment. The first mass rally condemning Ahok took place in Jakarta on 14 October 2016, and it is said that around 30,000 to 50,000 people joined the demonstration.\footnote{Jakarta Post, 3 November 2016.} A greater number of people joined another Islamic mass movement in Jakarta on 4 November 2016. About 100,000 people gathered at the Istiqlal Mosque for their Friday prayer and marched to the State Palace nearby. Another mass rally was held on 2 December with about 500,000 participants. These demonstrations were organised by one of the radical Islamic groups called Front Pembela Islam, better known as FPI.

The concern of President Jokowi’s government was that a possible religiously-driven riot would cause a serious social division in Indonesia. However, the government managed to prevent the participants from becoming violent, and thereby avoided physical destruction of Jakarta. The police and the military deployed 20,000 and 5,000 personnel respectively in order to maintain security in the areas of demonstration. In addition to the tight security measures, a sermon given by Masaruddin Umar, the imam of Istiqlal Mosque, seems to have contributed to a rather peaceful movement, for he emphasized the importance of Muslims not to be “excessive”, as it is stated in al-Quran.\footnote{Jakarta Post, 4 November 2016.}
It is possible to understand the demonstrations as opportunities for Muslims to express their indignation and hatred towards a non-Muslim leader, Ahok. Yet, it is also true that it was an occasion for the whole umat Islam in Indonesia to reaffirm their solidarity among Muslims, although we cannot deny the fact that there was sentiment against Ahok during the rally. Ahmad Rais, an executive member of the Ma’arif Institute in Jakarta stated that “many people joined the Friday prayer and rally on 4 November because they merely like to feel the religious atmosphere.” Andi Makmur Makka, a noted writer and journalist, also expressed his view that the motivation of the participants of the mass rally on 4 November was not necessarily a merely “anti-Ahok” sentiment, but rather they were willing to be a part of a “trendy” religious movement without knowing the substance of the issue.

Having said this, the political damage that Ahok incurred was by no means trivial. The popularity of Ahok dropped swiftly, and one of the surveys conducted after Ahok’s comment showed that any of the three pairs competing for the governorship of DKI Jakarta, Ahok-Djarot, Anies-Sandiaga, and Agus-Silviana, could win the election.

Umat Divided over the Ahok Issue

The hailstorm of criticism and the demand for punishment against Ahok were spontaneously promoted by quite a few fundamentalist groups apart from the FPI. One of these groups was Jamaah Anshor usy Syariah (JAS). They expressed their distress and demanded a public apology from Ahok in a statement issued on 7 October 2016. H. A. Fallah, the leader of the Jakarta Charter of JAS, explained that the punishment against Ahok should be twofold: religious and secular. Fallah said that although the apology made by Ahok can be accepted, there remains the possibility of punishment based on the national secular legal system. Fallah also admits that, should Ahok be elected governor, there would be no choice for him but to accept him, as Shari'a has not been implemented in Indonesia.

Abdul Rohim, another prominent leader of JAS, expressed his distress that president Jokowi is close to communist China. The implication of this statement is that the team of Jokowi and the Chinese-Indonesian Ahok would weaken the position of Islam in the country. It should be noted that the anti-communist campaign at the end of 2016 became more prevalent, with quite a few banners posted in various parts of the country. The political nature of the Ahok issue will be discussed in the later part of this paper.

16 Interview with the author in Kalibata, 27 December 2016.
17 Interview with the author in Kebon Juruk, 25 December 2016.
18 According to the survey conducted by the Populi Centre, the approval rate of Ahok-Djarot is 36.7%, while Anies-Sandi’s is 28.5% and Agus-Sylviana’s is 25%. Jakarta Post, 30 January 2017.
19 Interview with the author in Depok, 25 December 2015.
20 Interview with the author in Depok, 25 December 2015.
21 Interview with the author in Solo, 3 January 2016.
Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), which aims to establish a “legitimate caliphate,” also severely rejected Ahok. Ismail Yusanto, one of the highest executives in HTI, explained that HTI never accepted non-Muslims as leaders and never tolerated anyone who insults al-Quran. Unlike some political parties such as Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS), HTI has never supported non-Muslim candidates for the provincial elections. Yusanto genuinely believes that the anti-Ahok mass rallies are the expression of Muslim determination to defend Islam. At the same time, Yusanto understands there might be political interest behind the anti-Ahok movement; however, he believes it is still more important to follow the Islamic duty of condemning blasphemy.

In contrast to those who reject Ahok, there are still some who support and legitimize his political position. Abdurrahman Wahid, also known as Gus Dur (who was the fourth president of Indonesia and a respected Muslim scholar), once conveyed his view on non-Muslim governorship in 2007. Gus Dur clearly stated that one could not connect religion and secular governorship; thus, there was no obstacle for Muslims to elect a non-Muslim as a governor. He also added that this does not imply Muslims should convert to Christianity when choosing a Christian governor. Gus Dur’s view was echoed by the fifth and first woman president of Indonesia, Megawati Sukarnoputri, who stated that “we’re not voting for a religious leader. We will vote for an administrative leader.”

Arif Safri presented a theological argument, saying that Muslims are allowed to have their own political decisions. He cited one of the verses of al-Quran to substantiate his argument, that is, “If Allah so willed, He could make you all one People: but he leaves straying whom He pleases, and He guides whom He pleases.” Arif also sees a semantic problem in the Ahok issue regarding the content of al-Maidah-51. According to Arif, who is an Arabic expert, the word “awlya” (translated as “friends” in the English version of al-Quran) means “close friends,” not “leader,” although some conservative Muslims understand awlya as leader as well. Thus, Arif believes that the anti-Ahok movement, which is attempting to delegitimize Ahok as a governor of DKI Jakarta, has lost ground.

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22 Interview with the author in Kalibata, 28 December 2016.
23 For example, PKS supported a non-Muslim candidate for the governor of the province of Papua Barat in February 2017.
24 Abdurrahman Wahid was a leader of Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia; he died in 2009.
25 Gus Dur delivered this speech, joining Ahok’s campaign when Ahok ran for the governor of Bangka-Belitung province in 2007. Full footage of his speech can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9sSAksVZFk
26 Jakarta Post, 15 March 2015.
27 al-Quran: 16-93
These less-conventional interpretations of theology presented by Arif are the reflection of his ideas that one should have a contextual understanding of Islam rather than a literal understanding. This stance is echoed by other scholars who believe that contemporary social conditions should be considered in relation to the interpretation of Islam. For example, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na’im stated that “what is suggested is that the Qur’an and Sunna have been the source of Shari’a as the Islamic response to the concrete realities of the past and must be the source of modern Shari’a as the Islamic response to the concrete realities of today.”

R. Ghannouchi also believes that it is possible for Muslims to have a broader perspective and that they could support a non-Islamic government prior to establishing their religious government. Both Gus Dur and Arif seem willing to bring about a more inclusive society with Indonesia’s socio-cultural reality in mind.

Ahmad Syafii Ma’arif, a respected Muslim scholar and former leader of the nation’s second largest Islamic organisation, Muhammadiyah, also expressed his support for Ahok and criticised the statement issued by MUI. He expounded that Ahok had no intention to insult al-Quran or ulama when making his speech on Pulau Seribu in September 2016. In his own words;

Ahok was talking about people who use al-Maidah to discourage people to vote for him. That is why the word, “pakai” (use) is mentioned in his speech. Ahok himself did not question the credibility of al-Quran itself at all. He did not insult al-Quran or ulama.

He also deplores that an exclusionary attitude of Muslim thinkers is becoming more pervasive in Indonesia, saying that the core principle of Islam is that all existence in this world created by Allah should be blessed and appreciated. He cites one of the verses from al-Quran, that is, “We sent thee not, but as a Mercy for all creatures.” He hopes that there will be a new generation with a “calmer” and “wiser” attitude regarding understanding Indonesian politics, implying that a political motive is behind the Ahok issue.

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28 Interview with the author in Kota Gede, 1 January 2017.
31 Interview with the author in Yogyakarta, 2 January, 2017.
32 al-Quran: 21-107
33 Ma’arif, Syafii Ahmad, Tempo, 2 December 2016
The Political Side of the Ahok Issue

It is true that the momentum of the anti-Ahok movement is endorsed by a religious sentiment of the masses. However, we still need to understand this religious phenomenon within the political climate of Indonesia. We, in fact, find complex political elements behind the gubernatorial election of DKI Jakarta in 2017, which was widely believed to be the preliminary skirmish for the presidential election that will take place in 2019. The popularity of Ahok is tacitly regarded as the approval of the constituency for Jokowi, and it is vital for those who intend to compete with current president Jokowi in 2019 to overtake Ahok.

Each gubernatorial candidate for DKI Jakarta in 2017 seems to have his own political agenda. Anies is supported by a political party called Gerakan Indonesia Raya (Gerindra), chaired by Prabowo Subianto, a former son-in-law of Suharto. The origin of the political rivalry between Prabowo Subianto and Jokowi was firmly seeded in the time of the presidential election in 2014, when both ran for the highest position of the Republic of Indonesia. Despite the fact that Jokowi, then Jakarta governor with his deputy Ahok, was declared the winner of the election, Prabowo Subianto refused to accept the results.

Although Prabowo had to accept the decision of the Constitutional Court that acknowledged the victory of Jokowi in the end, we can assume that Prabowo Subianto still holds his firm ambition to take Jokowi’s position in the next presidential election in 2019. Therefore, it was crucially important for Anies, as a representative of Prabowo, to win the gubernatorial election in order to display the political potential of Gerindra.

Agus Yudhoyono, another candidate in the gubernatorial election of DKI Jakarta in 2017, is a son of former president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Yudhoyono desperately needs to maintain his party’s presence in the national political arena in order to face the presidential election in 2019. We can easily imagine that Ahok’s comment on al-Quran could be utilised by his competitors as a political weapon to discredit Ahok. Thus, the mobilisation of anti-Ahok rallies in October, November, and December could be the result of a political manoeuvre to curtail the political credibility of Ahok by his opponents.
Knowing this political nature of the Ahok issue, we need to remember one of the darkest political memories in Indonesia, that is, the killings of Communist Party (PKI) members in the mid-1960s. This incident, called Gerakan September Tiga Puluh or Gestapu, is still regarded as taboo in Indonesia, which results in “the absence of public discussion and careful study of the killings.” For Indonesians, should one be branded as a communist or should one’s family be related to Gestapu, this means a termination of social life in the country.

The term Gestapu invariably reminds Indonesians of the influence of China. Thus, the combination of being Chinese and Communist is the worst social status in the country. The greater presence of Chinese, including manual laborers, in Indonesia has been a much debated political issue since 2016, which was the time of the gubernatorial election. Jokowi’s administration, in fact, has been troubled by so-called “fake news” in relation to Chinese migrant workers by his political opponents. Ahok, with his Chinese background, is vulnerable to tacit antipathy of Gestapu and the Chinese presence in Indonesia.

It is true that banners that read “Waspadai Bangkitnya PKI!” (Be careful with the revival of PKI) were ubiquitous in various parts of Indonesia in the time of the election campaign. Needless to say, this trend can be seen as a patriotic movement that intends to safeguard Indonesia from Communism and the economic invasion of China. However, it is also plausible to regard this as the attempt to discredit Ahok, implying that he is a symbol of the Chinese invasion into Indonesia and the revival of Communism.

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34 On 30 September 1965, it is said that some Communist members attempted to seize power in a coup d’état. However, they were swiftly subdued by General Suharto, and it resulted in the fall of Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia, and the mass killing of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) members and their sympathisers.


36 For example, Fadli Zon, vice-speaker of the parliament and secretary general of Gerindra expressed his concern that an increase of the Chinese labour force would be a “threat” to the Indonesian local labour market. See, Parlementaria, Edisi 145th, XLVII 2017, pp.8-9.

37 In December 2016, Joko Widodo gave instructions to investigate the source of the “fake news” that reported that 10 million Chinese workers had already entered Indonesia, which was untrue. The Straits Times, 10 January, 2017
The End of Tolerance?

Ahok appeared to be the most popular candidate among the three contenders, with 42.96% of the vote, while Anies and Agus obtained 39.97% and 17.06% respectively when the first round of the election took place on 15 February 2017.\(^{38}\) As none of the candidates were successful in obtaining 50% of the vote, the first two candidates, that is, Ahok and Anies, proceeded to the final round of the election on 19 April 2017. The final choice of the constituency of Jakarta was Anies, who received 57.95% of the votes, while Ahok obtained 42.05% of them.\(^ {39}\)

Some may perceive this as an apprehensive development in the country in relation to religious harmony.\(^ {40}\) However, it is too hasty to conclude that this is the end of religious tolerance in Indonesia. First of all, we should remember that the margin between the two candidates in the final round of the election was rather slim, with a difference of less than 900,000. This suggests that there is still a vast amount of Muslims who voted for Ahok, a non-Muslim.

Secondly, *Nahdulatul Ulama* (NU) and *Muhammadiyah*, which are the two most influential Muslim organisations in the country, have maintained carefully disciplined composure regarding the Ahok issue. Both organizations cautiously called on their members not to be influenced by political propaganda.\(^ {41}\) For example, Said Aqil Siradj, the chairperson of NU, clearly stated that the members of NU would not be allowed to participate in an anti-Ahok Rally in November, while *Muhammadiyah* discouraged their members from joining it.\(^ {42}\) In addition, NU warmly accepted Ahok to their prayer, which was held at *al-Huda* Mosque, even after Ahok made a comment on *al-Quran* in September 2016.\(^ {43}\)

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\(^ {38}\) Indonesian Election Commission Official website: https://pilkada2017.kpu.go.id/hasil/t1/dki_jakarta (last accessed on 3 May 2017)

\(^ {39}\) Indonesian Election Commission Official website: https://pilkada2017.kpu.go.id/hasil/2/t1/dki_jakarta (last accessed on 3 May 2017) The website also shows the total number of votes for the two candidates, that is, 3,240,332 votes for Anies and 2,351,245 votes for Ahok.

\(^ {40}\) The *Economist* reported on this election with a headline that reads: “A tense election threatens Indonesia’s religious tolerance”. It also says that “Mr Baswedan(Anies) is not about to impose Islamic law in Jakarta. But hardline forces helped him win. That genie is not easily returned to the bottle”. See, http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21721144-hardline-muslim-agitators-help-defeat-christian-incumbent-tense-election-threatens

\(^ {41}\) Prior to the final round of the election, Said Aqil Siradj, the chairperson of NU, expressed the political neutrality of NU, saying that “if you are happy with Ahok, choose Ahok, and if you are happy with Anies, choose Anies. http://www.nu.or.id/post/read/76818/kiai-said-islam-agama-mulia-belalah-dengan-cara-mulia (last accessed 4 June, 2017)

\(^ {42}\) Jakarta Post, 1 November 2016.

\(^ {43}\) Jakarta Post, 6 February, 2017.
Taufiq Damas, a young NU activist, also showed his support for Ahok, saying that “Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) has shown great attention to Muslims in his achievement…” Taufiq also emphasised that the Republic’s constitution, which has never prevented anyone from taking a governmental position regardless of religion, should be appreciated.

Thirdly, we need to understand the temperamental influence of religion over the attitude of the Indonesian people. Before Ahok made his comment on *al-Maida* 51 in September 2016, his popularity was high enough to assure his governorship. The author also conducted unofficial interviews with some residents of Jakarta in March 2016; the interviewees included taxi drivers, food vendors, and shop clerks. It is no exaggeration to say that 8 out of 10 of these people showed support to Ahok. However, Ahok’s popularity dropped rapidly after the Pulau Seribu incident in September 2016.

This means that his comment on *al-Quran* offended the feelings of Muslims. Nonetheless, we have already observed that Ahok managed to secure most of his votes in the first round of the election, and much of Ahok’s support came from Muslims. Muslims who still support Ahok after the incident of September 2016 possess their own steadfast religious and political attitudes, which are on their face tolerant and moderate.

However, it is important to note that there are certain Muslims who swung to the anti-Ahok camp after the incident. It can be assumed that these Muslims have not established their own firm religious and political positions, and we might call them the “vacillating mass.” They are by no means so-called fundamentalists who endorse religious rigidity. They are, however, more vulnerable to “fake news.”

It is more precise to say that their emotions have been stirred by Ahok’s comment, and they feel that Islam was insulted. Furthermore, religion has a way of making people emotional, for they feel that their existence itself is denied when their faith is downplayed. This “offended feeling,” in fact, brought the vacillating mass to the anti-Ahok side, without a serious examination of what was intended by Ahok. In other words, should there be an event that reflects positively on Islam, they would have a favorable emotional response towards whoever brought about that event.

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44 Jakarta Post, 22 October, 2016.
45 Ibid.
46 According to one of the surveys, the approval rate for Ahok in March 2016 was 59.3%. See: Jakarta Post, 7 October 2016.
It is interesting to see the survey that shows the degree of satisfaction of Jakarta residents towards the performance of Ahok’s government. Although Ahok was not chosen as a governor, the survey conducted by Lembaga Survei Indonesia (Indonesia Survey Organization) right before the election shows that the satisfaction rate towards Ahok’s administration reached 73 %. This might suggest that the trend against Ahok is caused by impulsive emotional reactions and is, thus, temporary. Furthermore, the emotional effect of religion might have diverted some Muslim voters from supporting Ahok.

Conclusion

The Ahok issue is far from over as the North Jakarta District Court found Ahok guilty of blasphemy and sentenced him to two years of imprisonment on 9 May 2017. After the verdict, Ahok expressed his intention to appeal to the higher court. It will take a rather longer period to bring his struggle to an end.

It is true that the Ahok issue has presented a serious challenge to religious tolerance in Indonesia; however, it is misleading to conclude that the result of the gubernatorial election in 2017 automatically means the termination of Indonesia’s tradition of religious harmony. Statistics shows that Ahok still has a significant supporters who are presumably Muslim. In addition, influential Islamic organizations, such as NU, still maintain a rather tolerant attitude towards Ahok. The Ahok issue is deeply related to secular politics, including the presidential election in 2019. It is more correct to understand the anti-Ahok movement in relation to the political reality in the country rather than the substantial religious attitude of the people.

Most important, however, we should remember that the anti-Ahok trend has been influenced by a volatile aspect of religion, which incites the emotions of its followers. This factor moved the vacillating mass to adopt a seemingly intolerant attitude. Nonetheless, this sort of emotional reaction can be impetuous. Yet, the possibility of the most populous Muslim country, Indonesia, becoming more intolerant cannot be ruled out, for the “vacillating masses” could come to possess a more exclusive ideology towards non-Muslims. Thus, it is vital that Muslim scholars such as Syafiie Ma’arif and Afrif, mentioned above, constantly exhibit their inclusive and tolerant views towards non-Muslims, reminding all Muslims of the importance of being rational in relation to Islamic practice, just as a noted Muslim scholar, Nurcholish Madjid, encouraged Muslim intellectuals to pursue a progressive attitude in thinking.

47 13 April 2017, Detik.com News
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Workplace Bullying II:  
A Civilizational Shortcoming Examined in a Comparative Content Analysis

Leah P. Hollis

Abstract

According to Freud, civilization is meant to protect humans from the forces of nature, to protect human frailty; but then, paradoxically, it falls short of such protection by its lack of concomitant regulation (1991). In fact, civilized service to society, delivered via organizations, creates strife and anxiety. While civilization is a structure created to protect people from nature and to support a frail humanity, its rules and power structures yield aggression, spawning the need for people to control each other (Freud & Strachey, 1991).

Such control and the power structures that arise within organizations can be considered the root of workplace bullying, aggression, and incivility in our putatively civilized structures of work. Consequently, global researchers strive to make sense of incivility within civilization, a structure that generates aggravation although it was originally developed to provide protection.

Northern Europeans have led research efforts to analyze the psychological impact of workplace bullying for employees, observing the protection of human frailty as described by Freud. While researchers in the United States over the last twenty years have also paid considerable attention to workplace bullying, within the legal lexicon of the United States many consider workplace bullying as a status-free harassment, and other researchers consider bullying as but another form of harassment. The American approach aligns with Freud’s assertion that civilization – with its “sum of achievement and regulations” – still yields unhappiness among mankind.

Thus, there are different approaches to considering workplace bullying. Methodologically, this article utilizes a content analysis of sixty articles to present some differences in how two civilizations analyze workplace bullying. The content analysis reveals that European researchers are more likely to discuss workplace bullying as a health and wellness issue, while United States researchers tend to focus on organizational policies and legal issues.

While this content analysis presents a difference in approaches, it is not intended to establish that a mutually exclusive approach to workplace bullying exists between these two cultures.

Keywords: Workplace bullying, chronic health issues, legal issues, civilization
Introduction

In June of 2014, I presented a lecture during the “9th International Congress on Workplace Bullying and Harassment” at the University of Milan. With the theme “promoting dignity and justice at work,” the International Association on Workplace Bullying and Harassment hosted scholars from over twenty countries. The conference offered different perspectives related to workplace bullying, such as legislative considerations, cyber-bullying, and prevention.

The health results and psychological effects of workplace bullying were typically presented by European scholars. These European papers offered research beyond the litigious consternation that has an impact on organizational cost and productivity. Examples of such papers are as follows: “Sleep problems and workplace bullying: Is leisure-time physical activity a mediator or moderator?” authored by Asa Marie Hansen from Denmark; “Daily interpersonal conflicts and positive and negative effects among naval cadets: the moderating role of neuroticism,” authored by Jorn Hetland of Norway; and “Psychological distress is associated with reduced cognitive performance victims of workplace bullying,” authored by Luca Neri, from Italy. Such perspectives from the Europeans considered how the target’s health and well-being are eroded through workplace bullying.

Since this conference, I have had the opportunity to present at various colleges and universities across the United States. Participants in the United States typically ask about legal action to deter a bully, or whether workplace bullying is actionable in court. Those suffering targets seek ways to bring justice to the bully, yet they seem startled when we discuss the impact of such abuse on the target’s health and well-being.

For Americans, the discussion of health issues pales in comparison to the desire to exact damages from the organization that allows for bullying. During such campus visits, targets complain, nevertheless, of the escalating health costs that result from workplace bullying: inflamed nerves, sleep problems, and migraine headaches. However, while targets of workplace bullying in the United States ask about referrals to lawyers they typically do not ask about doctors or psychologists to mitigate the stress-induced health problems. The American culture focuses on steps to resolve workplace bullying issues in court; often the health-related issues are viewed as a happenstance or by-product, instead of a compelling consequence of working in an aggressive environment.

Referring to Freud, we may reflect on how the focus in the United States is on the lack of regulation, instead of a primary focus falling on compromised human frailty in the face of workplace bullying.
Literature Review

Global scholars consider workplace bullying using disparate terms. In Europe, scholars have used a “negative acts” questionnaire to capture data about workplace aggression. Researchers have used terms such as “incivility” and “aggression” (Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001); yet American scholars use “status-free harassment” (Yamada, 1999) to describe workplace bullying. Other terms such as “psychological harassment,” “harassment moral,” or “mobbing” are also used to discuss workplace bullying (Crawshaw, 2009).

As workplace bullying remains a global problem, researchers have examined the effects of incivility and workplace bullying (Björkqvist, Österman, & Hjelt-Bäck, 1994; Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013; 2012; Einarsen, Hotel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011; Hollis, 2016b; Namie & Namie, 2009; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013). More specifically, some European scholars have considered the effect on the targets’ health and wellness (Djurkovic, McCormack, & Casimir, 2008; Hallberg, & Strandmark, 2006; Rayner, 1997).

Workplace bullying creates a psychological stress within those targeted by such aggression. Stressful experiences can lead to depression, anxiety, and sleep disorders. Psychological stress and poor health were found in Vartia’s (2001) study of 949 Norwegian employees who dealt with bullying. In turn, these employees were more likely to use medication to sleep or rely on sedatives. In a study of 1100 British National Health Service employees, Quine (1999) confirmed that 42% of workers experienced workplace bullying that led to clinical depression. Other European researchers, Rodríguez-Muñoz, Notelaers and Moreno-Jiménez (2011) and Vartia (2001), also reported a relationship between workplace bullying and the targets’ subsequent depression and sleep issues.

These European examples align with Freud’s notion that a “person becomes neurotic because he cannot tolerate the amount of frustration which society imposes on him in the service of cultural ideas” (Freud & Strachey, 1991, p. 16). In short, the European focus seems to lean toward examining how the presence of bullying within civilization is part of civilization’s failure to protect human frailty.

Despite the attention that Europeans give to workplace bullying and its association with health issues, United States scholars seem to have a stronger focus on bullying and its impact on the organization. The groundbreaking Namie and Namie study (2009), reflecting on the general population, stated that 37% of workers face workplace bullying in their careers, costing organizations over $54 billion.
In a study of 359 United States workers, Valentine, Fleischman, and Godkin (2015) called for clearer communication of organizational ethics to minimize the negative relationship between workplace bullying and employee job satisfaction. Goodboy, Martin, Knight, and Long (2017) considered 314 United States workers to analyze job demands and high stress environments. In their study, workplace bullying was related to job dissatisfaction and job stress.

United States studies on higher education confirm that approximately two-thirds of employees face workplace bullying, and relate such behavior to the costs from the activity to the organization (Hollis, 2016). Within the legal and economic focus of the American studies is a nod to Freud’s assertion that civilization has an “inadequacy of the regulations which adjust the mutual relationships [in] society” (Freud & Strachey, 1991, p. 15). In other words, though such structures are civilized, the laws of the land developed in this civilization fail to truly protect the population. Hence, the proliferation of workplace bullying continues to bring unhappiness without effective regulations to mitigate the problem.

Though the studies undertaken in the United States lean toward analyzing relationships between workplace bullying and organizational factors, American health organizations do note the levels of stress-related ailments in the United States population. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA, 2016), 18% of the United States population, or 40 million Americans, struggle with anxiety and depression. Consequently, those affected seek medical attention at a rate three to five times more than the general population. Further, they were subject to more sleep issues, more substance abuse and higher rates of post-traumatic stress. As confirmed by Volkow’s study (2009), substance abuse was one of the leading health care issues in the United States, affecting one tenth of the 307.8 million United States citizens, close to 31 million people. Within this statistic, alcohol abuse specifically is the third leading cause of American death (American Center for Disease Control (CDC), 2013). Such health issues are associated with stress and anxiety, with substance abuse as an escapist coping mechanism.

Given the extensive number of people in the United States who face workplace bullying and the association between workplace bullying and subsequent health issues as established by various European researchers, reasonably, Americans are also facing health issues because of workplace bullying. In turn, while United States government agencies have documented the stress related to the United States workplace, and United States researchers have considered the extent of workplace bullying in the country, United States researchers could expand their scope to consider the human frailties advanced by Freud, relating stress to civilizational conditions. A consideration of regulations and protecting health would be a more holistic approach to creating a civilized solution to workplace bullying for United States workers.
Purpose Statement

Based on an initial reflection of the different approaches scholars take in researching workplace bullying – the European approach which leans toward protecting human frailty, and the United States approach which leans to strengthening regulation – this content analysis considered the abstracts of 60 articles on workplace bullying. Thirty articles were from United States scholars and thirty articles were from European scholars. This comparative analysis considered European and United States perspectives in studying workplace bullying. Just as the United States has a set of 50 states, with different populations and legislative functions; Europe has 50 countries with different populations and legislative functions. In turn, this comparison might inspire an expanded scope in United States research regarding workplace bullying.

Significance

As a United States researcher studying workplace bullying, I recognize previous work has focused on the cost to organizations, and the impact on different populations and potential solutions (Baillien & De Witte, 2009; Hollis, 2016; Holllis, 2016a; Tehrani, 2013). Other American scholars have called for stronger regulations such as status-free legal protection from workplace harassment and aggression (Yamada, 1999), or studied the cost to organizations (McTernan, Dollard & LaMontagne, 2013; Murray, 2009). American scholarship that further incorporates the health and wellness detriments of workplace bullying could influence policy to protect workers in the United States by considering human frailty, health, and wellness. Such a focus on workplace bullying research could advance the need to protect American workers’ human frailty just as European researchers have influenced policy to protect European workers’ human frailty.

Data Collection

The 60 articles were collected from EBSCO Host, ProQuest, Researchgate, and academia.edu using “workplace bullying” as the keyword in the query. The articles in the analysis were published between 2000-2017. United States researchers and European researchers wrote the articles that were the subject of this content analysis. The abstracts from these articles, thirty from European researchers and thirty from United States researchers, were used to support the content analysis. The analysis included coding keywords from the problem statement, purpose statement, or findings discussed in the abstracts. The key phrases were highlighted and then coded for themes to determine if there was in fact a different focus or scope in studying workplace bullying between European researchers and United States researchers.
Research method

This study utilized data sampling, data reduction, and data analysis as part of Krippendorf’s (1980) content analysis procedures. First, I used a purposed collection of data, the articles focusing on workplace bullying from United States and European authors. The data reduction phase involved excluding articles outside the stated scope. As the scope of this analysis was to compare European and United States research, studies from Japan, Canada, Australia, and Nigeria were excluded. The data analysis phases included highlighting common phrases in the abstracts of each article that lead to an open coding process that yielded the emergent themes (Creswell, 2014).

Research question

European and United States scholars potentially have different approaches in studying workplace bullying. To address this potential difference, the following research question was developed for this content analysis. How does European and United States research on workplace bullying potentially differ in the consideration of human frailty and regulation in the scope of the respective studies?

Findings

The review of keywords in abstracts of sixty articles showed a difference in the approach taken by United States researchers and European researchers who focused on workplace bullying. As the topic involved the workplace, the keyword “organization” was a primary theme. However, based on this content analysis, United States researchers focused on the “organization” three times more often than did European researchers. See Table 1.

Table 1: Comparative analysis of keywords between United States and European studies on workplace bullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United States: n=141 keywords</th>
<th>Europe: n=130 keywords</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>76 – Organizational</td>
<td>23 – Organizational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 – Harassment</td>
<td>1 – Harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – Protected Class (demographics)</td>
<td>3 – Demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – Psychological/Emotional</td>
<td>45 – Psychological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – Health/Stress</td>
<td>37 – Health/Sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21 – Suicide Ideation/Depression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

United States and European research on workplace bullying shared a common theme of the organization being a salient focus of the research. The power dynamics and policies within organizations can support or deter aggressive workplace behaviors. In other words, the very organizational structures for work which emerge from creation of a
civilization are at the root of the workplace bullying problem. The social structure of an organization would presumably protect humans from nature, from poverty, from illness; yet, as Freud comments, such civilized structures control people’s self-determination, and they result in the power struggle which gives rise to anxiety and aggression between workers.

Conversely, those who are self-employed, entrepreneurs, are striving to escape such contentious and presumably civilized work structures to instead forge a path guided by their own vision. See Table 2 for a sample of phrases from United States and European research focusing on the organization.

**Table 2: Theme #1: Organization (United States and European)**

| US: “organizational culture can be both indirectly and directly related to workplace bullying” (Pheko, Monteiro, & Segopolo, 2017, p. 1). |
| US: “working in various organizations completed a questionnaire about their bullying experiences, working environments, and occupational outcomes. (Goodboy, Martin, Knight, & Long, 2017, p. 24). |
| EU: “yielding severe consequences for both the individual and the organisation” (Broeck, Baillien, & Witte, 2011. p. 40). |
| EU: “The article concludes by mentioning the likely legal and economic implications for Organisations and society” (Sullivan, 2010, p. 1). |

As observed in Table 1, United States researchers assign more attention to the lack of legislation to protect employees from workplace bullying. In contrast, some European countries have already prohibited “harassment morale” (EU-OSHA 2009). Consequently, the existence of European legislation may have influenced how Europeans focus on workplace bullying. As the Europeans may have resolved a lack of regulation within their civilization, perhaps the focus then turned to the human frailty that is left unprotected at work through bullying.

Two other themes emerged from the United States content analysis. Theme #2 was “legal issues.” Theme #3 was “protected class,” referring to the protected classes found in Title VII Civil Rights legislation. This focus can be the attempt to address the “inadequacy of the regulations” (Freud & Strachey, 1991, p. 15).
Table 3: *United States: Theme #2- Legal Issues*

| “There is a business case for workplace bullying legislation” (Yamada, 2009, p. 1). |
| “Striking finding was that 73.3% of the cases were found in favor of the employer as the defendant” (Martin & LaVan, 2010, p. 175). |
| “Bullying is not illegal in the United States, whereas it is illegal in many other countries” (Vega & Comer, 2004, p. 183). |

American researchers also focused on how some people who have historically been disenfranchised and disempowered were more likely to face workplace bullying. Aligning with the litigious focus in some United States research, if a savvy target can tie workplace bullying to national Civil Rights legislation, that target might be able to seek relief through legal action. The theme of protected class (race, gender, disability) was essentially a subset of the legal arguments made by United States researchers to develop legislative protections against workplace bullying. See Table 4.

Table 4 *United States: Theme #3 - Protected Class*

| “While a general form of bullying has been focused on by contemporary scholars, specific types of bullying (racist bullying and homophobic bullying) have not well been studied” (Misawa, 2010, p 7). |
| “Demographic minority groups are more likely to be victims of workplace injustice “(Okechukwu, Souza, Davis & de Castro, 2014, p. 573). |
| “Approximately 41% of those with disabilities face workplace bullying despite United States protections for those with disabilities” (Bernard, 2017, p. 41). |

The European researchers, while embracing the organizational dynamics that yield workplace bullying, are more likely than United States researchers to associate workplace bullying with health issues such as psychological distress, depression, suicide, and general health issues. Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7 are the European themes that relate workplace bullying to health problems.
Table 5: *Europe: Theme #2 Psychological*

“Relationship between workplace bullying and physical and mental strain” (Maidaniuc-Chirila, 2015, p 147).

“Psychological symptoms are also associated with subsequent exposure to teasing” (Nielsen, Magarey, Gjerstad, & Einarsen, 2014, p. 2).

“The findings show that exposure to bullying is associated with both job-related and health- and well-being-related outcomes, such as mental and physical health problems, symptoms of post-traumatic stress” (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012, p. 309).

In addition to considering general psychological damage, European researchers specifically considered suicidal ideation and depression in relationship to workplace bullying. Table 6 offers a sample of statements that represent this emerging theme.

Table 6: *Europe: Theme #3 Suicide/ Depression*

“Nurse committed suicide over HSE probe” (Fallon, 2009, p. 4).

“Workplace bullying and subsequent mental health in the form of anxiety and depression with a time lag of five years “(Einarsen & Nielsen, 2015, p. 131).

“Workplace bullying may be a precursor to suicidal ideation, whereas suicidal ideation seems to have no impact on subsequent risk of being bullied “(Nielsen, Notelets, & Einarsen, 2015, p. 105).

Examining human frailty within these work structures, European researchers continued with a reflection on the health and wellness issues for targets facing workplace bullying. Sleep disorders were among the sickness leave and health issues addressed by researchers in this fourth European theme. See Table 7.

Table 7: *Europe: Theme #4 Health/Sleep*

“In this study, these consequences were examined prospectively by focusing on sickness absence in hospital staff “(Kaimuki, Elvina, & Vaster, 2000, p. 565).

“All but one study found that exposure to workplace bullying was associated with increased risk of sickness absence” (Nielsen, Indre Gard & Everland, 2016, p. 1).

“The associations between workplace bullying and subsequent sleep problems are poorly understood” (Lallukka, Rahkonen, & Lahelma, 2011, p. 204).
Discussion

“The first requisite of civilization, therefore, is that of justice – that is, the assurance that a law once made will not be broken in favour of an individual” (Freud & Strachey, 1991, p. 21). However, the tension between such civilized justice and the protection of human frailty remains in conflict, as Freud commented that such laws, based on the majority “implies nothing as to the ethical value of such a law” (Freud & Strachey, 1991, p. 21). The structure of civilization can and has created entities that unjustly discount the human frailty of those outside the majority, those without the same power or resources as the majority.

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) consider workplace bullying, violence, and aggression as a serious threat to employees’ health and wellness. Norway, France, Germany, Ireland, Belgium, and Poland are some of the countries that have codified the problem and declared workplace aggression to be an illegal threat that hurts workers (EU-OSHA, 2009). While many European countries have passed legislation, the emphasis through EU-OSHA (2009) is to protect the health and wellness of European employees. Such organizations can be viewed as part of a growing majority in Europe developing structures to protect human frailty, to redefine what is just within the civilized structures of work.

In comparison, by relying on the 1964 Civil Rights legislation and Title VII to protect United States workers from harassment, the United States may fall short in providing protection for anyone facing workplace aggression (Yamada, 1999). With advances in technology, such workplace aggression and cyberbullying have spread to the Internet and social media spaces, in turn bringing aggression into the target’s private space (Hollis, 2016c). Nonetheless, while such anti-discrimination protections are needed to provide equal access and opportunity (Hollis, 1998), United States researchers face a gap in the literature about how workplace bullying jeopardizes the health and wellness of United States workers. In other words, the American focus addresses the lacking regulations but would need to further consider how such lacking regulations in the American civilization further compromise American human frailty.

An American psychiatrist and anthropologist, Carroll Brodsky (1976), is often considered the first to have studied workplace bullying in his book, The Harassed Worker, a work that brought little attention at the time it was written. However, in the late 1980s, Northern Europeans advanced the field of workplace bullying and harassment with a series of studies that caught the attention of researchers in Britain, Germany, Australia, and Southern Europe. In later years, about the first decade of the 2000s, United States researchers started examining harassment and aggression which fell outside of federal regulations (Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2010).
Within this timeline, European researchers have lead the field in addressing workplace bullying and aggression; hence, many European countries have developed regulations to forbid such workplace bullying and aggression. As a result, European researchers are advanced, within Freud’s context; the Europeans are way ahead in tackling the “lacking regulations” and making major strides in addressing the human frailty that is subject to injury within civilized work structures. In comparison, since 2014, while the United States has some laws in Tennessee, Utah, Minnesota, and California that address workplace bullying, the United States is still grappling with the lacking regulations and is only now beginning a focus on how workplace bullying challenges human frailty.

This brief comparative content analysis of research studies on workplace bullying has highlighted a civilizational disparity: the European focus is on health and the United States focus is on litigious action. It is hoped that these findings will help push forward the conversation on workplace bullying. How should cultures further consider and address workplace bullying, from both a health perspective and a legal one, as it is seen to be an unfortunate but inevitable by-product of a civilized society?
References


I saw the Iranian Revolution of 1979 up close and personally--a revolution against a modernizing authoritarian king. I watched otherwise clever intellectuals deceive themselves that they would emerge the rulers of a democratic Iran, while the crafty theocrats waited in the wings to seize power. How could all these leftists be so naïve about how revolutions work? The trajectory of revolutions should be no mystery. Crane Brinton’s *The Anatomy of Revolution*¹ spelled it all out in 1952, and his observations have stood the test of time.

Of course, Brinton’s big picture of the most consequential revolutions in history do not explore the revolutions that came after his death: the Islamist revivals, the “velvet” and color revolutions of Eastern Europe, and even Indonesia, which followed the Brinton models despite Indonesia’s Muslim population. Nonetheless, most of Brinton’s observations are valuable.

Brinton compared four major revolutions: the English Revolution of 1640 (they executed their king and established a 10-year religious dictatorship), the American Revolution of 1776, the French of 1789, and the Russian of 1917. Brinton’s formula also applies to the Chinese 1949 Revolution, but not the Iranian Revolution, which occurred after his book was published. The American Revolution was the exception to the usual templates about revolutions, which is why it was less bloody and horrific than the others. It was the revolt of British settlers demanding representation in Parliament, not an overturning of a government. But for the rest, the following elements hold true:

- Revolutions in which an entire system of rule is replaced by another have happened only since the 17th century; before that, there were revolts, which were bloodily put down by the ruling class, or revolutions that replaced one dynasty with another, as we see in China.
- Revolutions do not occur when things are at rock bottom. Famines, plagues, and natural disasters contribute to unrest, but a revolution will not happen until a society perceives that progress has been thwarted by government incompetence. The danger is keenest when rising expectations are not met.

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• Revolutions do not come from the fringes—the far left or far right—they erupt from the literate intelligentsia, children from the middle class. When the intelligentsia of a country loses all respect for the country’s leadership, the groundwork is laid for ending the regime. The scholar who illuminated this process was Jacques Barzan, who wrote in his mid 90’s From Dawn to Decadence, 1500 to the Present, a tour de force trek through 500 years of Western cultural life.

I read this book in the late 1990s, and have watched our own country’s increasing ignorance of our basic governing institutions with anxiety. Teaching civics in public schools has largely disappeared, and in our recent election, when a populist and his followers showed disdain for the press, courts, or historic norms of behavior that have protected us from tyranny. Too often, the intelligentsia overlook movements roiling among average or less educated voters. Aside from the American Revolution, however, the other major revolutions have followed similar trajectories:

• Once autocratic leadership is removed, the intelligentsia are the next to be removed. A dictatorial cadre—from the fringes and often few in number—can take over a country. The Russian Revolution is a model of this process, as were the French, Chinese, and Iranian.
• Economic issues may start the revolution, but ideological fanaticism finishes it (the American and Indonesian being the exception).

Brinton did not live long enough to witness the Iranian Revolution, but his overview of widespread discontent, alienation of the aristocrats, and radicalization of the college students and professors all were issues he noted. But what was different with this revolution was that it was the first to actually reject modernization. It was a retreat to a religious past, a devolution, which attempted to undo all the modernization that had come from the Pahlavis.

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In the summer of 1978, left-wing students, many of whom had returned from studying in the US and Europe, demonstrated in Iran’s urban centers to bring down the Shah. The BBC radio and television broadcasts covered the demonstrations and appeared sympathetic to their cause.\(^3\) The Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, never a decisive person, was secretly suffering from cancer, which weakened him, while his competent advisor and friend since childhood, Asadollah Alam, Prime Minister from 1962-64 and Court Minister from 1964-1978, died the year before the revolution, leaving the Shah without a rudder.\(^4\)

Alam might have protected the Shah from his vacillation and uneven responses to the growing anarchy. When the Shah applied force to stop the demonstrations, the world press watched and condemned him. Thereafter, his response to events in the street were uneven and ineffectual. The mobs were emboldened.

The intellectuals found support from an unexpected ally: the Ayatollah Khomeini, the articulate cleric who had assumed leadership of the Iranian Shiite clergy and who had long defied the Shah’s modernizations. He posed as a symbol of rectitude who just wanted to see the oppressive Shah brought down. The intellectuals were fooled into thinking that once the revolution succeeded, Khomeini would just be an honored elder who would retire from the fray.

In February 1979, the Ayatollah returned from exile in Paris and immediately established his headquarters in what had been a girls’ school, evicting the occupants. Iranians were so euphoric about their revolution’s success that no one reacted in a timely fashion to Khomeini’s swift seizure of power. Khomeini immediately pushed for a referendum (again, before anyone had a chance to discuss this in the media) in which voters would say yes or no to an “Islamic Republic.” The many revolutionary sectors had thought that they were getting an Iranian Republic, an idea encouraged by the Ayatollah himself. After he seized power, however, he acknowledged that lying in defense of Islam was more important than Muslims themselves, or Iran itself.

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Establishing his headquarters in the girls’ school was his first message to women. The next was to have his religious police beat women demonstrating in the streets for not wearing headscarves (hijab). The women had believed that this rule was not ordered by the Ayatollah, but by his underlings, a mistaken notion quickly disabused by the beatings and arrests. This was followed by the first of hundreds of executions that began with the woman who had headed the new department of social services. Women judges were then fired and sent home.

He then held a referendum (not an election) that offered two choices: “yes” or “no” to a new religious constitution. With no press to illuminate this horror and no time for thought, the public voted yes. An entire program of social modernization painstakingly executed over the four decades of Pahlavi rule was trashed.

It is necessary to understand that despite the zeal of the masses who support these revolutions, revolutions and totalitarian dictatorships do not often have staying power. The initial headiness that begins them morphs into corruption and cynicism and violent repressions, which eventually breed backlashes. Studies suggest that most revolutions quickly go from anarchy to dictatorships.

The “Arab Spring” appears to be a revolution against the perennial authoritarianism of the Muslim World. The democratic revolution that idealists hoped for morphed instead into the default position of Muslim-majority countries: either military or religious-fanatic dictatorships.5 (Exceptions might be Tunisia, one of the more secular Muslim state and the overthrow of the Indonesian autocrat, Suharto.) Indonesia is always raised as an example of a Muslim state that has become a democracy. For a period, this became so. However, there are strong indications today that Islamism is increasingly popular, which bodes ill for democracy.

Over time, resentment and underground humor in Egypt began the next cycle of revolt. The quickly-called election put a member of the Muslim Brotherhood in power, and this long-time Islamist cult, which the people seemed to support, was shortly voted out because of incompetence and increasing anarchy, only to be replaced by an army general.

The trajectories that characterize all revolutions (except for that of the United States—Tunisia and initially Indonesia) should be no surprise to those who understand revolutions. There is initial euphoria and often promises of real change in the early stages of revolutions. In the French Revolution, for example, the young intellectuals who considered this a time to put in effect enlightenment values, enacted several progressive ideas: first, emancipating all slaves held in French Caribbean territories.

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Then, granting benefits to women, such as serving in the parliament, rights to secure a divorce, rights to inheritance, and even new dress styles that freed them from the constriction of stays and exaggerated costumes and hair styles that required teams of servants to produce. But these rights were quickly reversed when dictatorship replaced the revolutionaries.

The Bastille prison had already been opened and destroyed, giving rise to the belief that justice would finally be reformed.6 A modern tool of execution, the Guillotine, replaced the traditional axe or sword, this considered more humane. Other revolutionary notions included changing street names; changing weeks to 10-days long and the days renamed numerically; a year of 12 months, each containing three weeks, and extra days added to make the math work.

This exaggerated reform came to a quick end with dictatorial ideologues seizing power and instituting a reign of terror in the country. Many of the freedoms promised by the revolutionaries were reversed when dictatorships took power. The earliest example of this occurred when a military general, Napoleon, seized power and crowned himself Emperor. Even the emancipation of the Black slaves in the French colonies was reversed when the planters protested. Money talks. In addition, the legal benefits originally granted to women were revoked (rights of divorce, inheritance, and individual autonomy).

In the case of France, it ultimately returned to its more democratic roots, largely because of its uniquely Western cultural-legal context. These western values have not yet thrived in other 20th century revolutions.

The 1918 Russian and 1949 Chinese Revolutions both followed the same trajectory as the French, although neither so far has morphed to the liberal democracy that the French have. The initial chaotic euphoria and hopes of participatory governance were overtaken by small radical cells that seized power. Both Russia and China underwent the horrors of dictators (Stalin and Mao) who stayed in power that grew ever more dangerous as their minds deteriorated. Revolutions are complex; but even more complex are the systems that sustain total dictatorial power. Such systems lack the divisions of power, the independent institutions of press and the judiciary, which protect liberal democracies. Dictatorships destroy these institutions upon taking control.

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The Iranian Revolution followed suit. Most Iranians believed that they were getting a liberal democracy. They believed the Ayatollah’s professions of belief in these values, but he was willing to use deceit and to move swiftly to reach his goals. The academic radicals never selected Khomeini to lead them. They actually believed (until it was too late) that he would merely be a symbol of virtue who had no intention to do anything other than return to his religious seminary to live out his days.

He quickly disabused them of this notion by seizing total power, and began the process of arresting, executing, and doing what revolutions do: “eating” their young. Very quickly, he organized a new “religious police” who would keep people in line, created a parallel army of religious ideologues to watch the regular army (Russia’s Communists did the same with their military), and set about executions that by 1988 were estimated by Amnesty International, to reach 5,000 men, women and children.

Iran has today a limping, illiberal democracy, one based on a “constitution” hastily confirmed by the referendum. Elections are held, people (including women) vote, but they can only vote for a slate of candidates permitted by the clerics (council of experts). The judiciary are an arm of the clerics, and any attempt at producing a fair press is met with censorship or imprisonment of the journalists.

One attempt by the Iranian people to demonstrate their discontent with this system (Iran’s so-called “Green Revolution” of 2009) ended in bloodshed and imprisonment of the opposition leaders. Today, the grumbling is underground: defiance of women to subvert the “modest” dress code, young college students defying the alcohol bans, and the flourishing of a vibrant culture of underground humor and mockery of the clerics.

Dictatorships that have the longevity of the Russian, Chinese, and Iranian Revolutions show the same signs of disillusionment over time. In Russia, the Stalin dictatorship ended with his death (perhaps poisoned by his inner circle) and Khrushchev, his successor’s determination to reveal the secret horror of Stalin’s concentration camps (gulags). Eventually, the Russian Revolution disintegrated, mostly by its own exhaustion and the good luck of having a modernizing leader (Gorbachev).

The Chinese Revolution changed with the death of Mao, and the decision of his successors to diverge from Communist economic doctrine, instituting many of the characteristics of Capitalism. The political orthodoxy, however, has remained intact. The question will be to see how long the political order can resist the desires of an increasingly educated, traveled, and prosperous Middle Class.
Those who want to end a regime, even a dictatorship, should take a leaf from Jacques Barzun’s observation: widespread humor and mockery can bring down a state. (This is also a tactic many times noted in Gene sharp’s work on nonviolent action, ca. 1970s.) Jacques Barzun’s *From Dawn to Decadence* tracks the fall of the French monarchy during the French Revolution to the point where the French elites had no fear of making jokes about the monarchy. One characteristic of nasty governments—theocracies, dictatorships, and authoritarian monarchies, is that they have no sense of humor. The one thing that can put a frightening government on the defensive is to know that their subjects are laughing at them. This is a pattern that repeats.

Republics such as ours have little fear that making fun of the government or mocking our leaders will bring down the walls—but dictatorships do have such fears. When Romania’s dictator, Nicolae Ceausescu, made a speech to his abused population on December 21, 1989, he was startled to hear laughter and hoots—and the armed soldiers in the square, contrary to his expectations, did not shoot them; they arrested him instead, and he was dead by morning.7

Perhaps we miss the boat in dealing with the “hearts and minds” of the benighted populations of the world when we do not use comedy and soap operas to get our points across. Laughter, mockery, and serialized stories can be very destabilizing—and effective. Examples are plentiful.

A few years ago, a Persian comedy group in Beverly Hills put on their hilarious weekly TV program for their Persian-speaking audience. By a fluke, it was picked up by satellite and beamed to Iran. The Iranian public was much entertained and the government started to confiscate satellite dishes (a losing battle for them). In the broadcast was a segment called “Ask the Mullah,” in which a ridiculous little turbaned fellow gave answers to call-in questions that brought down the house — and were too realistic for comfort of the clerics. Our own *60 Minutes* picked this up and suggested that our government sponsor this regularly. We never followed up on it! The tradition of mocking clerics is old and honored in Iran—and we should build on it.

Nonviolent techniques have been successful in places where the authoritarian leaders are reluctant to shed blood because the world is watching.8 This was true for the nonviolent demonstrations at the end of the Soviet Union (the Velvet Revolutions of Eastern Europe), even in such a terror state as East Germany. Tunisia and Indonesia are examples of Muslim-majority countries in which dictatorships were brought down by nonviolent means.

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7 Watch Ceausescu’s final speech: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6pvMFlQf50](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6pvMFlQf50).
However, even when such revolutions succeed, their ability to survive as liberal democracies depends upon a history of exposure to the values of Western Civilization (legal-political values). We are already seeing liberal democracy in trouble in Poland and Romania, and the jury is out if nonviolent demonstrations will be able to turn these dictatorial movements around.

During the 1930s, almost every one of the new democratic republics created in the aftermath of World War I morphed into fascist dictatorships (Poland and Germany) or were quickly conquered by their Nazi neighbor (Czechoslovakia and Austria). We may be seeing the same phenomenon in Eastern Europe now.

Modernizing movements in Muslim-majority countries that appeared ready to sustain liberal democracies (Turkey, Egypt, and Indonesia) are under attack from dictatorial leadership and resurgent militant Islamism. With no historic tradition embracing the important elements of Western liberal democracy, there is little hope that nonviolent demonstrations can save them.

The one country in this group that appears to be sustaining its democratic revolution is Tunisia, perhaps because it had not faced population explosion as have its neighbors, and because secular life and a burgeoning middle class supported its primary industry, European tourism.

We are living in revolutionary times, and the history of revolutions has much to offer. History has shown us that the more violent the revolution, the more difficult it is to transition to a Western style liberal democracy. With the exception of the violent French Revolution, which over time became a western style democracy, all of the other violent revolutions led to reigns of terror followed by ferocious dictatorships. These histories should provide us with some opportunities to understand how revolutions really work, how to avoid the siren call of violent political revolutions, and how to help bring down bad ones.
Bibliography

Buried on Three Continents in Three Civilizations: A Jewish Fate
Yishai Shuster

I do not know if the story I am about to tell relates directly to the Holocaust, but I am convinced, however, that a story like this could happen only to someone who is Jewish.¹ I wish to dedicate this paper to my friend, my brother Wlodek (Wlodzimierz Przytyk), who died of cancer on March 21, 2006 at the age of 57.

I have no idea if all the history recalled here occurred exactly the way it is narrated. A few of events here were told to me by my parents; other parts come from relatives and friends. This account includes some historically documented facts, but the rest has been handed down to me by others. The second part of the story, however, centers on Kibbutz Yad Hanna. It is based on my personal knowledge and from information gleaned from Sarah Nomberg-Przytyk’s published memoirs.

Europe

I will begin with information directly relating to my family and myself. I was born on September 16, 1946 in the town of Walbrzych in Western Poland. I was given the name Seweryn, which means 'a gift'. My parents, Berl Shuster and Rywa Fabrikant, came from Sarny in the Wolyn region, in eastern Poland, one ruled by many different countries at various times, including the Poles and the Russians. After World War I, the district was under Polish control and following the Molotov — Ribbentrop Pact in 1939, it was awarded to the Soviets.

In 1941, however, the entire Wolyn region was captured by the German army during Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union. Towards the end of the war, and with the German defeat, the district was annexed to the Soviet Union. However, since the dismantling of the Soviet Union, Wolyn has been a part of the Ukraine.

Both of my parent’s families were poor and Jewish. In their hometown of Sarny, Jews made up ten percent of the population. It may be no surprise that both of my parents, at a young age, became active in the newly-formed Communist Party. The party was illegal then, and its activities were underground. The ruler of Poland after World War I was Jozef Pilsudski, a man who hated the Communists even more than he hated the Jews.

¹ The following personal account was written originally for a Holocaust study program and has not been published previously.
In her youth, my mother was arrested by the Polish police for the crime of belonging to the Communist Party, and she was imprisoned in notorious sites — Berezie Kartuskiej Prison, where she met my father, and then in Fordon Prison. After serving a total of three years and nine months in these prisons, she returned to Sarny and resumed her political activities in the party. There, she and my father married.

At a very young age, my father Berl had begun working to support his family, first as a tailor's assistant and afterwards as a tailor. He joined the Communist Party after he became aware of their revolutionary activities in the Wolyn Region. When he was a child of nine, the Bolshevik Revolution erupted. He, an assistant tailor who had been consistently abused as a laborer, was immediately attracted to the principles of the Communist Party and he began spending time with its members, much to the objection of his entire family. My father, like my mother, spent time in various prisons of Pilsudski's dictatorial regime.

My parents were married in a civil, rather than religious ceremony, despite objections from their families. Eventually the families came to terms with the youngsters’ determination to engage politically. In exchange for this agreement, the two agreed to a compromise, and they were wed in a religious ceremony in a distant city. I very recently discovered the latter information from my cousin, because my parents never spoke of their religious wedding.

My uncle Ya'acov Shuster, of blessed memory, told me that my parents and my paternal grandparents had a terrible fight because of the refusal of my parents to have their first son, my brother Marek, circumcised. When my parents had to travel to another town for some political activities, his family quickly organized a circumcision. They had the local mohel, who was also a butcher, come and perform the ceremony. Marek was named after my mother's father, Menachem Mendel, who had died from a terrible illness a few years earlier. Though they decided to name him Menachem, they called him Marek — a proper Polish name. He maintained the use of that name until his death in 1997 and even though he lived in Israel, he never gave himself a Hebrew name.

Contrarily, my parents changed the names they had been given at birth. My father's original name was Berl Dov which he changed to Boleslaw — again, a proper Polish name. My mother, born Rywa, changed her name to Regina, and those are the names that appear on their wedding certificate. When the family immigrated to Israel, they did so using their Polish names.

My parents’ underground political activities weighed heavily on the young family, until 1939. Then, they received the happy news that their district, according to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, would be annexed to the Soviet Union. The mere fact that my father was arrested by the Soviet authorities — because of Stalin's anti-Semitic policies — briefly after the annexation and sent to Siberia did not deter either him or my mother from being faithful to the party.
At the time, my mother was pregnant with my second brother Franek. He was born in September of 1940, while my father was imprisoned in the Gulag. Like Marek, Franek was named after a family member but he, like Marek, maintained the use of his Polish name until his death in 1993 in Toronto.

With the beginning of Operation Barbarossa and Germany's attempted conquest of the Soviet Union in 1941, my father was released from Siberia; he returned to Sarny and immediately enlisted in the Red Army. My parents were together only briefly, as the Germans were conquering Sarny and the entire district.

My mother, following Stalin's orders, moved to a kolkhoz (a Soviet collective farm, structured somewhat like a kibbutz or communal village in Israel) in Uzbekistan, deep within the Soviet Asiatic region, far from the reach of the Nazis. My father, on the other hand, under the orders of the Red Army, enlisted in a Soviet Partisan unit which operated in the forests surrounding Sarny. There he witnessed the murder by the Nazis of almost his entire family along with most of Sarny's Jewish population. The victims were then buried in a mass grave.

His mother, father, nine sisters, aunts, uncles and cousins were murdered. The only survivors were a few cousins and his younger brother Yankel (Ya'acov), who like my father had joined the Red Army.

Of the Fabrikants, my mother’s family, two older brothers survived — Ya'acov and Yoseph; they had escaped earlier with their families deep into the USSR. In addition, my uncle Hatzkel had been drafted into the Red Army; he survived the war and remained in the USSR. Hatzkel was also an active communist, and he was the only family member who had supported my mother’s political affiliations.

From the beginning of 1942, it became increasingly dangerous for my father to remain within Nazi-occupied lands; he was a Communist, an officer in the Red Army, and a Jew. After being ordered to cross the lines back into Soviet territory, he took a detour to Uzbekistan to visit his wife and two young sons. He intended to join his new unit — The Polish Division, under the leadership of Konstantyn Rokossowski. So, after his visit he joined his unit, but unbeknownst to him, during his family visit he had been tried and found guilty of desertion, and he was sentenced to be executed.

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2In a kolkhoz, a member, called kolkhoznik (колхозник, feminine колхозница), was paid a share of the farm’s profits according to the number of workdays, while a sovkhoz employed salaried workers. In addition, the kolkhoz was required to sell their crops to the state, which fixed prices for the grain. These were set very low and the difference between what the state paid the farm and what the state charged consumers for the food represented a major source of income for the Soviet government. Thus, in 1948 the Soviet government charged wholesalers 335 rubles for 100 kilograms of rye, but it paid the kolkhoz roughly 8 rubles. Nor did such prices change much to keep up with inflation. Prices paid by the Soviet government hardly changed at all between 1929 and 1953, meaning that the state did not pay one half or even one third of the cost of production. (Wikipedia)
For some reason, the sentence never reached his division and he served with them as had been previously ordered. My father held the rank of captain in the infantry and he fought in the battle of Stalingrad. Together with his soldiers, he reached Berlin at the end of the war in 1945.

Meanwhile, my mother lived in the kolkhoz in Uzbekistan with my two brothers. Their life was very difficult. For a while, she and my father corresponded, but soon after his return to the front, their correspondence ended. She received sporadic news about my father, and then, during the freezing winter of 1942-43, she received the horrible news, with no explanation or details, that my father was dead. (This probably happened because of his being accused of treason.)

My mother worked picking cotton. (Forty years later, when I was picking cotton with a modern mechanized picker in the fields of Kibbutz Yad Hanna, my mother told me how she had become a “Soviet working heroine” as a result of being the fastest cotton picker in her kolkhoz.) In the summer of 1943 my mother and her children left their kolkhoz because of her son Franek's illness and they moved to another one on the outskirts of the city of Bukhara, so that he could receive treatment. There, my mother met a kind medic. Their hard lives bound them together.

As the world war drew to an end, my mother and brothers stayed on in Central Asia because they did not want to move Franek, who was still recovering. (Perhaps, though, this was just an excuse to stay with her new life partner.) In 1945, Regina Shuster was chosen as the representative of her kolkhoz to hail the Soviet soldiers upon their return from their victory over the Nazi oppressors. The victory parade was to take place on November 7th in Red Square. Naturally, my mother's new boyfriend arranged to join her at that event in Moscow.

According to my mother, the parade was very impressive. Then suddenly, and to her amazement and shock, she saw mounted on a horse at the head of his unit her Berl -- alive and well. Their reunion was obviously very moving. However, that very night my parents received word from a close friend that the Soviet secret police were looking for my father. The charges of desertion had never been dropped. My mother and father immediately went into hiding. They hid for a few weeks with different friends. Eventually my father used his Polish citizenship and managed to cross the border into Poland.

My mother, as a result of their reunion, became pregnant. She returned to Uzbekistan, took my brothers, and carrying me in her womb, she reached Poland as well. And so, I came into the world on September 16, 1946, in Walbrzych, Poland, near the Polish border with Germany. My parents first considered calling me Ishaiyahu because they wanted to name me after my paternal grandfather who had been murdered in the killing pits of Wolyn in 1941. However, they quickly abandoned that idea, because it seemed
inappropriate that highly recognized communists would call their son such an obviously Jewish name. Since they felt that they had received me as a gift, they named me Seweryn, an unusual name in Poland at the time. I dearly cherish, appreciate and love my paternal grandfather with all of my soul, whom I knew only through stories and feelings, but I am pleased that I did not inherit his name.

I used to think that my parents chose to settle in Walbrzych, far from the Soviet border, to keep their distance from the Soviets. However, I learned during a Holocaust study program that the Polish government's policy was to repopulate the western area of the country since the Germans had either killed or deported much of the population there throughout their six-year occupation.

In spite of everything that had happened to the Jews of Poland, my parents remained in Walbrzych, Poland, loyal, active and prominent members of the Polish Communist Party. My father managed a clothing factory and my mother was a party employee. Their promotion within the party hierarchy was swift. My mother received an important position in the Central Committee and was one of the personal secretaries of Edward Ochab, a prominent party and government official. Then my father was offered a managerial position in a military clothing factory in Warsaw because of connections he had made during his military service. Thus, towards the end of 1949, we moved to Poland's capital, Warszawa (Warsaw).

We lived first in a town near Warsaw called Anin, occupying a beautiful home in the woods. Our elderly and kind neighbor was the Polish Jewish poet Julian Tuwim. Then, we moved to Warsaw once a new home was built there for us. It was located in one of the first neighborhoods to be constructed on the ruins of Warsaw. These neighborhoods were erected for Polish and Soviet officers. Therefore, our neighbors were either military personnel or government officials, so naturally my friends were their children.

Life was good during those years, and I have no recollection of any anti-Semitic atmosphere or events, although everyone knew that my family was Jewish. We never hid our Jewish identity. My parents spoke Yiddish in public and attended the Yiddish Theater in Warsaw. (Unfortunately, I have never understood Yiddish.)

We celebrated some of the Jewish holidays. I recall that my brothers and I demanded that we have a Christmas tree because they are lovely, and of course because of the gifts. My parents acquiesced but we also lit Hanukah candles that stood in the window. Naturally we were given a secular explanation of the secular spirit of Hanukah. At Passover, my father brought matzo from the Israeli embassy. My Polish friends and I nicknamed the matzo, which we enjoyed, "Jewish bread." We did not observe the kosher dietary laws and until we moved to Israel I didn't know what they were.
However, the first night of Passover we always had a large feast. Bread was not a part of the meal and we were told why it was celebrated. Neither God nor any other religious aspect of the occasion was mentioned. It was purely a celebration of freedom. I have tried ever since to continue the tradition, first within the kibbutz, and now, since kibbutz tradition has dissolved, within my own home. I continue the secular Jewish tradition which I was given in my parents' home.

Although we barely sensed it, it is not true that anti-Semitism didn't exist in Poland in those days. One event I do recall was my oldest brother Marek, who was a member of the Polish Communist Youth organization, coming home after being beaten up by Polish hooligans. I was told that intoxicated hooligans had done it, but years later when I was in Israel I was told that the reason behind the attack was anti-Semitism.

Nonetheless, we led happy lives and I had many Polish friends. Like all Poles, we celebrated Wladyslaw Gomulka's rise to power in 1956. The very same Gomulka had been a friend of my mother’s in Pilsudski’s prison 30 years earlier. However, as a reaction to the 1956 Sinai Campaign in Israel, and because anti-Semitism overcame him, Gomulka decided to “cleanse” Poland of its Jewish population. The few Jews who remained after the expulsion in 1957 were deported (more like “encouraged to leave”) after the Six Day War in 1967. Of course, I was too young at the time to comprehend the on-going political process.

It was shortly after Gomulka's election, while we were still celebrating his rise to power, that I was told by my parents that we were moving to Israel. At first, I didn't know what or where Israel was, until I was told that they were speaking of Palestine, and that there most of the family that had survived the Holocaust was living.

As we were leaving Poland on the train in the spring of 1957 I personally experienced overt anti-Semitic behavior by Poles. On the border between Czechoslovakia and Poland, the Polish Border Patrol checked the passengers and their belongings. Their behavior reminded me of the pictures and movies I had seen at home and in school of the crudeness and brutality manifested during wartime. I remember, as if it were today, that our record player that was in a very special suitcase, was taken from us. It had been given to my mother as a farewell gift from her comrades in the Central Committee of the Communist Party. The image of my mother, the woman who in my mind could do anything, pleading and crying in front of a young, mocking Polish border guard is etched forever in my memory.

Thus, for years, I had no desire to visit Poland. A special reason eventually presented itself in 1999 when my childhood friend and I found each other.

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3 In 1999, a Polish friendship was re-kindled following a long search. We had had great neighbors, the Faust family; they lived across the street from us. The father was a colonel in the Polish Navy and they
Israel

On May 5, 1957, the Greek ship which had transported us from Venice docked in Haifa. Aside from Jewish Agency representatives, family members I had seen only in photographs were waiting for us on the pier. My cousin, Haikeh from Kibbutz Lochemei Hagetaot (The Ghetto Fighters Kibbutz), asked my parents in Yiddish “how the little boy is called.” "Seweryn", my parents answered. “That is not a name that you can call a child in Israel” Haikeh replied. “Who is he named after?” My father hesitated, recalling their uncertainty of what to call me when I was born eleven years earlier. “Perhaps he is named after my father. They called him Yishayahu”, my father answered.

My cousin saved me by saying that Yishayahu is too long and awkward a name. “We'll call him Yishai”, Haikeh declared. So it was, and so it remains. I love my name that was given to me by my cousin Haikeh, who took me to live in her kibbutz. There I lived for two or three years. Until the day I die I will never forget the Agami family from Lochemei Hagetaot that so warmly “adopted” me. They gave me a strong beginning in my new country, along with my new name.

My parents were placed in a ma'abara (temporary housing set up for new immigrants) in Kiryat Haim, near Haifa. After looking for work, they sought contact with the Israeli Communist Party.

Yes, in spite of the blows and humiliation they had suffered in Europe at the hands of the party, in spite of the arrests and eventual exile, Berl and Regina Shuster arrived in Israel and shortly thereafter joined the Communist Party. At that time, the party was “anti-Zionist,” and its members were disliked by most of the Jewish population in Israel. This was during the McCarthy Era and Israel’s political orientations leaned towards that of the so-called “capitalist” USA. Thus, the communists, or anyone who might be too “red,” were persecuted, discriminated against and even beaten.

After moving in with my parents in Kiryat Bialik and trying to join a few youth movements, such as Noar Oved and Hashomer Hatzair, I, too, joined the Communists, through the youth movement, Bankee (an acronym for The Communist Youth Covenant).

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had two sons, Janek and Jurek. Our connections were cut when we were expelled from Poland in 1957. But after communism fell in Poland, Jurek found me. We have been in contact ever since.
Garin Dror (Freedom Group), a part of Nahal⁴, arrived at Kibbutz Yad Hanna in October of 1963 for the first phase of its army service. Kibbutz Yad Hanna was on the “Green Line”, the accepted international border, facing the (West Bank) then Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan city of Tulkarem. Towards the end of 1962, I joined my friends from the Bankee Youth Movement who were serving in Kibbutz Yad Hanna with Garin Achva. I remained there until I was inducted into the army. The army track for the communists was different than the other Nahal groups because of the politically-based discrimination and isolation that communists then endured in Israel. (Naturally, the military authorities explained away the discrimination as being based on “security considerations.”)

In actual fact, there was no true connection between national security and Bankee. Our track began with pre-military unpaid service in Kibbutz Yad Hanna for three months. Afterwards we spent six months in basic training and then we were returned immediately to Kibbutz Yad Hanna to work until the end of our service. The garins from other youth movements that served in other frontier communities went through advanced training in the paratroopers, and they created small outposts that eventually became settlements. These and various other activities and opportunities were denied to us — all based on politics.

A few years later, during my Reserve Service, I completed the training I had been denied and became a part of a select paratroop unit. This occurred at the beginning of the 1970's after the division within Maki, the Israeli Communist Party, and after a tragic incident along the border, at Kibbutz Yad Hanna.

On December 8, 1964, Jordanian Legionnaires opened fire on Avraham Jurie, who was protecting me as a security escort while I tilled the fields next to the border of Tulkarem, then part of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Jurie, my best friend, was killed. Ever since then, my life has been bound to Yad Hanna. (The story of our garin and the border incident has been told by me in a movie, “As Wind in the Willows,” which was produced in 1994 by Tikva Sneh and me. The film was shown at the Haifa Film Festival of that year.)

In Kibbutz Yad Hanna in 1965, I met my life partner (and now wife) Mazal Miyuni. She was born in Ioanina in northwest Greece. Mazal, the daughter of Greek Communists, came to Yad Hanna with a garin that was named after my already dead friend, Jurie. Mazal and I met over a bar of chocolate — our paths crossed and melded.

⁴ Nahal- a Hebrew acronym for Noar Halutzi Lohem (literally, Fighting Pioneer Youth), refers to a program for Israeli youth which allows them to combine their compulsory three-year military service with volunteer-type civilian service, such as organizing social welfare projects in neighborhoods and towns suffering from socioeconomic difficulties, acting as counselors for youth organizations, or founding and developing new agricultural settlements. (Wikipedia)
I was released from my mandatory military service in 1966, and Mazal and I married in September of that year in Kibbutz Yad Hanna. There, our four children and three grandchildren were born. There, we all live today. Yad Hanna is no longer a kibbutz and most certainly no longer communist. Regretfully? Perhaps.  

One day in the spring of 1969 (if memory serves me well) when I returned home from work, Mazal told me that a Polish man named Wlodek Przytyk, who barely spoke Hebrew but who knew Polish and English, had arrived at the kibbutz. He had come to visit someone from my garin, Oded Yorkovski. Since Oded, to say the least, was not one of my friends, I had little contact with Wlodek at first. However, after meeting by chance we learned to like each other and then became close friends. We had a great deal in common and had very similar tastes in music and books. Wlodek knew a great deal about the type of Western music that was very popular at that time, particularly music from the US and Canada. His desire to know about things from the West came from his life behind the Iron Curtain of Communist Poland; and his knowledge was vast.

Another thing we had in common was our pleasure in eating and drinking. Mazal loved then, and still does now, cooking and no one can match her culinary artistry. We satisfied our appetites with countless parties that lasted through the night and into the morning — and all within the walls of our tiny kibbutz home.

I learned that Wlodek was born on November 7, 1949, an extremely important date for communists throughout the world since on that day in 1917 the Bolshevik Revolution had broken out in Russia. As a good communist family, the gift of a child born on that day was commemorated by naming their tiny infant Wlodzimierz - Joseph after the names of the party's founder, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, and Joseph Stalin. The Przytyk family left Poland in 1968 after their oldest son Jurek went to the United States for a university sabbatical and opted against returning to Poland.

The family went to Vienna first and then to Rome, where they were temporarily housed with the help of the Jewish Agency. They intended to immigrate to the US, where Wlodek's father Andrzej had close relatives. However, his mother, Sarah Nomberg-Przytyk, was denied a visa by the American immigration authorities as she had been a very active member of the Communist Party in Poland.

So, in 1969 Andrzej joined his family that had immigrated to the US in the 1920's while Sarah, together with Wlodek the younger son, immigrated to Israel. In the meantime, their son Jurek had left the US and moved to Canada, where he met his wife Natasha.

5 The story of Kibbutz Yad Hanna and its subsequent changes from the time of its establishment in 1950 -- and the massive change in 2007 -- is worthy of another essay. I'm not entirely sure that this place should still be called Yad Hanna.
When Wlodek and his mother arrived in Israel, she was placed in housing for retired academics, located in Ramat Efal. Wlodek was sent to a kibbutz ulpan which he quickly left. He tried his luck in the Israeli Merchant Marines and went abroad as a cadet. On his first journey, he realized that the lifestyle wasn't suitable for him and when the ship docked at one of the US ports, Wlodek left the ship and joined his father who was living there. After a while, Wlodek crossed the border into Canada and joined his brother for a while until he grew tired of it and returned to Israel.

In the meantime, Sarah, being a veteran Communist Party member, joined Maki (the Israeli Communist Party). Maki splintered into two groups — one that became Rakach, headed by Meir Vilner and Arab leaders, while the other group, Maki, was headed by Moshe Sneh and Shmuel Mikonis. Sarah joined the latter of the two.

After Wlodek returned to Israel, his mother advised him to try life on a kibbutz and what could be more natural than to live on a communist kibbutz? And so Wlodek and I met in Kibbutz Yad Hanna.

One morning, in that spring of 1970, Wlodek and I had breakfast in the kibbutz dining room with my parents, who were also living in Yad Hanna. Naturally we spoke in Polish and my mother asked Wlodek where he was from in Poland. “I'm from Lublin”, he answered. “I had a very good friend from Lublin”, my mother said. “We shared a prison cell in Poland for three years because of our membership in the Communist Party. Her name was Sarah Nomberg.” There was a moment of silence at the table and then Wlodek said, “That's my mother.”

Obviously that same day we went to Ramat Efal and brought Sarah to the kibbutz. There was great excitement as the two friends who hadn't seen each other for some 40 years finally met. My father, who knew Sarah only from stories, was moved to tears. The old friends sat into the wee hours of the morning, laughing and crying. Each of them recounted their life experiences since they left one another in prison in Poland in 1934.

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6 The aim of an ulpan is to teach adult immigrants to Israel the basic language skills of conversation, writing and comprehension. Most ulpanim also provide instruction in the fundamentals of Israeli culture, history, and geography. The primary purpose of the ulpan is to help new citizens to be integrated as quickly and as easily as possible into the social, cultural and economic life of their new country.
It turned out that Sarah, like my parents, had remained politically active in the Communist Party until the time Poland was conquered by the Nazis. But unlike my mother, who was saved by escaping into Central Asia, Sarah was captured by the Nazis and sent to Auschwitz. A journalist, she had documented her life during World War II in a book entitled Auschwitz. It was published in English by the University of North Carolina Press in 1985. The original manuscript had been written in 1966 in Sarah’s handwriting and is found in the archives of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

Obviously after such a meeting, Włodek and I grew closer and Sarah came to visit often in Yad Hanna. If memory serves me, she came most weekends. Most of the visits were between my parents and Sarah, but the family frequently spent time in my home as well.

During one of these visits, while we were all sitting on the porch, Mazal’s parents, Moshe and Lina Miyuni arrived. Immediately after their arrival, Mazal’s mother spoke to Mazal in Greek and said, “I know that woman”. Mazal replied, “Oh, you know everybody! You’re probably imagining it. How could you possibly know her? You’re from Greece, she’s from Poland -- what’s wrong with you?” Lina persisted and said to Mazal, “I know her. Look, the numbers tattooed on our arm are from the same camp: Auschwitz. I know her from there. We were on the same block for a while and I even taught her songs in Greek.”

Lina approached Sarah and asked her, “Do you remember the little Greek girl in Auschwitz who taught you a Greek song?” Lina began to sing and Sarah immediately replied, “Of course I remember,” and she began to sing as well. Lina then said, “I am that Greek girl from the Block in Auschwitz.” Of course, everyone was moved — tears and experiences were shared into the late hours of the night.

The relationship with Włodek became even stronger. Mazal and I shared a closeness with Włodek that could be likened to that of a brother, especially because of the incredible connection between our mothers from 40 and 50 years before. The three of us shared a good life in Kibbutz Yad Hanna: parties, many trips, food, drink and a lot of music. Włodek met a volunteer from Denmark named Karin, who was both beautiful and sweet. They began living together in Kibbutz Yad Hanna. In 1973, Włodek joined the Israel Defense Forces and served in the Air Force. It seemed that he had found his place in Israel.

At one point, Włodek’s brother Jurek came for a visit from Canada to Kibbutz Yad Hanna with his wife Natasha and their son Sasha. Other friends of Jurek’s joined in as well: Sidney and his partner, along with his daughter Maya from Canada, and Daniel and Max with their daughter Chantal from Holland. That visit transformed the group into one large international family.
During the Yom Kippur War, Wlodek was a member of a crew that transported wounded soldiers from the field of battle via helicopter to various hospitals. The horrible experiences during that war and the loss of our good friend, Moshe Uziel from the kibbutz, affected Wlodek deeply. He and Karin decided to leave Israel. They first tried to live in Canada near his brother and his mother Sarah, who had also emigrated to Canada. Shortly afterwards they moved to Denmark, the country of Karin's birth; there, their daughter Sima was born.

My close relationship with Wlodek didn't change despite the geographical distance. In fact, we grew even closer. Wlodek, Karin and Sima visited in Israel frequently. Sarah visited on occasion and remained in touch with my parents.

The first of the people I have written about to depart this world was Wlodek's father, Andrzej Przytyk, who died of cancer in Canada in 1972. He was buried on Jurek's farm in Canada. My father, Berl Shuster, died in 1983 and was buried in Kibbutz Yad Hanna. Sarah Nomberg-Przytyk died in 1990, after becoming ill during a visit in Israel. According to her request she was buried in Taut. My mother, Rywa Fabrikant Shuster died in 1993 and was buried in Kibbutz Yad Hanna.

My brother Franek died two days after my mother was buried. I had spent a month and a half with Franek, who had undergone surgery for a brain tumor. I stood by his side and cared for him throughout his illness. After he died, I took his remains back to Israel to be buried next to our father, as he had requested. In 1996, my oldest brother died as the result of a lengthy illness and he was buried in Kiryat Bialik.

And finally, my friend—my brother Wlodek Przytyk, died on March 21, 2006 after a brief struggle with cancer. His wife Karin and daughter Sima decided to have Wlodek cremated. His ashes were buried in the three places that were meaningful to Wlodek throughout his life. Some of his ashes are in Denmark, where he spent most of his adult life. Some of them are in Canada, where he visited often and where his father was buried. The rest of his ashes are in Israel, a place where he spent fascinating years and where his mother Sarah is buried. Wlodek is the only person I know who is buried on three continents: Europe, America and Asia.

In my opinion, this story is one that only a Jew could experience.

Translated from Hebrew by Beth Malke.
Book Reviews


Reviewed by Michael Palencia-Roth

In the concluding sentence of this long and impressive book, Andrew Scull writes: “[Madness] remains a fundamental puzzle, a reproach to reason, inescapably part and parcel of civilization itself” (411). He wants to leave us with this fundamental truth: the question of madness is inextricable from the question of civilization. In two previous works, *Museums of Madness* (Penguin Books, 1979) and *The Most Solitary of Afflictions: Madness and Society in Britain, 1700-1900* (Yale UP, 1993), Scull’s frame of reference was “societal.” In *Madness and Civilization*, his frame of reference has expanded to an inquiry into that largest collectivity that is the raison d’être of the ISCSC: “civilization.”

*Madness in Civilization* mines Scull’s *Madhouse* (Yale UP, 2005), *The Insanity of Place, the Place of Insanity* (Routledge, 2006), and *Masters of Bedlam* (Princeton UP, 2014). In the preface to the second edition of his 1977 book entitled *Decarceration* (Rutgers, 1984), Scull writes of his own work as a scholar: “I hope it is not immodest to suggest that the republication of the original text is testimony to the continuing impact of my attempt to develop a historically informed macrosociological perspective on the structure of social control in contemporary England and the United States.” Writing today, Scull might substitute for “macrosociological” the word “civilizational”.

*Madness in Civilization* is therefore a kind of omnium gatherum that brings together all his previous work and thought on the subject and also provides a scholarly testament to the “continuing impact” of his life’s work. Scull habitually mines previous work and even repeats certain chapters in successive books. For example, a chapter entitled “The Rise of the Asylum” from *Museums of Madness* (pp. 13-48) is repeated, with that title, in *The Most Solitary of Afflictions*, and then expanded upon (pp. 1-45). Some of the language, details, and paragraphs from this and other chapters are distributed through *Madness in Civilization*. All of that makes an evaluation of *Madness in Civilization* difficult.
Other scholars have written on madness and mental illness from broadly historical and societal perspectives. Consider, for example, the co-authored book by Franz G. Alexander and Sheldon T. Selesnick, *The History of Psychiatry: An Evaluation of Psychiatric Thought and Practice from Prehistoric Times to the Present*; E.R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*; Roy Porter’s books, including *A Social History of Madness and Madness: A Brief History; The Routledge History of Madness and Mental Health*, edited by Greg Eghigian; Petteri Pietikäinen, *Madness: A History*; and of course Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, which is the abridged translated version (1965) of his massive *Folie et Déraison: Histoire de la folie à l’âge classique* (1961). *Folie et Déraison* was translated into English as *History of Madness* in 2006 and 2009. But Scull is more comprehensive and more wide-ranging on this subject than any other writer I have come across. Even Foucault’s *History of Madness*, longer (by more than 200 pages) than Scull’s *Madness in Civilization*, covers a briefer time period and has a more limited geographical scope.

Much of the work in the comparative history of civilizations has to do with such large and often rather abstract issues as state systems, symbolic systems, comparative religions, migrations, urbanism, economics, world-system theory, trade networks, urbanization, imperialism, industrialization, war and peace, and the like. Much attention has also been paid to the conception of “civilization” itself and the taxonomy of civilizations (how many there are, and where). Seldom is work in comparative civilizations reduced to the self, in particular to the mind and its illnesses, in relation to the society or civilization in which it is embedded. Scull’s reduction focuses attention on a very specific problem and the threats it presented historically, and continues to present, to social order. The topic and Scull’s treatment of it lead to a number of questions. “What do we mean by ‘madness and what is its relationship to “civilization”’? “Do the theory and treatment of madness belong to ‘the civilizing process’”? “What causes insanity”? “What is the proper response to madness”? “What are the effects of madness, if left untreated”? “What is the opposite of madness”? “Does the very notion of ‘civilization’ – which includes the desire to be ‘civilized’ – require the isolation of the ‘insane’”? Many other questions could be asked.

*Madness in Civilization* is divided into twelve substantial chapters: Confronting Madness (10-15); Madness in the Ancient World (16-48); The Darkness and the Dawn (48-85); Melancholie and Madnesse (86-121); Madhouses and Mad-Doctors (122-161); Nerves and Nervousness (162-187); The Great Confinement (188-223); Degeneration and Despair (224-267); the Demi-fous (268-289); Desperate Remedies (290-321); A Meaningful Interlude (322-357); A Psychiatric Revolution? (358-411). The chapter titles signal their contents and announce Scull’s broadly chronological approach to the subject.
He distinguishes his subject from the history of psychiatry (which is a modern term invented in 19th-century Germany) because ‘madness’ has always existed in all societies; it is part of the history of humankind. He puts it this way: “Madness and its cognates – insanity, lunacy, frenzy, mania, melancholia, hysteria and the like – were terms in general usage” (12) throughout history and Scull’s particular interest is in “the encounter between madness and civilization over more than two millennia” (12).

As Scull progresses through the history of madness, his scope becomes increasingly secular. It also narrows from “madness in civilization” to “madness in society”. One might say, therefore, that as Scull approaches modernity, his analysis becomes less “civilizational” and more “societal”. This is in part because he is tracking a movement, and in part because he becomes increasingly interested in medical issues per se. He begins in the ancient (western) world, in Palestine, Greece and Rome, with a nod to Imperial China (the Qin and Han Dynasties, 221 BCE to 220 CE) (36-47). Then he moves to early Christian culture and the rise of Islam as he focuses on the European Middle Ages. The references to Islam and madness are relatively brief. Though Islam is dropped from consideration in the early modern period and beyond, what is important here, to my mind, is that Scull recognizes Islam’s positive influence on the development of medieval Christian institutions for the insane, especially in Spain (85).

In the earlier centuries of western history, up through the European Middle Ages, madness was viewed primarily through a religious lens. For example, the Greeks viewed epilepsy as a “sacred disease” (26) and said of madness, as a quotation mistakenly attributed to Euripides suggests, that “those whom the gods would destroy they first make mad”. But Euripides himself actually gives a more psychological interpretation of madness when he describes how Medea, driven mad by her husband Jason’s infidelity, kills her own children. In addition, the followers of Hippocrates (460-357 BCE), in discarding religious explanations for the origin of madness and emphasizing more physical origins in the body (this became the humoral theory of illness), set the stage for the competing religious and secular interpretations of madness throughout western history. The Romans continued in a similar vein. Both cultures “bequeathed,” says, Scull, “both natural and supernatural accounts of the ravages of madness to subsequent generations. Doctors and priests offered comfort and solace in different ways” (35).

In emphasizing “supernatural accounts,” Christianity followed Hebrew tradition (for instance the idea of the inspired prophet). Medieval Christianity is full of stories of “divine madness” and the “raptures of Christian visionaries and saints” (36). A contrary interpretation of the origin of madness also was prevalent: madness as demonic possession, a view that predominated in Christianity in early modern European history.
These weren’t the only views on madness, however, and in the early modern period, as well as into the 19th century, madness also became something of a fashionable illness in the guise of depression and especially melancholy, even to the point of being associated with genius and creativity. Madness increasingly became part of the history of art and literature, from Albrecht Dürer’s *Melancholia I* (1514) to Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso* (1532), Shakespeare’s *King Lear* (circa 1608), Cervantes’ *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (1615), and Robert Burton’s *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1652), to mention but a few titles.

Present throughout Scull’s work is a binary view of the history of madness in civilization. Madness is either religious or secular in origin. It is physical, originating in the body (this is the humoral theory of madness which Dürer, for example, relied on), or it is spiritual, originating in the psyche or soul. It is biological, originating in the brain, or it is mental and thus accessible through psychoanalysis. The binary view is even present in the term “schizophrenia” or “split mind.” Whichever half of the binary one believed to be the origin of madness determined, in part, the treatment of the person believed to be insane. The belief in demonic possession as the cause of madness led to practices like exorcism and witch-burning. Belief in supernatural causes, left unexplained or not directly attributed to Satan, led to more benign treatments such as housing the insane in charitable institutions supported by the Church. The conviction that the insane were dangerous and needed to be isolated from society led to the creation of asylums. Scull details the establishment of such institutions in the English-speaking world, the most famous of which was the Bethlehem Hospital, founded as a religious charity outside London in 1247 and the antecedent of the more “secular” hospital known as “Bedlam”. The separation of the insane from society is Michel Foucault’s principal focus in *Madness and Civilization* and *History of Madness*. As did Foucault, Scull calls this development “The Great Confinement” (188-223), which for him began in a definitive way in the 18th and 19th centuries and has continued into the present. For Foucault, in *History of Madness* (48), the “Great Confinement” began in Paris in 1656 with the royal decree which set up the Hôpital Général. For both Foucault and Scull, the “Great Confinement” accelerated the development of a more secular and, in some ways, a more inhumane treatment of madness.

That more inhumane treatment is linked, sadly, to the predominance of the view of madness as a societal problem and a medical issue. The history of madness in the modern era becomes increasingly the history of psychiatry, whether through the treatment of hypochondria, hysteria and other nervous disorders, or the application of psychoanalysis to a patient’s dreams in the treatment of neuroses. 19th and 20th-century remedies for madness have included the inducement of fevers and malaria (300ff), the application of electrical shocks (308ff), sensory deprivation, a particularly brutal surgery known as transorbital lobotomy (316), and, most recently and most prevalently, the use of psychotropic drugs.
In sum, the view of madness has evolved from a disease of the soul or psyche to a disease of the mind and, in the case of psychiatry and pharmacology, a disease of the brain.

The treatment of the mentally ill has increasingly relied upon the pharmaceutical industry. “Anti-psychotics and anti-depressants,” writes Scull, “are among the most profitable of all drugs sold on the planet” (402). More recently, it has been suggested that the cause of madness can be even more precisely determined. Though Scull does not dwell on this fact, research has shown that in at least 70% of cases there is a genetic component to a disease like schizophrenia, though a direct causal link between a gene or particular set of genes and the disease has not been proven. The status of research in this field is summarized by Courtney Humphries in his essay on “Probing Psychoses” in the July-August issue (2017) of *Harvard Magazine*. The new neuro-scientific genetic approach is at odds with traditional interpretations of mental illness in the West, “from the Bible to Freud,” as Scull’s subtitle puts it, which sees it as coming from the psyche or soul of the person.

Scull is generally dismissive of Foucault’s work, but he shares with him the view that institutions or asylums for the insane historically have mostly been punitive in nature. For both men, the treatment of the insane is a moral issue that says a great deal about the society in which diagnosis and treatment take place. The issue is moral because throughout history, Scull says, it is the society itself which must bear some responsibility for the mental illness of individuals within it. Indeed, after more than 400 pages of detailed history, of example after example and story after story, Scull suggests that despite all the attempts by shamans, healers, medical doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, and neuroscientists, we have not progressed as a society as much as we should have. “Modern psychiatry and its potions notwithstanding,” writes Scull, “one of the more sobering realities about serious mental illness in the twenty-first century is that its sufferers not only die at a much younger age on average than the rest of us (as much as twenty-five years sooner), but also that the incidence of serious illness and mortality in this population has accelerated in recent decades. On this most basic of levels we seem to be regressing” (406). In sum, after more than two millennia, we still have not been able to solve the mystery of the causes of madness and its most effective and humane treatment. Where do the roots of this mystery lie? The roots lie somewhere, Scull says, “in the murky mix of biology and the social” (411). This is not an optimistic conclusion, but it is probably the most appropriate one.
I believe the praise for this book to be largely deserved. “A work of heroic scholarship,” says Elaine Showalter of Princeton University. “Brilliant, provocative and hugely entertaining,” says Dirk Wittenborn, author of *Pharmakon*. “A wonderful book, fascinating and beautifully written,” says Sylvia Nasar, author of *A Beautiful Mind*. “There is no other volume comparable to this in scope,” says David Healy, author of *Pharmageddon*. “Mr. Scull’s tone is elegant, his scholarship immaculate. The story he tells is riveting,” writes Joanna Bourke in *The Wall Street Journal* (April 2015). What all these comments gloss over is the following. What distinguishes *Madness in Civilization* and makes it more than ordinarily significant is the civilizational perspective. It is there where Scull, in my view, is most illuminating and suggestive.
This book’s title must puzzle anyone even vaguely familiar with the history of world literature. Did Cervantes (1547-1615) invent fiction?

Unfortunately, the author’s focus is exclusively Western. Neither “India” nor “China” appears in the index, for instance. But China provides a tradition of fiction that long antedates *Don Quixote* (published in two volumes, the first in 1605). *The Water Margin and The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* appeared the 1300s of the Current Era (CE). *Journey to the West* appeared about 1590. Many regard the even earlier *Tale of Genji* (11th century CE) from Japan as the first psychological novel in a modern sense.*

Even restricting our focus to the West, how plausible is the title’s claim? It obviously depends on what one means by “fiction”. In what sense was *Don Quixote* (book one 1605, book two 1615) different from all that went before?

First, do we include poetry or plays as fiction? On plays Egginton is ambiguous, implying in some places he will accept them as fiction. In this case clearly Sophocles and other notable Greek playwrights two millennia before Cervantes have clear priority. (I think one can exclude the even earlier *Iliad* and *Odyssey* on the grounds the initial author[s] and listeners probably regarded them as history, despite our present perspective.) *Narrative* poems, clearly fictional, include *Chaucer’s Canterbury’s Tales*, or Dante’s *Inferno* among a great number which clearly predate Cervantes.

But even limiting oneself to narrative prose from the West, the claim of the title is incorrect. Complete Greek romantic novels survive from the 1st to the 3rd centuries of the Current Era (CE). ** From the Romans we have among others *The Satyricon* by Petronius (27- 66 CE), *The Golden Ass* by Apuleius (124 CE - 170 CE) and *A True Story* by Lucian (125 CE- 180 CE), which despite its title is a fictional satire of false claims. Its plot includes what would be called science fiction 2000 years later.

Egginton might claim that these were lost and not rediscovered until after Cervantes wrote. That is not correct. For example, Cervantes himself knew of and drew on at least one work of antiquity, *The Golden Ass*.

Egginton does mention at least *The Decameron*, 1345, by Boccacio (1313 – 1376), Utopia 1516 by Thomas More (1478 -- 1535), and *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (appearing in print from about 1532 up to 1564) by Rabelais (1490 – 1553).
He concedes priority in a sense to Boccacio because, in the Decameron, he created the form of the novella. But that along with the works of the others remain insufficient because “his [Boccacio’s] characters remain only objects in this world”. Presumably this means the reader has little or no access to the “inner life” of the characters. Cervantes by contrast plumbs the depth of character and shifts fluidly among different points of view. *Don Quixote* constantly leads us “to question the intent behind the descriptions, the difference between the masks the characters show to one another and the emotions that animate them.”

If *this* is the modern (Western) world created by any literature, then Cervantes did not invent it in 1605! Novelist or no novelist, Shakespeare did it starting 15 years earlier. (*Hamlet* appeared no later than 1602.) Egginton rather grudgingly concedes Shakespeare’s importance, but only in a footnote at the end of the book, where he defends the primacy he gives to Cervantes because the latter “created a more potent vehicle for influencing culture and thought.” (My emphasis.) I dispute this, and wonder if Egginton knows how widely Shakespeare has influenced the world.

But the “modern world” aside, what does Egginton *mean* precisely when he claims Cervantes invented “fiction”? He means Western modern (non-dramatic) fiction, i.e. the modern novel, hardly the modern world. One may forgive a critic for a little literary braggadocio, but Egginton’s title goes too far.

Many writers and literary critics (and politicians and advertisers) use language sloppily. Others speak and write as if they believe they have a right to take license with language. Because language evolves, these actors may think they are justifiably hastening the process. They may not go as far as Humpty Dumpty who openly asserts his sense of dogmatic entitlement. (“When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean” nor moreover, will you know the meaning “till I tell you”!) But, one may ask them, where is the boundary between a clearly understood new use, a misleading use, and a misuse?

At what point does misleading or misuse of language become dangerous in the sense George Orwell discussed in his essay “Politics and the English Language”? As long as an author makes clear directly, or at least by implication, that the exaggeration or the distortion of truth embodied by “literary license” s/he employs, *is in fact such*, and the reader understands that, then we avoid such corruption. But often we may not.
Egginton refers often to the equivalent of “truths in fiction”, as e.g. “a novel giving access to a truth otherwise inaccessible.” Thus allegedly, such fiction enables moral questions to be explored that could not otherwise be. Certainly, prose fiction, as well as plays and narrative poetry, may convey “truths.” John Steinbeck’s novel the *Grapes of Wrath* (1939) — or the film, the play, or the opera — presented movingly the poignant bleak effects of the Dust Bowl and the Depression on human lives. But vivid as it was, one hardly needed fiction to have access to these facts. Steinbeck made vivid the despair of those affected. But no one needed fiction to be aware of that.

Fiction can help us find truth. But it may not. It can as readily convey lies as well as truths, and lead us to believe things that are untrue! Nazis’ children’s fiction portrayed Jews as moral monsters. Some novels have glorified anti-semitism and race hatred. Fiction in Communist Poland served the Party’s ideology. So how is the reader or observer to know which fiction lies for the sake of propaganda in service to some ideology, or, for other reasons, deliberately presents harmful untruths in the guise of “fiction,” and which does not? It may be obvious. But it may not be.

There is in a location I cannot relocate in this book reference to the “glorious art of facts that aren’t.”

In two lines Shakespeare in his 138th sonnet put this notion better and more honestly than Cervantes and Egginton:

“When my love swears that she is made of truth,  
I do believe her, though I know she lies…”

There is no ambiguity in this paradox. The poet acknowledges he loves the maiden so much, he will accept her lies knowing them for what they are.

Setting aside the courtesy of taking the title at face value with the knowledge that it is exaggerated bluff, let us examine the contents within.

We find a vivid biography of both Cervantes (1547-1616) intermingled with a discussion of his creation. Cervantes had a remarkable life, full of incident and which itself could be the nidus of a great historical novel. His five year military career resulted in extensive battlefield exposure, maiming wounds (he lost use of his left arm), long hospitalization, and ultimately capture and then enslavement for another five years in Algiers before ransom by his family. Despite tribulations for the sake of the State and cause to which he was devoted, he received no financial reward for what he suffered for his sincere patriotism. Even at age 58, with the publication and immediate success of the first volume of *Don Quixote* in 1605 in the twilight of his life, he still endured financial difficulties, despite the fact the work was immediately and widely successful, and translated into many languages. He had 11 more years before dying in 1616, the same year in which the second volume of the work appeared.
Egginton starts a richly imagined chronicle with a scene of the raucous enjoyment of a reading aloud of *Don Quixote* in a low Spanish inn. This along with a large number of other descriptions and comments are simply speculative. “Cervantes *might well have* looked up and reflected…,” after some event “…friends *likely* gathered at a restaurant [with him]…,” here “Cervantes *may well have met*…,” “…*it is hard to believe this is not* how Cervantes felt…,” “…*undoubtedly* he felt relief…,” etc. My favorite is the image reported as fact of Cervantes on a hot August day in the dusty streets of Valladolid clutching a heavy package (the manuscript of the work) with his one useful hand. It was likely dusty in Valladolid (average rainfall is about 0.9 inches for the month) and maybe it was hot that August day or maybe it wasn’t (the average high August temperature in this era of global warming in that city is 86 and low 56), but how does Egginton know that Cervantes and not a friend didn’t carry it for him, especially if it was heavy. And we are frustrated by being told that while he stepped gingerly over blood and offal in the streets, we don’t know where he is going, although we are left to infer the package contains the manuscript of volume one of *Don Quixote* and it is being taken to a scribe to make a fair copy for the publisher. These speculative imaginations in a work of biography and literary criticism are signs of a novelist manqué. I suspect the author has been trying too hard to emulate Cervantes in attempts to probe aspects of his mind and life to which he really has no access.

Egginton, in discussing the variable viewpoints Cervantes creates in his novel, notes the similarity of Jorge Borges’ 20th century multi-perspectival approach to fiction. Borges, who was a great admirer of *Don Quixote*, had great fun writing, and his public reading, reviews of non-existent books. One such was of a work by an-of-course non-existent Frenchman who, Borges reports, recreated parts of *Don Quixote*, word for word, not by copying but through his own experience. Yet though the Frenchman’s work is identical, Borges’ review of his non-existent book pronounces it better than the original.

Borges and Cervantes enjoy the mischievous approach, as do we readers. And also does Egginton. Indeed, every once in a while, I got the sense he was enjoying playing a joke or two on his own readers in his text. Perhaps *that* accounts for his title.

* I thank Yunzhong Shu for calling my attention to these works.
** I thank Michael Palencia-Roth for calling my attention to the Greek Romances. This led me to discovery of the Latin novels.

Reviewed by Michael Andregg

This 2015 book published by Hampton Press, New York, NY, has 192 pages of text in 12 chapters, an appendix on trends and predictions, an index, 5 figures and 22 tables. Its author is Johan Galtung, an undoubted world leader in development of “peace studies,” an emerging field, which I have watched emerge. The book is based on a series of lectures he taught at Princeton and other universities from 1985-2000. He has reflected deeply on his geopolitical theory of peace and war since then of course, in many venues not least the Transcend, Global, on-line Peace University, which he founded. But some of Galtung’s chapters have an ancient air about them today, because so much history has passed to challenge his visionary prescriptions.

Chapters:
1. The Four Worlds: A Classification
2. The Four Worlds: A Characterization
3. The Four Worlds: The Six Relations Among Them
4. Inside the First World
5. Inside the Fourth World
6. On the Causes of Terrorism and Their Removal
7. Relation-Oriented Approach
8. Structure-Oriented Approach I: The State System
9. Structure-Oriented Approach II: The Center-Periphery System
10. Diversity, Symbiosis, and a Moral Imperative
11. On the Abolition of War and Other Social Evils
12. Visioning a Peaceful World

Galtung’s conclusion on page 189 begins with “Almost 40 years have passed since the 12-part framework for this book was written as a 12-week University course.” I have concluded after reading the book through that lens, therefore, that his latest among many books is better as a historical document on Galtung’s thinking than as a literal prescription for change today.

One cannot doubt that Professor Galtung is daring! His Appendix lists 50 predictions about the world written in 1988 for a World Futures conference in Beijing, China. To publish such a list 27 years later for review is to risk all your errors being obvious. He concludes this appendix with a brief paragraph claiming that about 48 of the 50 have come true. Well that is debatable. Many are quite broad and some are truly visionary, but others have clearly not come true.
I am going to illustrate that in some detail so I want to acknowledge again the undeniable and considerable contributions of Professor Galtung to social science theory and especially to peace studies, even though so many of his predictions were … less than fully accurate. I will run through some that I find most noteworthy. By all means, judge for yourselves.

3. Galtung predicts “ever more pressure on empty land in Siberia, Alaska, Canada, parts of the United States” … and on around the less populated parts of our world. Well that is easy, and on the positive side, Galtung explicitly considers demographics, which are very powerful forces in international affairs, but are also often neglected by scholars who want to avoid controversy. On the negative side, Galtung concludes therefore that “Increasingly, this will mean the end of nation-states.” We certainly see failing states today, but end of nation-states? I do not think so.

6. He predicts an “Accelerating deterioration of moral standards.” Amen to that. But have not all elders predicted this since the beginning of time?

7. He then predicts an “Accelerating deterioration of intellectual standards.” Little doubt there.

9. He predicts “A changing world economic power composition.” Well, of course the composition of world economic or other powers is always changing. Galtung predicted a “major increase for China and the Soviet Union.” He was obviously right about the former and wrong about the latter. This is a recurring pattern of his predictions; something very general which is almost inevitable, followed by details that are sometimes right, sometimes wrong, and sometimes very wrong. But again, I give him considerable credit for daring to a) make the predictions, and b) publish them decades later so we can see for ourselves how accurate his model was.

13. “The peace movement will continue influencing the discourse.” In his dreams. To this, life-long participant in the US ‘peace movement’ this appears to be pure rosy-glasses illusion since the peace movement I observe has been quite marginalized since the Vietnam War. Yes, if you consider any tiny thing to be influence, once in a great while we accomplish microscopic changes in policy. But mostly, powers that be ignore even multi-million person protests as insignificant irritants even before major mistakes like the US invasion of Iraq on false “intelligence” in 2003. For a non-US example, consider how feeble the “peace community” in Israel has become.

14. Galtung predicts that 1992 will be a “take-off for major movements.” I was there; it was not.
15. “America may give up its image as the leader of the free world.” Well, predictions that have “may” in their structure are impossible to falsify. But what I see is a President Trump and “America First” (again). Neither looks eager to give up our images of leadership in the world.

16. Here, Galtung claims that the Soviet Union “may give up their image as a unique and chosen country.” Well the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, but President Putin of Russia seems keen to restore the prestige of imperial Russia, not to abandon its version of national exceptionalism.

17. “The superpower character of the European Community will be increasingly clear.” Actually, the EC appears to be fragmenting as we watch it in 2017, again to me at least.

18. “Africa south of the Sahara possibly to be recolonized by the EC.” Well possibly, but not visibly to me. China might be colonizing Africa economically, but not the EU or the EC.

19. “War in the Western Pacific over maritime resources is possible.” Again, anything is possible. But I think Galtung is more prescient here, because we are certainly seeing more tensions over the South China Sea and other resource issues.

20. “ASEAN to emerge as a major power with 10 member states.” ASEAN is the Association of South East Asian Nations, which indeed includes 10 states and is fairly important economically. But a “major power?” Not remotely in military terms. It is dwarfed by China, Japan, India and even Pakistan if Pakistan were to get really upset with its >100 nuclear warheads and missiles.

21. “Unification of divided nations will proceed in the 1990’s.” Galtung was right about Germany, but wrong about the Koreas and China (by which he meant reunification of Taiwan with mainland China). Once again, Galtung presents an attractive generalization followed by both accurate and non-accurate detailed predictions.

23. “The UN is in for a major revival as pax americana and pax sovietica are coming to an end, with no pax nipponica or sinica emerging.” The UN appears to me in major decline. Galtung is certainly correct that no pax anything has emerged to replace the UN. But he also ends this section with the amazing sentence “Been solved.” No, the war puzzle has not “been solved.”
30. “The debt crisis will be solved politically not economically.” Well I certainly hope someone solves those crises, both domestically and internationally. But I do not know any economist who believes that either has been solved today in any fundamental way.

32. “More power to academics all over the world.” What a hoot of a prediction! Which world is he observing? Galtung follows this with “A major result of the education revolution all over the world will be the near impossibility of keeping the (near) Ph.D. class out of power.” This prediction also seems to contradict his prediction #7 noted earlier.

35. “Glasnost and perestroika will come to the United States.” I cannot wait, but will not hold my breath on that.

36. “The Soviet Union will experience dynamism as never before.” Well, as noted before, the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991. So that is not happening. But in Galtung’s defense, even the CIA failed to note the deep decay that undermined the Soviet Union while they were building ever-bigger nuclear bombs. Remember, visionaries who dare to predict run exceptional risks – Galtung has accomplished many great things even though his visions are too rosy to me.

37. “Palestine will become independent.” No commentary needed there. Perhaps, someday, we pray. But not in any future I can see through the fogs of uncertainty that bedevil all forecasters. My formal prediction for that area is eventual genocide or more likely, ethnic “cleansing.” I do hope that Galtung is more correct than I am about that.

42. “There will be more KGB and CIA defectors.” Well the last KGB defector I know was assassinated in London (Alexander Litvinenko). The KGB’s successors, Russia’s “FSB” and “SVR,” seem equally brutal. More recent CIA leakers have been put in jail than in the past, and I do not know of any recent CIA “defectors.” So this prediction seems very optimistic to me.

Therefore, I conclude by applauding again the many accomplishments of a true visionary, Johan Galtung, but recommend the book only as one of historic interest on his thinking rather than as a formula for the peaceful world we all desire. (Well, most of us desire that.) One recurring failure of my rosy-eyed peace friends is failing to deal with those who actually love wars, and start them.

Reviewed by Laina Farhat-Holzman

Daniel Chirot is the Herbert J. Ellison Professor of Russian and Eurasian Studies in the University of Washington’s Henry Jackson School of International Studies. Chirot’s most recent book, co-authored with Scott Montgomery, is *The Shape of the New: Four Big Ideas and How They Made the Modern World* (Princeton University Press, 2015.) Chirot’s other books have been about genocide, ethnic conflicts, tyranny, social change, and Eastern Europe.

In a digital world of quickly passing opinions and “points of view,” how is it possible that just a handful of deep ideas could still be dominant? That is the challenge of the authors of this book. They claim to have hit upon just four deep ideas that have shaped our world, its economics, politics, and notions of freedom since the late 18th century.

Scott Montgomery and Daniel Chirot focus on the main ideas that were authored by Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, and the combined thought of Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton. Although these ideas and the people from whom they came were not the only shapers of the modern world, they were surely among the most important. The authors not only explain the ideas, but explore the characters and times of these five intellectual innovators.

**Adam Smith** (a Scot who lived just before the industrial revolution, 1723-1790) was the first to explore how enlightened self-interest was the best guide to economic prosperity, and laid the basis for modern economic thinking. These ideas provided a justification and guide for the capitalism that was starting to transform the world and is still with us today.

As well as it worked, Smith was wise enough to warn that for such a system to avoid enormous and unfair inequality, capitalists and the wealthy must have strong moral underpinnings. Smith’s second book: *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776, is much better known than his first, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), which deals with the sorts of values that we see even today in the new popularity of philanthropy being promoted by the best of today’s billionaires. The key to Smith is that he was a *moral* philosopher, not readily found among economists.

The authors conclude that free and open markets in economic matters and free markets in the expression of political ideologies are essential for democracy. Freedom and political liberty cannot exist without both.
Karl Marx, born in 1818, was a difficult, irritable man who raged against the world he lived in; yet he created a theory for how it would one day become a near paradise.” In identifying the inequality inevitable in untrammeled Capitalism, he imagined a world in which inequality would be impossible, thus conceiving of a utopia. Utopias, unfortunately, are a joke of Plato who selected the word to describe his imaginary Republic, Utopia meaning “no place.”

Although Marx, a baptized Protestant, was hostile to religion, including his father’s religion at birth (Judaism), the system he created functioned as a virtual religion and his works serve as a kind of gospel. No other thinker of the 19th century was ever the source of such transformative, life-and-death power. “What is so astonishing about Marx, however, is that his influence led to the wholesale restructuring of societies, with unparalleled consequences, achieved purely through the ideas he expressed in his writing.”

Marx’s big idea was Dialectical Materialism as the Theory of History. He believed that the economic system of a society determines all else: its political and legal institutions, cultural values, and the very forms of daily life. This was belief in a purely materialistic interpretation of history affecting every aspect of human existence.

The Communist Manifesto of 1848 predicted that once the industrial proletariat was organized, it would sweep away the existing order by means of revolution and make itself the ruling class. Marx died well before this happened in Russia.

After his death, his colleague (and economic patron) Friedrich Engels, assembled materials from Marx’s and his own writings to publish Das Kapital, considered the gospel of Communism. A British scholar of Marxism, David McLellan, noted: “For a book which has a reputation for length and difficulty, Capital is an unlikely best seller.” This enormous and turgid book has been translated into more than 50 languages and has been one of the most widely quoted books of the last hundred years.

The authors conclude: Karl Marx’s theories encompassed much of what was both good and dangerous about the Enlightenment. He sought scientific rigor, idealized progress, and wanted to liberate mankind from what he saw as oppressive economic systems. But his utopian vision resulted in a whole series of nightmarish, ultimately failed political systems. Fury was present at its birth, and may yet come to life again in another incarnation.
Charles Darwin was a gentle and conventional Victorian gentleman who never intended to pull down centuries of belief in a fixed, divinely ordained universe built by a benevolent God. Yet his major opus, *Origin of Species*, not only changed the life sciences, but unintentionally provided fodder for more sinister ideas about “survival of the fittest” as a justification for some terrible economic and political systems that emerged later. Darwin’s great idea is that man evolved through natural selection and random mutation. For religionists that has been a hard pill to swallow, and this is why Darwin’s science is still being rejected by those who refuse to give up the older view of a God-ordered stability. But here again is an idea, or a systematized science of how creation really works, that has changed the world.

Democracy, as found in the Jefferson-Hamilton Debates, is an extraordinary set of ideas centered on notions of human freedom and ways to preserve it. Yet Hamilton and Jefferson strongly differed on how the core values of the new American experiment could be preserved.

Modern democracy harks back to ancient Athens. That extraordinarily innovative regime had some rough procedures which we could broadly call democratic; but it was limited to native born, male, property owners. Montgomery and Chirot note that it was a very long time between the maturation of those ideas and the *rebirth* of democracy in the modern world on the American continent. That it happened there, in such a primitive, non-urban setting and in a colonial outpost of the British Empire, has always been a puzzle. The authors give a good account of the political ideas that were then percolating in Europe and American access to them. It was from those ideas that our liberal democracy of today evolved. It could not as easily have happened in Europe, with its authoritarian traditions and hereditary aristocracy.

Although there was a problem in the American South, which looked more like a hereditary aristocracy and a slave labor force, Southern aristocrats such as Jefferson and the northern Harvard-educated lawyer John Adams, accompanied by the entrepreneurial genius of Alexander Hamilton, debated for decades what the nature of their new country should be.

Jefferson and Hamilton disagreed on the size and responsibilities of government. Jefferson believed that the new country should be in the hands of independent yeomen farmers and a weak central government while Hamilton believed that the country needed a strong central government. This included a central bank, to maintain order and encourage development. Their debates illuminate issues that to date have not been completely resolved. But what they both agreed on was that there must be rule of law universally accepted with the separation of powers to prevent tyranny and corruption, and that there is a need for a diligent citizenry that is literate, hardworking and informed by the values of the Protestant Reformation.
This chapter is an excellent exploration of America’s earliest years and it casts light on the varieties of democracy in the world today. Not all democracies are the same. A liberal democracy differs from an illiberal one. In the latter, the people may vote, but how they vote scarcely matters because an autocrat rules. We see many such around the world today.

The idea of democracy matters, and has created a country that is, and may, in its ideals, continue to be, the best example of how a country should be run. But American progress has not been linear. It has had setbacks and emergencies (such as the Civil War and some near brushes with totalitarian ideas). Yet, we have expanded the rights and duties of citizens to include women, blacks and many who are not property owners. No idea that sees the light of day and becomes influential lacks its opposition. Ideas that change traditional patterns of human culture threaten people vested in the older system. This is certainly true today.

The Enlightenment proposed that humans be guided by reason, not by tradition. It was a system that promoted science, the exploration of the world without heeding the mythological or religious explanations that were accepted as truth for millennia. But the danger of an Enlightenment can be that all traditions are swept away, both good and bad, with new, untested ideas put forth as truth.

Nonetheless, the Enlightenment has given rise to a modern world in which many miseries of the past (starvation, plagues, slavery) have become largely, if not entirely, eliminated. It has given us cultures in which every adult can voice preferences about issues in their daily lives. It has also produced some violent ideologies that are devoted to the destruction of this democratic world order.

A group of outliers in the United States are populist believers in extreme Christian evangelical fundamentalism. This is our most resistant sector to the ideas of the Enlightenment.

There have been three other major opponents of the Enlightenment: Fascism and totalitarian dictatorships (the Nazis and the Japanese in World War, and formerly, the totalitarian Soviet Union), and today, a backlash that has pushed archaic Islam into a new form of totalitarian domination.

All of these hark back to darker times, yet their practitioners are not reluctant to use the sciences and material benefits of the Enlightenment without also adopting the modern political institutions that created rule-by-law.
Two of these enemies of modern democracy, the Fascists and Communists, have lost in conflicts with the United States and its democratic allies. The third, a violent ideology that marries literalist Islam with fascism, is now roiling order around the world. The proponents of it have declared war on modern ideas and institutions, but it does not seem likely that they will prevail for long.

I cannot praise this book enough. Ideas are indeed the stuff of culture and how they have played out in the 20th and 21st century is a matter of paramount interest to us all. Although Montgomery and Chirot do not say it, they have identified and articulated a vital, core set of values, unique to the Western world. In the days to come, we can expect them to face serious opposition around the world. As our authors point out in their chapter on the “Making of Democracy,” after the emergence of a number of new democratic states in the first third of the 20th century, the process stalled so that by 2014 only forty percent of the world’s population now live in fully democratic societies. Will there be a new, fourth wave of democratization? Present signs are not favorable.

Reviewed by Laina Farhat-Holzman

The growing gap in the traditional trajectory from poverty to middle class may have less to do with color than with culture. We can see during this present election process the anger and distress of poor white men, flocking to the rallies of candidate Donald Trump. These men, who were once doing well during the post-WWII era, when our country was a manufacturing giant, are now victims of a changing economy.

Their fathers, working in these factories, supported families and sent children to college, thanks to strong unions and good industry profits. But as the US helped the rest of the world to recover from their wartime disasters and helped open up China, some of our industries couldn’t compete.

Lesser-educated white men found themselves competing with black men for jobs in the diminishing industries. Even more insulting to many of them was competition from women. Add to this a flood of immigrants, some taking agricultural work that nobody else wanted, and others arriving with skills that were welcomed by the newer industries.

J. D. Vance admits in his Introduction that it is absurd for a 31-year-old to write a memoir, usually the fruit of a distinguished long life. However, his memoir tracks an anomaly: a child from a dysfunctional “hillbilly” family growing up poor in a rust-belt Ohio town whose steel industry had gone to China, a child who managed not only to go to college, but to get a law degree from Yale University. His memoir, however, is less about his achievement than about the culture of failure and violence that darkened his childhood.

Although his focus is on the Scots-Irish who people West Virginia and Kentucky (greater Appalachia) who then migrated to the mid-west industrial towns, his observations apply similarly to other groups living in poverty: Blacks in inner cities or as sharecroppers in the South, and second-generation Hispanics living in gang-poisoned urban enclaves.

All of these communities have good and bad traits. The Scots-Irish maintain an old-fashioned adherence to family, religion, and politics. They believe in loyalty and dedication to family and country. But on the negative side, they dislike and suspect those who differ from themselves in color, behavior, or how they talk.
Greater Appalachia has changed from Democrat to Republican since Reagan. Also, from the optimism of the working-class people achieving middle class, they have descended into low social mobility and poverty, divorce, and drug addiction. The entire region is in misery.

He notes that his people are more pessimistic about their futures than blacks and Latinos, many of whom suffer from poverty too. Social isolation that derived from Appalachia has been passed down to their children. Their religion has changed from the earlier Methodism that offered mutual aid to highly emotional churches that offer no support. Many have dropped out of the labor force as coal mining and factories declined, choosing not to relocate for better opportunities.

He notes: “Our men suffer from a peculiar crisis of masculinity in which some of the very traits that our culture inculcates make it difficult to succeed in a changing world.” Is this not the same crisis in masculinity suffered by inner-city Blacks and Hispanics? This crisis is leading to a rise in divorces, one-parent families, and a plague of irresponsibility among men. The Protestant Ethic seems to have flown over this region leaving many without a future. The consequence is dysfunction, violence (quick fists, knives, and guns), and drugs now joining alcohol abuse as a killer of stability.

We, as participants in our governance, need to understand the nature of this “White Men’s Rage,” as well as its counterpart in the “Black Lives” movement. As I read this book, I see that much of this rage is misdirected, but these angry men (and it is mostly men) are not seeing this.

The patriotism that used to characterize this population has declined and been replaced by distrust of government. Vance notes, for example, that trust of the media that used to unite us (newspapers, journals, radio, and television) has been replaced by a culture of internet conspiracy theories instead. The widespread belief that our president is not America born or is a Muslim is more a reflection of envy than racism.

None of Vance’s high school classmates attended an Ivy League school. “Barack Obama attended two of them and excelled at both. He is brilliant, wealthy, and speaks like a constitutional law professor — which, of course he is. Nothing about him bears any resemblance to the people I admired growing up: His accent — clean, perfect, neutral — is foreign; his credentials are so impressive that they’re frightening; he made his life in Chicago, a dense metropolis; and he conducts himself with a confidence that comes from knowing that the modern American meritocracy was built for him. Of course, Obama overcame adversity in his own right — adversity familiar to many of us — but that was long before any of us knew him.”
This subculture does not believe that the modern American meritocracy is for them. And yet this one young man, J. D. Vance, through sheer luck, was able to survive his family’s dysfunction. He was able to do this thanks to a pair of fiercely principled grandparents who pushed him to excel at school, attain a work ethic through part-time jobs and to serve in the Marine Corps. He argues that there is far too little mentoring of the young in working-class or inner city populations — mentoring concerning the management of time, appearance, and money that is natural in Middle Class families.

Vance’s book makes it possible to see the virtues and failings of people who might otherwise be known to us only when they hoot and holler at a Trump rally. Of course, some of their troubles are external: changes in technology, social norms, and global issues beyond their control. But Vance urges that the qualities that have shown themselves to be the best for us: loyalty, family love, responsibility, and industriousness, can go far to make a better future.
CCR Style Guide for Submitted Manuscripts

Begin the document with title, author’s name, author’s position (e.g. professor, lecturer, graduate student, independent scholar), author’s academic department and affiliation, if any, and the article’s abstract (maximum 200 words). Do not include page numbers, headers, or footers. These will be added by the editors. Do not utilize automatic formatting for indents, space following subheads and paragraphs, etc.

Write your article in English. Submit your manuscript, including tables, figures, appendices, etc., as a single Microsoft Word or PDF file. Page size should be 8.5 x 11 inches. All margins (left, right, top and bottom) should be 1-inch, including your tables and figures. Single space your text. Use a single column layout with both left and right margins justified. Main body text font: 12 pt. Times New Roman. If figures are included, use high-resolution figures, preferably encoded as encapsulated PostScript. Maximum length of article is 20 pages including endnotes, bibliography, etc.

Do not indent paragraphs. A line space should follow each paragraph. Subheads are in bold, flush left, separated by a line space above and below. Long quotations should be placed in a separate paragraph with a .5-inch hanging indent, no quotation marks, and preceded and followed by one-line spaces.

Except for common foreign words and phrases, the use of foreign words and phrases should be avoided. Authors should use proper, standard English grammar. Suggested guides include *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White; and *The Chicago Manual of Style*, University of Chicago Press.

Underlining in the text is discouraged. Whenever possible use italics to indicate text that you wish to emphasize. Use italics for book titles, movie titles, etc and for foreign terms. Using colored text is prohibited. However, we encourage authors to take advantage of the ability to use color in the production of figures, maps, etc. To the extent possible, tables and figures should appear in the document near where they are referenced in the text. Large tables or figures should be put on pages by themselves. Avoid the use of overly small type in tables. In no case should tables or figures be in a separate document or file. All tables and figures must fit within 1-inch margins on all sides, in both portrait and landscape view.

Footnotes should appear at the bottom of the page on which they are referenced rather than at the end of the paper. Footnotes should be in 10 pt. Times New Roman, single spaced, and flush left, ragged right. There should be a footnote separator rule (line). Footnote numbers or symbols in the text must follow, rather than precede, punctuation. Excessively long footnotes are probably better handled in an appendix.
The subhead References (denoting Bibliography, Works Cited, etc.) should appear right after the end of the document, beginning on the last page if possible. They should be flush left, ragged right. Use the format with which you are most comfortable, such as APA (American Psychological Association), MLA (Modern Language Association), Chicago/Turabian.
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Papers are invited on the above topics and any other topics with civilizational relevance. Send Abstracts of up to 300 words describing your proposed paper by (date to be determined), in MS WORD to the Program Chair, Laina Farhat-Holzman Lfarhat102@aol.com. Abstracts submitted in Mandarin should be sent to Program Committee Member, Shi (Irving) Yuanhui, Vice Dean at yuanhuishi08@aliyun.com.

All Abstracts must include your name, contact email, phone number and affiliation. Please see the ISCSC website http://www.iscsc.org for news on conference updates, details, registration, logistics and transportation suggestions. The website will be updated as new information becomes available.

Our hosts at Soochow University are Professor Fang Han Wen, Director of Comparative Literature and Comparative Civilizations, and Professor Shi Yuanhui, Vice Dean School of Foreign Languages. Professor Fang is the Vice President of Coordination to China.

Conference participants should plan to arrive in Suzhou (Soochow) by June 14th, one day prior to the initial conference date for hotel check-in. Our hosts have arranged for us to stay at the Gloria Plaza Hotel in Suzhou, a 5-minute walk to Soochow University where conference sessions will be held. The reduced conference price per night is approximately 400 RMB (approximately $60 USD). Do not make hotel reservations at this time. Further information will be provided soon regarding travel recommendations and how hotel reservations are to be made.